

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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THE GIFT OF THE MAKARAS

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Man will rebecome the *free* Titan of old, but not before cyclic evolution has re-established the broken harmony between the two natures—the terrestrial and the divine; after which he becomes impermeable to the lower titanic forces, invulnerable in his personality, and immortal in his individuality, which cannot happen before every animal element is eliminated from his nature.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 422

HUMAN Evolution has a long past—longer than modern science, though it has pushed back the age of man considerably, would admit. Man is not descended from the ape, nor did civilization begin in savagery. Theosophy rejects all theories of evolution which look upon brain, body and matter as the producers of mind, soul and spirit. Assigning to thinking man the age of 18 million years, Theosophy traces the roots of human mind and self-consciousness to the sacrifices of a Celestial Hierarchy known by many names in the Hindu Puranas and other exoteric books. They are the mysterious beings that preside over the constellation Capricornus or Makara—beings about whom H.P.B.'s *Secret Doctrine* gives instruction more in the shape of hints than in detail.

These mind-born sons of Prajapati taught infant humanity its arts and sciences—agriculture, architecture, etc. They also

A Magazine Devoted to The Living of the Higher Life

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incarnated in the mindless men, *i.e.*, men in form but not in mind. The differences to be found in the human kingdom should be traced to this psychological phenomenon. The mindless men were entities of different grades of bodily sensitiveness, and each attracted to itself what it deserved. Just as there is fire locked up in a piece of wood which blazes into flame when struck by lightning, so also those mindless human forms carrying within themselves the fire of mind were touched by the Fire-Fathers, the Agnishwatta Pitris, and were lighted up into self-consciousness. The differences which arose after this process, divided humanity into groups. The incarnating entities themselves were of different degrees of intelligence.

In the beginning, immediately after the descent of these gods—the Fallen Angels of the Christian scriptures—the most advanced lived with the less advanced, teaching the latter, as said above. It was that Golden Age of the race when the whole of humanity was one family with one language and one religion. The elders tended and looked after the young, and selfishness and sorrow were unknown.

As ages rolled by and the less evolved members of the human family grew in intelligence, they were animated by the desires of the senses and the sense-organs and they became rebellious, like growing boys and girls who in their teens begin to think their fathers fools. This rebellion was itself but a Karmic reaction from previous action, about which much has been written in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*.

The Atlantean rebels were slaves to their own passion-nature. The powers of the lower self, Kama-Krodha-Lobha, the triad of passion-anger-greed, kept the embodied Spirit in a firm grip, and left it no scope to commune with the Father in Heaven, the Higher Divine Self. Thus arose in the human race intelligent, self-conscious entities who chose the path of vice and wickedness and led others astray.

Yet, all human beings carry within themselves, in however veiled a form at present, the Light of Wisdom and the Power of

Compassion which they owe to the Fire-Fathers, the mysterious Makaras. In the present-day gloom caused by strife, competition, greed and carnage, we wonder where that Wisdom and that Compassion are to be found. Are they not dead? Esoteric Philosophy teaches that they are not dead though they are deadened. The materialism of modern science and the degrading influence of dogmatic religion have put to sleep man's divine intuitions. The mission of Theosophy is to shake men out of the jogtrot of existence and make them claim their divine heritage.

We must arouse ourselves to recognize the truth that what we should fear is not another world war, not the food shortage, nor our own impoverishment. These fears are born of the disregard of the truth that unless we fight our own lust, wrath, greed, vanity, pride, concupiscence, there will be international wars, class struggles, family feuds. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 268):

The Third Race was pre-eminently the bright shadow, at first, of the gods, whom tradition exiles on Earth after the allegorical war in Heaven; which became still more allegorical on Earth, for it was the war between spirit and matter. This war will last till the inner and divine man adjusts his outer terrestrial self to his own spiritual nature. Till then the dark and fierce passions of the former will be at eternal feud with his master, the Divine Man. But the *animal* will be tamed one day, because its nature will be changed, and harmony will reign once more between the two as before the “Fall,” when even mortal man was *created* by the Elements and was not born.

