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TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

London Lodge of the Theosophical Society.

THE PYRAMIDS AND STONEHENGE.

INDEPENDENTLY of knowledge concerning the spiritual growth of humanity, with which theosophy is specially concerned, a great deal of information that could not be obtained in any other way may sometimes be acquired by theosophical students in reference to the plain external history of the world around us. Literary research in such matters very soon reaches the limit of its tether. In dealing with the remote past it is paralysed for want of written records, and at the best can only supplement these by interpreting a few inscriptions on stone. With their aid we are enabled to reach back in the direction of what Mr. Samuel Laing calls "Human Origins" some 5,000 years before the Christian era. But evidences which are not less certain than those of Egyptian hieroglyphics, show us that Man existed on the earth at past periods which geology fails to estimate with exactitude, but which certainly extend back millions of years. In this way we are confronted with a problem which, in its broadest aspects, only admits of two alternative hypotheses. Either for those millions of years mankind existed on the earth in a savage state, never rising above the use of the barbarous stone implements we find associated with his fossil remains, or he attained to early civilisations at remote periods, the regular historical traces of which have been lost.

Comparing these two views, mere reasoning on the basis of evidence that everyone is equally qualified to appreciate will go far to support a belief in prehistoric civilisations. In Egypt, the testimony of the monuments and of papyrus records, already translated, carries us back to a period about 5,000 years B.C. But at that time we find ourselves just as much in presence of Egyptian civilisation as at that relatively modern epoch of Egyptian grandeur, the Eighteenth Dynasty. According to the admirable German Egyptologist, Brugsch Bey, Menes, the first king of the first dynasty mentioned by Manetho, altered the course of the Nile by constructing an enormous dyke, in order to facilitate the foundation of Memphis. He was a law-giver, moreover, and is said to have greatly augmented the pomp and extravagance of the monarchy, thus showing himself at the same time not merely a civilised ruler, but one who had already contracted some of the vices of civilisation, a sure indication that he belonged to a declining rather than to a rising era of his country's progress. But, in truth, people have got into the way of thinking of him as if he were a primeval personage, merely because he begins Manetho's list of the kings, in so far as that list has been preserved for us by the accident of its quotation by some classical writers. The original work of Manetho vanished probably in the smoke of the Alexandrian library. It is known through other writers that Manetho spoke of Egyptian epochs long previous to that of the thirty dynasties; and even if he had not done so, the situation faintly portrayed as prevailing in the time of Menes is enough to show that it must have been the growth of a social progress extending into the past for almost immeasurable ages previously. Fifteen and not five millenniums B.C. must be taken into account—according to some of the modern Egyptologists now engaged in translating the papyri—if we wish to frame a picture in our own minds of the rise of Egyptian civilisation.

Turning now to another modern investigation, we have to recognise that by degrees a mass of testimony has accumulated on our hands in support of the classical legend concerning the

lost continent of Atlantis. The Egyptian priests whom he visited gave a great deal of information on that subject to Plato's ancestor, Solon. For a long time modern scholarship was inclined to treat the story as a fable, one hardly knows why, because the recognised course of change on the earth's crust makes it certain that most of what is now dry land was once ocean bed, and *vice versa*. There is an *a priori* probability, therefore, that some such continent as the "fabled" Atlantis must once have existed. And now there are abundant evidences, derived from the surveys of the Atlantic bed within the last few years, to show that the site assigned to Atlantis was probably that of great land masses during some former configuration of the earth's surface. Furthermore, comparative archaeology brings out identities between the pre-historic symbolism and remains of Mexico and Central America on the one hand, and those of Egypt and Syria on the other. These point to a common origin which Atlantis would exactly supply. A persevering explorer of Mexico and Yucatan, Dr. Le Plongeon, has, to quote a recent and very striking scrap of evidence, succeeded in deciphering the character in which ancient Mexican inscriptions are written, and has even translated a very old manuscript saved from the vandalism of Cortez and his attendant monks. This turns out to include a straightforward record of the final catastrophe which swallowed up the last remnant of Atlantis ten or twelve thousand years ago.

The question of Atlantis is immensely important, and I am, for the present, merely referring to the chain of reasoning by which its actual existence in former days is supported. A thorough examination of the merely exoteric evidence on the subject would be a large undertaking in itself, and I have another task before me for the moment. But all theosophical students, and even cursory readers of theosophical books, will be aware that the teaching concerning the origins of the human race that have been given to the world in connection with the inauguration of the theosophical movement, gear in with that belief in the former existence of the Atlantean con-

inent which, as I have shown, is making its way even in the outside world, which has nothing to do with theosophy. Humanity, according to all theosophical authorities, is evolved through a series of great root races, of which the Atlantean race was the predecessor of our own. I do not put forward the statement as in itself conclusive, because the whole character of theosophic teaching—as far as its really qualified exponents are concerned—is opposed to the principle of *ex cathedra* assertion. The regular method of instruction adopted by the Masters of occult science is to show the student how his own interior dormant faculties may be awakened and brought to bear on the discovery of truth, whether it has to do with the planes of Nature and consciousness superior to our own, or with periods of the world's history long anterior to our own. Until the pupil is sufficiently advanced to have the power of applying his own direct perceptions to the questions he may wish to investigate, he is almost discouraged from taking the statements of others more advanced than himself, on trust. But, at the same time, we must steer a middle course between the attitude of mental servility and the attitude of narrow-minded incredulity. For the reasonable theosophic student who has found substantial ground for relying on the knowledge and *bona fides* of the occult Masters, from whom our current theosophic teaching has been received, the statements they make in reference to such matters as the character and place in Nature of the Atlantean race will necessarily have very great weight.

