

the successful man) looks on glory that is bought at such a price as one whose listless eyes have chanced on something very far away!" And Karma, the unswerving judge, impersonal and impartial, just, *unloving*, will send the soul back to successive re-incarnations till it finally reaches perfection enough to enter Nirvana, or absorption in GOD. The ladder by which he mounts is formed of rungs of suffering and pain. Along the road he is continually encountering the Karmic deposits of his past lives, which bar his way and trip him; slowly and alone he must tread this path of effort, till he reach his longed for goal.

I have given you now an outline necessarily imperfect, because so short, of the teachings of this cult which confronts and challenges us. It is here in our midst. What have we to say to it?

*First*, it must be allowed to be fascinating. There is so much in it that appeals to the highest in us. There is such a show of satisfaction in it for all our questionings; there is such a call to devotion, to a lofty ideal.

There is an intensity of conviction in it too. It supplies an answer to the phenomena of occultism which is coming so much to the surface of things at the present time; an explanation of the problems of spiritualism and Psychology; a glamour of philosophy and science which fits in, with apparent perfection, to religion. In the course of my study of it during the past two or three years, I have sometimes been so far carried away with it, as so almost wish that it might be true. A man of thoughtful mind is always in more or less of danger when he takes up the investigation of something new to him in morals or religion. There are so many things on which his soul craves light; so many doubts which are ever crowding him; so many questionings to which he can return no answer; so many tragedies in which the principal characters are at his elbow, and the whole world forms the chorus. And light is promised and guidance is at hand, and the wisdom and silence of orient is now for the first time at the service of western dullness, and it seems as if the key to the mysterious as well as the open, to the occult equally with the manifest, were now placed within the lock. These precepts seem so good:—

(a) The entire eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of *broad, generous sympathy* in, and effort for, the good of others.

(b) The absolute cultivation of the inner spiritual man by meditation; by reaching to and communion with the Divine, and by incessant striving to an ideal end.

(c) The control of fleshly appetites and desires; all lower and material interests being deliberately subordinated to the behests of the spirit.

(d) The careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving results for Divine Law.

To follow this, so pure, so lofty, so high-minded, I say is a temptation to a certain class of minds, as we had better not underrate it.

But oh! at what a cost!

There is "the renunciation of all present religious ties, the giving up of all interests vested in the welfare of any one particular church or sect."

To this I would say, the thing is impossible. You only exchange one tie for another. Leave what is now dear to you because of its intrinsic holiness and purity, and attach yourself to that which appears to you to be more worthy of your devotion and what do you do but take that other in place of the first? There is no such thing in this mortal world as setting one's self free from the outward ties of religion.

I pass on to shew why Theosophy, as a religious system, is inadequate to man's needs, and can never take the place of Christianity.

1. Because of its coldness and intellectual iciness. What is to become of the poor, the homeless, the street arab, the uneducated, who cannot and could never be expected to understand all this transcendentalism, and who starve in body while their minds are being fed with cold, bare, glittering generalities? Do you not, O Mahatma, rejoicing in the perfection of your mental picture, and wrapping yourself up in a mantle of selfish meditation in your oriental hiding place, do you not hear the cry of the poor for bread, of the suffering for relief, of the sorrowful for consolation?

If you have been conscious in mortal or astral form of all these things, of these agonizing pleadings of the sons of men for all these ages—why have