How shall we adjust our outer terrestrial self to our own spiritual nature? By adequate knowledge of the terrestrial and the spiritual and by the perception that the corrupted nature of the former and the non-recognition of the latter are responsible for the disharmony between the two. If “the animal *will* be tamed one day,” why not make a serious and sincere attempt now, and accomplish the task in a speedier fashion? Why this obstinacy, almost amounting to perversity, in going the way of the animal?

The death and dissolution of the terrestrial, animal nature will

naturally occur if we succeed in gaining the active guidance of the Self within. *Isis Unveiled* (I, 39) helps us:

It is our decided impression and conviction, that to become a genuine spiritual entity...man must first *create* himself anew, so to speak—*i.e.*, thoroughly eliminate from his mind and spirit, not only the dominating influence of selfishness and other impurity, but also the infection of superstition and prejudice.

Let us resolve righteously. The strength to carry forward our resolves will come with knowledge, which is to be obtained through regular study of our divine nature and its celestial parents.

THE true ideas of the ancient philosophy relieve us of two misconceptions: one, the idea that there is a revengeful God who punishes us for those things that we are unable to prevent ourselves from doing; and second, the idea of a Devil to whom we are consigned if we do not follow the lines that some people have laid down for us. A knowledge of Theosophy enables us to understand that there never was any “creation,” in the sense of making something out of nothing; but that everything—every being of every kind—has *evolved*, and is still evolving. The beings below us are evolving to our estate, where the beings, now evolved so far beyond us, some time in the distant past went through a similar stage. All beings are what they are through evolution from within outwards, that evolution proceeding under Law.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

LIVING THE HIGHER LIFE

MADAME Blavatsky quotes the Master in the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine* (p. 167): “Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally.” It is rather difficult to lead the life necessary in the true sense, but that is the only way to acquire soul-wisdom.

What is wrong with our world? Humanity is groaning under a heavy burden of physical ailments, mental agony, economic stress, political slavery, religious exploitation. Why? This question is asked by all and is answered in a hundred different ways by different types of people to suit their cherished notions or to serve their own interests, but as they look not to the soul of things, as they do not penetrate to the very root cause, their answers and remedies have not been effective and have not brought a lasting benefit to mankind in general. Each one looks at life from his own point of view, which is different from all others; and, therefore, life, instead of being unified, is divided into compartments and departments that upset the harmonious rhythm of the whole.

The all-important possession of an athlete is his physical, muscular strength, to develop and preserve which he spends his time, energy and money, thinking nought of the necessity of mind-training or soul-culture.

To a scientist, his brain and his laboratory apparatus, with which he can experiment and evolve new theories, are of prime necessity. The soul does not exist for him, for he believes man to be a by-product of physical nature, and life to flicker away at death like a candle and cease to exist.

To a speculative philosopher, his most cherished asset is his mind, through which he reasons and argues about the absolute and the manifested, the transcendental and the immanent aspects of God or Deity, but it is rarely that he attempts to make a practical application of the philosophy.

To a *Hatha-yogi*, life is but a matter of rags and ashes, breathing exercises and postures and tortured limbs. With a blank mind and

neglectful of his duties, he spends his hours in a fruitless pursuit.

To a medium, his passive, nervous, psychic temperament counts the most. Morally and mentally weak, his one object in life is to dabble in necromancy.

And, similarly, to a politician his party politics, to a financier his stocks and shares, to a priest his rites and rituals matter most, and thus examples can be multiplied of many, many types of people, all living their lives in a one-sided, unharmonious and unbalanced manner. And besides these, there are the masses of mankind who live in a humdrum way, now in joy and now in sorrow, knowing not why they live, from where they have come and whither they are moving!

Students of Theosophy have been given definite principles to follow and to live up to. The truth about God-Law-Evolution forms the basis of their thoughts, words and deeds, and therefore to them is given the injunction to lead the life necessary. Theosophy teaches that man is a complex being, and as such he has to take into account all the aspects of his own nature, visible and invisible, mortal and immortal, giving to each its due, taking from each its due, and thus alone can he become a worthy unit in the harmonious working of the whole cosmos.