Indeed I may go a step forward in explaining why some theosophic students at all events come to look upon facts concerning Atlantis, and the light that can be thrown by occult inquiry on the remote history of Egypt, as coming within the range of something nearer to them than the knowledge of their higher teachers.

An instrument of research is placed in the hands of theosophic students sufficiently advanced to make use of it, which actually brings a great deal of the ancient history of the earth

within the reach of their direct perception. This is the faculty of actually seeing, with an inner sense adapted to the process, former states and conditions of any place or object with which the seer or clairvoyant may be in contact. Many people of our day are so ill-informed concerning the most interesting developments of science in progress around us, as to disbelieve in clairvoyance from A to Z. To those of us who know better, that is like disbelieving in the differential calculus—an attitude of mind simply absurd in presence of recorded facts and experience. Clairvoyants may be one per *mil*, one in ten thousand if you like, of the population at large, but they are sufficiently numerous to make the reality of their capacities as certain as the occasional capacity of the human mind to understand the higher mathematics.

Clairvoyance has many varieties and ramifications, but that with which I am concerned for the moment has been called—rather clumsily, perhaps, by modern writers dealing with it—psychometry. In its simplest manifestation it is not very uncommon. I have met many people, besides those who have had a regular occult training, who are able, by fingering a letter, without looking at it or reading it—or perhaps by putting it to their foreheads—to get impressions concerning the person who has written it, extending sometimes to an accurate delineation of his outward appearance and character. Now, this accomplishment depends upon facts of Nature that are enormously important in their wider manifestations. Psychometrising letters bears to the law under which it becomes possible, much the same relation that the experiment of rubbing sealing-wax so as to make it attract little bits of paper, bears to the whole science of electricity. There is a medium in Nature in which pictures, so to speak, of all that has ever taken place on earth are indestructibly preserved for ever. This medium is spoken of in the occult literature of the East as the Akasa. European mediæval occultists mean the same thing when they speak of the astral light. This astral light includes a record for those who can

perceive and interpret it, that dwarfs to insignificance the value, for historical purposes, of all the written documents the world contains.

Psychic faculties of a very adept-like order, educated, moreover, with scientific precision, and borne up on a highly spiritualised character, are required for the complete exploration of the astral light. Such faculties belong to the higher theosophic teachers, and it is partly to their exercise that is due the knowledge concerning the remote past of the world which they possess. I say "partly" because, in truth, the higher initiates of occultism possess written records that have been handed down to them by a line of predecessors, but their own faculties enable them to verify these at any time. And, in truth, there are stages of development which many of their pupils reach from which a great deal of historical—not to speak for the moment of other sorts of—information can be gathered from the astral light. This has sometimes been called the Memory of Nature. All memory—even that of the most familiar kind—is in truth a reading in the astral light. But the faculties that have not been developed by occult training are only capable of reading those records, at the making of which the person concerned has actually been present. Only with those have his astral senses been closely enough associated to make it possible for him to recover touch with them at will. The occultist whose astral senses are very much more delicate is able to follow other channels of association, other magnetic currents, to use the technical expression, and this hint gives us the clue to the comprehension of the psychometric faculty.

Tangible objects, as well as the inner vehicles of human consciousness, are connected by permanent magnetic currents with the astral records that have been originally established in their neighbourhood. The trained occultist, by touching or handling such tangible objects, is enabled to get upon these currents; to put his own astral senses into the same relationship with the astral records to which such currents lead, as that which

normally exists between his own astral self and bygone scenes of his own life that he has witnessed. Take the case of recollections any of us may entertain of some distant place he may formerly have visited. Desirous of remembering it, he turns back his thoughts upon that page of his memory, and in a certain interior way may be said to see again the scene of which he thinks. The occultist in the same way lays his hand upon the stones of a building—or it may be enough for him merely to come near them—and he can follow the magnetic thread of connection which leads back his consciousness to the early events with which they were associated.

This is the way in which, for the occultist, the pyramids of Egypt may be made to tell their own story very much more fully than it is possible to trace this with the help of fragmentary inscriptions or documents accidentally surviving the destroying influence of time. The extent to which the psychometric faculty is trustworthy in the case of people below the level of adeptship is a question that can only be considered in reference to each case in turn; but, at all events, I have had the advantage of being assisted—in such attempts as I have made to penetrate rather more deeply than usual, the mystery of Egyptian antiquities—by psychometric power of a very high order, and I have been enabled to check the information I have thus received through the fuller knowledge possessed by those from whom the teaching put forward in various theosophic books from my hand has been derived. In this way I have been enabled to build up a conception of the early beginnings of Egyptian civilisation which constitutes a coherent and intelligible sketch of the whole process, and synthesizes in a very interesting manner a great deal of disjointed speculation concerning the evolution of the human race towards which archæological research of the ordinary kind has been groping its way. I will now put forward the story for the benefit of all who may be sufficiently in touch with occult methods of investigation to appreciate its *prima facie* claim to attention.

Of course, the investigation of Egyptian beginnings brings us into relations with the Atlantean race. If we go back far enough in the history of mankind—if we go back a million years—we find ourselves in the midst of a period when there was next to nothing else in the nature of a population on the earth, except the Atlantean race,—inhabiting many regions, as the earth was then configured, besides those which formed part of the continent of Atlantis—just as at the present day—to draw an illustration from one of the minor ethnological divisions of our own great race, the Caucasians inhabit many other regions of the earth besides the Caucasus. But different ramifications of the same root race may differ very widely from each other: and at a time when the main body of the Atlantean race on the continent of Atlantis had attained a very high degree of civilisation and power, Egypt, amongst other countries, was in the occupation of a relatively primitive people, whom we need not think of as savage or barbarous in the worst sense of those words, but for whom the arts and customs of civilisation were as yet a closed book.

As far back as 800,000 years ago the Atlantean continent, having all but fulfilled its destinies in the education of the human race, began to melt away. The process was inaugurated at the period just mentioned by a geological catastrophe, on a very stupendous scale; but that merely began, it did not accomplish, what is known to occult history as the submergence of Atlantis. The continent held out against the destructive forces of Nature till about 80,000 years ago, when some considerable portions surviving till then finally disappeared, leaving only one big island—the Atlantis of classical tradition—which perished in a great natural convulsion about 11,500 years ago, a date originally derived from occult teaching, and approximately confirmed by Le Plongeon's discoveries, to which reference has already been made.

During the enormous period covered by the gradual submergence of the great land masses of the original continent, extensive migrations to other regions of the then existing world

were accomplished by detachments of the Atlantean people. The most spiritually enlightened and advanced representatives of the race were especially involved in these migrations. The destruction of Atlantis as a physical process was proceeding *parri passu* with the moral degradation of the people. The adepts of the race shrank away as much from the incurable degeneration of their countrymen, as from the doomed continent whose fate they foresaw. It was not in that decaying and corrupt civilisation that their influence could any longer be exerted with advantage. They had to discover a younger and more vigorous human stock, on which to graft the spiritual impulse of which they were the custodians.

At that period a large part of Europe, especially of eastern Europe, was an uninhabited swamp—scarcely upheaved from the ocean to which Atlantis was returning. But Egypt, though very different in its geography from the Egypt of the present day, was already inhabited land, as also were the countries bounding the Mediterranean on the east. Somewhere about the middle of the enormous period assigned to the submergence of Atlantis, a good many of the Atlantean adepts, accompanied by considerable numbers of their uninitiated contemporaries, settled in these countries, as also by degrees, and later on, in the western regions of our present Europe, as well as in many parts of the eastern world. On ground which is now part of our own British Islands, though it had not at that time separated itself from the main continent, Atlantean adepts left traces of their presence, some of which survive to the current epoch. In Stonehenge we possess a memorial of the Atlantean dispersion, though that structure is of more recent date than the pyramids of Egypt. For a very long time the adept immigrants who settled in what is now Egypt did not attempt the education of the people in the arts of civilisation. They simply resided in the country, and there, no doubt, brought forward individual pupils, and upheld the higher spiritual knowledge which, however ill qualified to assimilate it the bulk of mankind at any time may

be, can never be allowed to die out altogether, even if its guardians, as they sometimes may in the crises of human evolution, diminish to a few in number. What may have been the nature of the unseen spiritual influence they were bringing to bear all the while on the people amongst whom they lived, is a question that I need not attempt to deal with here. The race around them was gradually ripened for the teachings of a lofty civilisation, and no doubt was largely augmented and elevated ethnologically by the infusion of the immigrant blood, for, as I have said, large numbers of Atlantean people, besides those who represented the adeptship of the period, accompanied their spiritual leaders in their migrations, and mingled their descendants with the original inhabitants of their new home.