Cosmic energy is free; sunlight and moonlight are free; the air and the rain are free; universal mind is free; the omnipotent, omniscient spirit is free. Nature gives us freely in all her bounty, but to unveil her mysteries and to utilize her gifts man needs the wisdom provided in the great philosophy of Theosophy. Man is responsible to those above as to those below him in this vast cosmos, and he is here on earth to fulfil this duty or *dharma*. This is leading the life necessary.

The harmonious relationship of the seven types of lives and the harmonious blending of those seven with the One from which they all emanated—that comprises the science and the art of living. To express the light of the One through the composite seven is divine magic. Thus man can re-create himself and become a living god in a living human temple, with divine possessions which he

can share with all, with immortal powers with which he can uplift all, with eternal peace which he can radiate on all. This is to lead the life necessary.

In thought, the life of purity; in words, the life of truth; in deeds, the life of consecration; in time, to live in the eternal now; in consciousness, to live in the “Hall of Wisdom”; ever keeping the wheel of the Good Law rhythmically in motion, in tune with the Infinite—this is to lead the life necessary.

With love immortal, with thought, word and act harmonized, with patience sweet, ever rising above the pairs of opposites, using dauntless energy to come out of the mire of lies terrestrial, attaining *Dhyana* by entering the realm of Sat eternal, and living the life of compassion absolute—this is leading the life necessary.

But how can mortal man suddenly attain to this stage? By one method and one only, as pointed out by all the great Teachers. By giving up the life of wants, by forgetting about rights and privileges and by living the life of duty, duty to Humanity, duty to the great Sages, duty to the Higher Self. It needs a change of attitude, which can be gradually cultivated, a change from within, without. What is to be expected is not spectacular results, but a steady, healthy growth towards good, leading to better and the best.

How can the three basic ideas of God-Law-Evolution be used in everyday life? The concept of God as an omnipotent, omnipresent Principle of Divine Life, a ray of which is in every human heart, brings to us the first important lesson that each one is divine in origin, is eternal and immortal, above the body and the mind, above the feelings and emotions, which form mortal man. If all have a common root, then the second lesson we learn is that all have to be looked upon as divine fragments, as expressions of that one, though outwardly different. This kills out the sense of separateness by at once indicating that universal brotherhood is a fact, and helps us to act for and as the Self of all creatures. The love of God manifests in the service of our fellow beings, however lowly, and that is the third lesson to be learnt. “The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that

which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE” (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 76). The distinctions of castes and creeds, religions and races, the high and the low, drop away; life is lived for all and for the Whole. Then, naturally, actions become consecrated, because they are not motivated by thought of one's own gain, and drudgery becomes divine, giving a new value to the act; a higher concept of duty prevails, and that is the fourth lesson to be learnt and practised and perfected. The change of inner condition brings about a complete change in the individual and corporate life. A new understanding dawns, new vistas open, and man begins to live, not for himself, but for the world. This is leading the life necessary.

The second great concept is Law, a clear understanding of which is very helpful in living the life. It is ordinarily understood that God creates his laws. Theosophically, God and Law are the same. This Law has different aspects: it is the law of cause and effect, the law of cycles in the whole of nature, but in man it also becomes the law of moral retribution, the law of responsibility. It is not at all difficult to observe the operation of this law in the ebb and flow of the tides, in the waxing and waning of the moon, in the seasons, etc.; but its working in and through the minds and hearts of men is not perceived. When the perception awakens, one begins to lead the life necessary. Everyone goes through the same days and nights, yet each colours them differently, by his own mental and moral attitude. What type of causes are sown during the day and how the effects are received depends very much on the correct understanding of the law. It does not reward or punish; it adjusts. Life is an opportunity for adjustment, and to face that adjustment wisely is to lead the life necessary. Similarly, sleep is a common phenomenon, but the quality of sleep very much differs with each individual, depending upon the life lived during the day as well as upon the nature of that individual. Here the law of cause and effect becomes the law of moral retribution. To help nature and work on with her is the first lesson to be learnt; it means that the harmony of nature ought not to be disturbed. The law moves rhythmically,

and to work against the law is to create a disturbance. Again Madame Blavatsky quotes the Master in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 643): “Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through.” There are also periods of mental and moral light and darkness; they, too, return cyclically and civilizations rise and fall according to the life lived by the individuals. To work with the law, to take advantage of the cycles, to generate right causes, means leading the life necessary.