Thus at last a time came when the seed sown amongst them germinated effectually. The adepts began to teach and rule as well as to reside in Egypt. The vague traditions as to long lines of Divine Kings who preceded those dynasties chronicled by Manetho are no mere fables of an infant humanity, as the narrow-minded ignorance of materialistic critics in the nineteenth century too often supposes them. The Divine Kings of Egypt were the early adept rulers, and the golden age of Egyptian greatness was that over which they presided, in millenniums far back in a past so remote that one almost hesitates to handle the real figures, amongst people of whom only a few as yet can have become completely emancipated from the mental fetters as regards the duration of the world's history, forged for modern Europeans by the imbecile interpretation put by the theology of the Middle Ages on chronological statements of the Bible. In following back the history of the earliest monuments of Egyptian civilisation, by the help of those imperishable records still to be found, as vivid as ever, in the Memory of Nature by those who know how to gain access to its boundless picture-gallery, we do not have to add at a venture a few extra millenniums to the conventional dates of modern Egyptologists, but to measure their

ages on the scale of Atlantean history. It was at a midway period between the first immigration of Atlantean adepts in Egypt and the stage of the world's progress we have now reached, that the pyramids were really built, or, in other words, a little more than two hundred thousand years ago. Closely connected as they were in their origin and purpose with occult mysteries, it is impossible to obtain from initiated informants in the present day any very precise statement concerning the design which they subserved in the beginning. I have gathered a hint to the effect that, although no doubt from the beginning used as and designed to be temples or chambers of initiation,—the great pyramid for one, certainly containing other chambers besides the three that have been discovered,—one purpose of the great pyramid was the protection of some tangible objects of great importance having to do with the occult mysteries. These were buried in the rock, it is said, and the pyramid was reared over them, its form and magnitude being adopted to render it safe from the hazards of earthquake, and even from the consequences of submergence beneath the sea during the great secular undulations of the earth's surface.

This brings me to one of the most remarkable facts about the pyramids, among those which modern research has never suspected. Within the enormous period of their existence there has been time for more than one of those great changes in the configuration of the earth, brought about by what some geologists at all events recognise as a necessity of its constitution. The alternative elevations and depressions of continents and ocean beds are due to a slow pulsation of the body of the earth, that may be likened, as regards the surface, to the undulations of a sea that has settled down in a condition of almost perfect calm, but is still gently heaving under the influence of an all but imperceptible swell. Probably there are cross currents in such undulations that may occasionally intensify and occasionally minimise them; but, at any rate, they cannot be excluded from any reasonable scientific hypo-

thesis concerning the progress of geological growth, however far beyond the reach of our very brief historic records their last manifestations may be withdrawn.

Occult information on the subject brings some of them into view, and since the erection of the earliest pyramids one such undulation—connected with that which had to do with the final submergence of the last bit of the old Atlantean *Continent*—depressed the region which is now the Lower Nile valley below the level of the sea which spread over the northern part of Africa—except for the high lands near the Mediterranean coast. The west coast was also dry land at the period in question, but the present desert of Sahara was a sea, and that sea spread over the whole country now fertilised by the Lower Nile, as the huge undulation depressed its level.

The country of the Upper Nile was not submerged, and thither no doubt the population of Egypt to a large extent withdrew, although the submergence, I understand, was cataclysmic enough in its character to involve some destruction of life among those who clung longest to the menaced region. At all events, I am told that there was a considerable migration of the people to the east and west, as well as to the south, and for a time—I do not know exactly for how long, but for a short time compared with the general course of the undulations of the great rock-sheet of the earth—the pyramids and the country round remained under water. Incidentally this will suggest that the present course of the river Nile was not that which it followed before the natural convulsion in question. The course to-day differs, I am told, as a matter of fact, from that which it followed in the age of the great pyramid's construction as high up as Thebes. The temple of Karnac is an Egyptian monument of enormous antiquity, though not so old as the great pyramid, and it never shared the submergence of the pyramid; but as far as the course of the river was concerned, that was different from what it is now, even as high up as Thebes, at the time of the erection of the temple of Karnac.

The sea again receded from lower Egypt after an interval, the exact duration of which has not been given to me, and the pyramids were again left dry. Rapidly as compared with the geological changes in progress, it was doubtless repopled, and again taken in charge by the adept kings. I am inclined to regard the period which now came on as the really golden age of Egyptian civilisation. The decline did not set in till much later. But fate held another shock in reserve for the ancient state. When the last island remnant of Atlantis was submerged with cataclysmic violence about 11,500 years ago—an undulation of the oceans led to some enormous inundations, and without again becoming the bed of a sea as on the former occasion, the land of Egypt was overwhelmed with an immense flood which again dispersed its people. I do not understand that this was on such a scale as again to submerge the pyramids, but at any rate the population was drowned or driven out of the surrounding country—for a time. When, in turn, this flood passed away and population spread again over the land, there began that downward movement of spirituality and culture which, from the occultist's point of view, is the final brief period of the decadence of Egyptian civilisation, though for the modern Egyptologist it includes the whole range of Egyptian history, behind which some inquirers begin to look out for the evidences of primitive man.

Probably when the decadent period began, or was somewhat advanced, the tangible objects, whatever they were, which the great pyramid was designed to cover, were removed to some other country chosen as the headquarters of the world's adeptship. And though as long as the ancient wisdom religion survived in Egypt to any considerable extent the pyramids continued to fulfil their purpose as temples of initiation, by degrees, no doubt, the full knowledge concerning their uses in this respect faded out from among the people. On the face of things, it would only be by initiated adepts that chambers dedicated to secret ceremonies could be put to such uses, and with the fading out of the adept element in the population,

due to its own moral deterioration, the old traditions would naturally be lost. This consideration will, amongst others, abundantly account for the multiplication of pyramids in comparative recent ages, when, certainly, there was no thought on the part of the builders of using them in connection with the introduction of neophytes to the mysteries of occult science. As late as within the last few thousand years some of the pyramids along the Nile valley have been erected. While, therefore, occult teaching entirely discountenances the conventional theory that the pyramids in all cases were put up to serve as the tombs of monarchs, it opens the door to conjectures along that road as regards some of the latest among them. From an antiquity with which the decadent dynasties had probably lost touch, the example of the earlier pyramids as a fashion in architecture had obviously been handed down.

Certainly the coffer of the great pyramid was neither a sarcophagus nor, as Piazzzi Smyth conjectures, a standard measure of capacity, but a font in which certain baptismal ceremonies connected with initiations were carried out. It is possible, however, that in the later and degenerate period of Egyptian history—to which all the Manetho dynasties belong—some of the kings, losing touch with the ideas associated with the more ancient pyramids in the beginning, may have followed the fashion of their architecture, without knowing why it was originally designed, and may have put up pyramids to be their tombs. I understand definitely that this was the case, but the fact in no way militates against the explanations just given.

The great pyramid has been assigned by most Egyptologists to a king of the fourth dynasty, generally known as Cheops, or more correctly, to students of hieroglyphics, as Khufu. That monarch is supposed to have built it, and to have gone on adding to its size as long as he lived. As his reign was a long one, the enormous magnitude of the building—standing on a base the size of Lincoln's Inn Fields—is thus accounted for. My own information is to the effect

that Khufu simply restored some portions of the pyramid that had suffered injury, also, for reasons that I have not heard stated, closing up some of the chambers that were previously accessible. It is admitted by modern Egyptologists that the evidence which points to Khufu as the builder of the pyramid is meagre, although the original guess has been quoted so often now that most writers assume it to be somehow known as a fact.

The manipulation of the enormous stones used in this edifice, as also, indeed, the construction of the great pyramid itself, can only be explained by the application to these tasks of some knowledge concerning the forces of Nature which was lost to mankind during the decadence of Egyptian civilisation and the barbarism of the Middle Ages, and has not yet been recovered by modern science. This branch of the subject, however, may be conveniently reviewed in connection with some other architectural bequests from the ages in which the adepts dispersed from Atlantis were still taking part in the external life of Egypt, and, indeed, of some other countries now forming part of the European continent. In England itself we have architectural remains connected with the ascendancy here at one time of Atlantean adepts, the interpretation of which has been as much clouded by fantastic theories as by the passage of the ages that have gone by since their erection.

Stonehenge* is a riddle that has perplexed speculation as profoundly in its way as the pyramids themselves. Most archæologists have assumed that it was erected by the Druids of ancient Britain, who were already disappearing as a priestly caste at the time of the Roman invasion, although still carrying on secret and sanguinary rites to which some Roman historians have referred. This somewhat crude con-

* This branch of the subject was dealt with in an address I gave at a meeting of the London Lodge last year (1892). The information then dealt with was not embodied in any Transaction at the time, and may be conveniently incorporated here.

jecture, which offered no explanation of the methods by which an uncivilised race of people like those inhabiting the Britain that Julius Caesar conquered, could have handled the enormous monoliths of which Stonehenge consists, did not satisfy Mr. James Fergusson, who has devoted so much painstaking research to the subject of the "Rude Stone Monuments," dealt with in his interesting volume bearing that title. Mr. Fergusson had a passion for discerning a recent origin in all the remains of antiquity, and, taking advantage of the obscurity that hangs over two or three hundred years of English history, following on the abandonment of these islands by the Romans, he has developed an elaborate hypothesis, according to which Stonehenge was erected in the time of King Arthur, to celebrate one of the twelve great battles in which that hero is said to have overthrown the Heathen. Mr. Fergusson will have nothing to say to previous arguments that had assigned a religious purpose to the great relics on Salisbury Plain, and makes them out to have been nothing more than stones set up to commemorate a victory. He could not by any intentional efforts to that end have supplied us with a more grotesque *reductio ad absurdum* of that general view of the world which regards the civilisation now around us as having grown up from an immediately preceding condition of primeval human infancy. One of the reasons for which Mr. Fergusson rejects the Druidical theory is derived from the impossibility of supposing that such a mere race of savages as the Romans found in Britain could have handled the stone masses of which the ruin in question consists; but he is content to pass lightly over this embarrassment in dealing with his own theory, on the assumption that after the Roman occupation the Britons would have picked up a good deal of engineering knowledge from their conquerors. The Romans themselves would have been no better able than the Britons to manipulate the materials of Stonehenge. The "imposts" or upper stones of the great trilithons are themselves about eleven tons each