And the third side of the triangle, evolution, means unfolding from within, unfolding the powers and potencies of the spirit through an appropriate vehicle. To progress onward, to move forward, is the law of life in the whole of nature. Man, because of his choice, goes forward and backward, now in the right direction and then in the wrong. His senses, desires, passions act as obstacles to his progress and drag him down. To realize that he is an eternal pilgrim going through the circle of necessity, rising or falling according to his own choices—this is the first lesson to be learnt. There are no gifts and privileges in that journey except those one wins for oneself through one's own right efforts—this is the second lesson. To find out ways and means to reach perfection is to lead the life necessary. From man to super-man is one upward climb. The great Elder Brothers have reached the Nirvanic heights, but have left their footprints behind for us to follow. To follow them in true faith, without turning to the right or to the left, is to lead the life necessary. The circle of necessity is begun by each divine spark, Atma-Buddhi, non-self-consciously. At the end of the journey, that spark regains its purity and wisdom with full self-consciousness. It has earned for itself the peace and the bliss of *Nirvana*, but out of pity and compassion it chooses the path of woe and prefers to live in the world to help suffering, orphan humanity. To prepare ourselves for that stage, in silence and secrecy, is to lead the life necessary.

LESSONS DREAMS TEACH

WE experience dreams when we fall asleep every night. It is so common an occurrence that we hardly pay any attention to it. Dreams have very important lessons to teach us, but we scarcely heed them. The three planes of human life—waking, dreaming and deep sleep—contain the key to the deepest mystery of man, which the ancients well understood. The *Upanishads* contain important expositions on the three planes of human life, and draw lessons from them leading to most sublime truths of the psychological mysteries of man. In the Old Testament there are numerous references to dreams. In the *Book of Job* it is said that in the dreams and visions of the night, man is instructed. The first step on the Path of *Atma Vidya*, the Science of the Soul, the Science of all sciences, is a careful and a thorough study of the three states of our existence.

Modern science has paid superficial attention to this important phenomenon. It is considered to be of little consequence, because mind is taken to be the secondary effect of electro-biomolecular activity of the brain, not independent of the body, and doomed to disappear like a puff of steam after the death of the body.

The basic premise of the ancient science of psychology, on the other hand, is that mind is independent of body and not a product of physical evolution. It is a ray of the Universal Mind, evolving through countless reincarnations under Karmic Law; and this higher godly *Manas* is only partially incarnate as the lower mind-being, the mortal man. Hence, man is a dual mind-being: higher immortal and lower mortal; good and evil, wise and foolish. It is this basic truth that underlies the three planes of human life—waking, dream, and dreamless sleep—and it contains the key to the mysteries of the complex nature of man.

Even ordinary, chaotic, meaningless dreams teach us many lessons, if we only pay careful attention to them. The first lesson even ordinary dreams teach us is the fact that the sensorium is not in the physical body but independent of it. We see, hear, smell,

taste and touch in the dream state—when the body is fast asleep, and when senses and most part of the brain are in abeyance—as vividly as when we are awake. *Linga Sarira* or the Astral Body is the real seat of the sensorium.