in weight, and the uprights thirty tons each. It is nonsense to talk of such masses as being moved about and set up in their places with great exactitude by builders simply employing the strength of human muscles in the work. The mechanical resources of the present day would be heavily taxed to erect a second Stonehenge beside the first. Nor is the absurdity of such a hypothesis measured merely by the weight of the monoliths on Salisbury Plain. By Mr. Fergusson's own admissions we have to bring into our survey of the past the remains of Stonehenge and Avebury, and also the innumerable "dolmens" that are found about these islands, and in larger numbers in France, Spain and Scandinavia. It is no use to give an explanation that will fit in with facts in one case if it fails to square with those of another. The dolmens have to be accounted for as well as the Arthurian battle memorials. And in the case of some among the dolmens the weights to be dealt with throw those of Stonehenge into the shade. Dolmens are simple structures in which one mass of rock—the capstone—is hoisted up on three or more supports; and one measured in Cornwall, in the parish of Constantine, is computed to weigh 750 tons. Another in Pembrokeshire is a great tabular slab, big enough for five people on horseback to take shelter beneath it. What were the uses to which these strange monuments were put? The Arthurian hypothesis leaves the matter as much in the dark as the Druidical theory at which Mr. Fergusson takes offence. And the notion that the Britons might have become qualified to raise capstones weighing 750 tones, merely because they had picked up some engineering skill by watching the Roman road makers, is too childish to consider seriously.

People who contend, with Mr. Fergusson, that the rude stone monuments must have been put up in the third and fourth centuries, because we know they have not been built since, while they could not have been erected by primeval savages, are simply—without setting out on that argument

consciously—making smooth the path that conducts us back, in search of an explanation, to a civilisation anterior to our own, the traces of which have all but evaporated from the records from which, till lately, we have been constructing the history of the ancient world. Atlantis is the only rational clue to the comprehension of Stonehenge, just as it affords the only satisfactory solution of ancient Egypt.

The information on the subject to be gathered from those to whom the "Memory of Nature" is an open book, shows us the dispersed adepts from Atlantis as the founders in Western Europe of the religious rites that Stonehenge was designed to subserve. At a much later period than that which witnessed the Atlantean migration to Egypt, some representatives of the higher Atlantean occultism established themselves in the country which, in the subsequent changes of physical geography, was destined to become the British Isles. Their influence established a civilisation among the people which did not prove of the strong and enduring character attaching to that planted in Egypt, but which, nevertheless, gave rise to considerable cities, all traces of which have now passed away. And Stonehenge was erected as a temple, in which the exoteric worship they taught to the people could be carried on. It was never covered with any roof. Its rude structure was purposely adopted by the exiles from Atlantis as a mute protest against the corrupt luxury of the perishing civilisation they had left behind. In Atlantis itself the human family had touched the nadir point of materiality. Great developments of scientific knowledge had been turned entirely to the service of the physical life, and spiritual aspiration was entirely stifled in the pursuit of material welfare. Personal luxury cultivated by those who were strong enough to secure it for themselves, was the goal to which all the energies of the race were bent. Many secrets of Nature, which the science of this fifth race has not yet recovered, were degraded to the exclusive service of physical enjoyment by the dominant classes—for an inferior, servile

race also inhabited the country—and the spiritual adepts of the period turned with disgust from a community which it was not in their power to redeem. They set themselves the task of implanting amongst a simpler and relatively barbarous population abroad, whose descendants were destined, in progress of time, to melt into the next great race, the spiritual enthusiasm that might, in their case, lead on to an ennobled future. So the external ceremonies of the religion they taught were carried on under their guidance with stern simplicity. They built their great temple, of unhewn rocks. They sought no architectural effects that would divert attention from Nature. They invested their great cathedral with no other claims to admiration but those depending on the massive grandeur of its proportions.

But how did they overcome the difficulty of manipulating the huge masses of stone, the mere superposition of which, one upon the other, seems to have demanded mechanical resources which we can hardly associate in imagination with any period but our own? For that matter, in Atlantis itself it may be found, when fuller light is ultimately cast upon its history, that mechanical resources of a very advanced order were available for any work that needed them; but the builders of that age were not exclusively dependent on appliances of the kind we now make use of in handling large masses of material. In the maturity of Atlantean civilization some forces of Nature, now only under the control of adepts in occult science, were in general use. The adepts of the time were under no obligation to keep the secret of their existence jealously guarded; and among them was that power, so rarely exercised now that its very existence is scornfully derided by the common-place crowd—the power of modifying the force we call gravity.

It is rarely of use in public utterances in the present day, when current intelligence is engaged in channels far removed from those of occult attainment, to speak of adept powers that are wholly out of gear with modern experience of natural

possibilities. But in reference to the peculiar power to which I have just referred, the truth is that the modification of the force of gravity, by methods human ingenuity may bring into play, can only seem absurd to people who are ignorant of certain suggestive facts already within the experience of scientific investigation and, at the same time, wilfully blind to the evidence of mysterious occurrences notoriously taking place, though altogether unexplained so far, in the realm of spiritualistic experience. Theosophists are of course very far from accepting the theories of spiritualism in regard to the destinies of the human soul after death; but the external facts, familiar to the investigators of spiritualism, are facts none the less which must be fitted into their places in any conceptions of Nature framed by intelligent reasoning. The foolish crowd ignore these, because impostors are constantly detected in imitating by trickery the comparatively rare phenomena which, under the auspices of spiritual mediumship, illustrate the occasional activity of forces that set at defiance the very limited knowledge of natural secrets generally diffused amongst us at present. But the remark attributed to Galileo, *e pur si muove*, is highly applicable in this case. In face of all that has been recorded by qualified spiritualistic investigators,—a body of testimony which is not affected in the smallest degree by exposures of sham spiritualism in other cases,—it is curiously illustrative of the capacities of human stupidity, that people, fancying themselves clear-headed and sagacious, should continue to discredit the fact that, at spiritual seances, heavy objects are sometimes "levitated," caused, that is, to rise or even float about in the air under the influence of invisible agencies, or forces that have for the time being counteracted, as far as such objects are concerned, the usually operative force called gravity.

But that which happens only now and then, no matter how rarely, must be traceable, if only we knew enough, to the operation of some law as natural as that under which steam expands. Nor is there anything in the essence of the matter

more mysterious in the fact that solid objects are sometimes repelled from the earth,—or levitated,—than in the other fact that more usually they are attracted. No modern physicist has as yet any glimmering conception as to why or how gravity works. We are no better informed at this moment than Newton, as to why the apple falls. We can, to a certain extent, measure the force which controls it; we do not know what that force is. So with magnetism. There we have an agency we can observe in action both ways—as an attractive and as a repulsive force. Stimulate an electro magnet in one way and it will attract iron: stimulate it in another way and it will repel copper, so that a mass of that metal may be visibly levitated and kept floating on nothing, apparently, at some height above the apparatus repelling it. Electricians observe and can reproduce the fact; they do not understand it. The levitation of tables and human beings at spiritual seances can only be observed occasionally and cannot be reproduced at will—not by ordinary observers, at all events—but the fact has to be faced by reasonable men, and brought into relations with our general thinking. It is stupid to attempt an escape from the difficulty of not understanding it by declaring, in spite of the evidence, that the fact is not a fact.

When, therefore, theosophists learn from those among them in a position to become acquainted with the powers exercised by the adepts of occult science, that such persons can in the present day, as of old, modify the action of the force we call gravity, so as to levitate ordinarily heavy objects like masses of stone, there ought not to be any indignant revolt of the understanding against such a statement. As yet it is impossible to offer the ordinary reader direct evidence to that effect of a kind that is calculated to compel his belief. But the general situation, as I have shown, is such that any positive declaration of disbelief in the allegation can only be due to ignorance or stupidity. Therefore we who have what we hold to be trustworthy information in the matter may at least put it forward, very careless of scoffing, which, in view

of collateral knowledge now available, stands self-condemned as irrational. The adept custodians of that knowledge concerning the mysteries of Nature, which is filtering into the world at large by degrees as science advances, can and always have been able to control the attractions of matter in such a way as to alter the effective weight of heavy bodies at will. That is the whole explanation of the marvels of megalithic architecture. Working under the guidance and with the help of the adepts from Atlantis, the builders of Stonehenge and of the ancient "dolmen" altars found the enormous masses of stone they used light enough to be handled with facility. Clairvoyant observers of Stonehenge have seen the process of its construction going on. The pictures of its progress are all indelibly imprinted on the Memory of Nature: they are visible now as plainly as the actual transactions were visible for those who were present. And the vision shows us the enormous masses of the trilithons being raised to their places with the help of scaffoldings no more substantial in their character than would be used to-day in the erection of a brick cottage.

Of course, although I did not interrupt my narrative of the origin of the pyramids to say so, the great stones of which they are composed were treated in the same way as the materials of Stonehenge. The adepts who directed their construction facilitated the process by the partial levitation of the stones used. This is the simple, though in one way no doubt deeply mysterious, explanation of the old world monuments in which enormous masses of stone are employed. At the temple of Baalbec, in Syria, there are single stones built into the walls, each of which is calculated to weigh about 1500 tons. Preferring an explanation of such remains, which only seems reasonable, because it makes no appeal to forces and powers with which we are unacquainted, archæologists have hitherto been content to assume that, with an unlimited command of human labour, the builders of such temples as that of Baalbec may have been able to get their great stones

dragged along causeways on rollers, and may somehow have hoisted them up into their places with the help of inclined planes. Such hypotheses make larger drafts upon credulity really than those involved in the occult statement. They call upon us to believe that which is physically impossible; but the impossibility is acceptable because it is disguised in commonplace phraseology. Stonehenge and Baalbec really stand before us imperishable proofs that, in the age of their construction, whenever that may have been, the world was witness of an engineering which did not accomplish its triumphs by brute strength, but by the application of a finer knowledge than even modern engineering has as yet recovered. I have said that it was at a much later period than that at which the Atlantean adepts, who first left the perishing continent, took up their residence in Egypt, that those who settled in Western Europe set on foot the grand and simple spiritual worship which Stonehenge in the first instance was employed to subserve. It was at a much later period even than that at which the pyramids were erected. I do not know whether there was any long residence by Atlantean adepts in Western Europe prior to the introduction of their teaching among the people. Probably there was, but, at all events, it was near the final culmination of the great Atlantean continent's submergence, about 100,000 years ago from the present time, that the grey stones still standing on Salisbury Plain were first established in their places. Among the facts concerning them, which supporters of Fergusson's grotesque theory have to pass over very lightly, is one which relates to the geological character of the stones used. The outer circle and the stones of the great trilithons are of a composition that suggest their derivation from quarries in the neighbourhood. But the inner circle and the altar stone are of a totally different formation, of a kind which cannot be identified with any rockbeds in that part of England. Such stone is to be found in Cornwall, in Wales, and in Ireland, but nowhere nearer. So from one of these regions the

materials of the inner circle must certainly have been brought. Reasoning of the kind that is never shocked by an absurdity, but is only offended by the suggestion that modern knowledge does not embrace all the capacities of Nature, is content complacently to suppose that the Stonehenge builders brought the massive materials in question across many hundred miles of primeval forest-covered country, or by sea—all for the sake of a battle memorial on Salisbury Plain—when abundant stone, just as good and durable, was to be had in the neighbourhood. The nature of the Stonehenge materials would be alone enough to make the Arthurian theory ridiculous, even if it would bear consideration along other lines of attack. For the purposes of a mystic temple, however, everyone who has a glimmering of occult knowledge will apprehend that there may have been considerations connected with those subtle attributes of different kinds of stone, which occultists generally call their magnetism, that would prescribe the employment of more than one kind.

The worship of the early Druids, to give that name to the occult teachers who made Stonehenge their headquarters, was grandiose and simple. There were processions and chaunts and symbolical ceremonies associated with astronomical events, especially with the rising of the sun on midsummer day, when great crowds of people assembled to witness the sun's rays, at the moment of his rising, shoot through an opening opposite to the altar, and illuminate the sacred stone. There were no unholy sacrifices offered on the altar in those days, and the only external ceremony of a sacrificial nature that took place had to do with a libation of milk that was poured over the stone. In accordance with the elaborate symbolism of early occult rites, a great deal of importance was attached to the serpent as an emblem of multifarious significance, and as the adept Druids could easily control these creatures, an actual living serpent was made to glide up into the altar stone at the sunrise ceremony, and lap the milk. There is some truth, but much more mis-

conception, in prevailing notions concerning what is called the "Serpent Worship" of olden times. The failure of modern students of religion to discriminate between worship and the use of symbols has had to do with graver misconceptions even than those which have entangled the commonplace interpretations of serpent worship.

The chief Druid of the Stonehenge ceremonies in the days of the pure worship in the beginning used to march in some of the processions with a live serpent round his neck. Later on, when the adept influence was no longer present—many millenniums later—the degraded chiefs of the Druid decadence used to keep up the old tradition in so far as it lay in them to do so, but for prudential reasons wore a *dead* serpent,—a more fitting emblem than they supposed of the state of the faith they represented. Lower and lower its practices became debased, until the once sacred altar stone was deluged no longer with milk, but with the blood of human victims, and this was the only sort of Druid worship, of which, through Roman historians, we have any written records. How did it happen that so terrible a change came on? The age apparently, as far as ancient Britain was concerned, was not sufficiently advanced to provide the earlier adepts with a continuous line of successors. Eventually, it is to be presumed, one by one, no doubt, the earlier adepts ceased to incarnate among the people they could not lead on to the path of true spiritual progress. In Egypt the graft they planted took a firm hold of the stock to which it was attached. In Britain it did not, and thus, while Egypt remained to a comparatively recent period a land of high civilisation, and one of the principal centres of fifth-race adeptship, Britain relapsed back into barbarism. Up to only a few thousand years before the Roman conquest it remained still faintly tinged with the remote traditions of its vanishing civilisation, then it sank to its lowest condition of decay before the commencement of its modern cycle of progress within the historic period.

This sweeping survey of a past that will be more fully recalled, no doubt, in progress of time, as the world learns better to appreciate the inner faculties of man—slight and sketchy though it be, has only been rendered possible by much patient gleaning on my part, opportunities being made use of as they arose. It is possible at a later date that I may be able to fill up some details, but I hope the imperfect suggestions of this paper may meanwhile be accepted as contributing in some measure to show how imperatively necessary it is to bring the Atlantean origin of all civilisations belonging to our age into the scheme of our thinking if we are to hope for anything resembling a correct interpretation of the ancient world.