The second lesson dreams teach is the fact that the inner self is independent of the body, as we experience all the emotions and mental states when the body is fast asleep, oblivious of the external world. When from the dream state he passes into the deep sleep or *Shushupti* state, the personal man is wholly unconscious of his existence. When he returns to the waking state through the dream state, he does not lose his self-identity in spite of all these transformations. He feels sure that he was the same self in the waking life, during dream experiences, and also during the state of deep sleep—the state of apparent oblivion. The deep sleep state, in fact, refreshes him with new energy, deep peace, inner joy and contentment, when he awakes in the morning. This would not be the case were the deep sleep state an oblivion of self. It is noteworthy that the unchanging self-identity runs like an unbroken thread through all the myriad experiences of the three states, and remains the same Self. This supports the proposition of ancient psychology that Self or Ego is distinct from and unaffected by myriads of sensations and experiences it undergoes as it cycles through the three planes of being; naught adheres to the Self. It is the Perceiver of them all, but “stands on high unaffected,” *Kutastha*.

Theosophy teaches that when the deep sleep state is reached, after the dream state, the Ego regains temporarily its original freedom, a high spiritual state, full of knowledge and bliss, because the Ego-Manas is a son of the Universal Mind or *Mahat*. In *The Voice of the Silence* the deep sleep state is called the Hall of Wisdom wherein the Ego feeds on ambrosia and revels in its celestial freedom.

After enjoying the freedom, when the time comes for waking, the Ego returns from its celestial home to its bodily prison. It can only return by the gate of the dream state. As it is beginning to assume the bodily apparatus, the lower brain-mind begins to awaken

in the dream state and sees for a time the activity of its Divine Parent, the Ego. The Ego in turn tries to impress the lower mind with its knowledge and wisdom—of past, present and future. But the spiritual impressions so received are lost, as they get mixed up with the chaotic impressions of the waking experiences of the lower mind which troop into the dream state, and we wake up none the wiser. Thus spiritual knowledge of the Ego is lost every time we wake up in the morning, because we have made our mind and brain coarse and unfit for the reception of superfine spiritual impressions of the Divine Ego.

Our waking life has effect on dream life, and *vice versa*. If the waking life is full of mere personal concerns of selfish pursuits and lower desires, as is normally the case with the majority of people, the dream life is polluted with impure lower impressions. To receive benefits from our Divine Parent Ego in the dream state and to bring them back to the waking state, the latter has to be kept clean and pure. This means, performing duties dispassionately, as sacrifices to the God within, “with calmness ever present,” thus elevating and ennobling our lives. The brain-mind so purified and becalmed enters the dream state fit to receive and retain the impressions of the Higher Ego, which can be brought back more or less intact to the waking life for the benefit of our fellow-men and ourselves. There are any number of instances of high-minded men and women receiving knowledge and illumination through dreams. When the lower man is sufficiently purified and attuned to the Ego within, he will receive illumination and visions of truth in dreams. Very pure and holy men have been so inspired even during the waking state.

HAVE you had a kindness shown? Pass it on.

—HENRY BURTON

THE IMPORTANCE OF SMALL THINGS

Remember it is the little things the work is done through.

—W. Q. JUDGE

WE are often told to watch our virtues, for our vices are already obvious and known to us. Hidden in any virtue is the tiny speck of poison that turns it into a vice. Even almost at the end of our journey through lives it is but “one single thought” about the past that will drag us down.

In these days of intricate machinery it is not difficult to understand the importance of the minute. We are often reminded of the old saying that the strength of a chain depends on the strength of each link; in other words, that it depends on the weakness of a single link.

To apply this idea is, however, very difficult. Mr. Judge tells us, for instance, to “use with care those living messengers called words,” and some examples of this come to mind. The first object of the Theosophical Movement was stated by H.P.B. to be the formation of “the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.” Students, however, sometimes speak of “a nucleus” instead of “*the* nucleus.” Is there any difference between the two? A nucleus implies that there are other nuclei; *the* nucleus implies that there is only one. That nucleus must, therefore, be based on TRUTH, and TRUTH is one.

The other example that comes to mind is what is said in the Third Fundamental Proposition, that each being is “checked by *its* Karma.” Of course we are checked by Karma, but the emphasis here is on the fact that it is our own actions, or our refraining from actions, in the past that check our efforts today. This is a more potent thought for us to have.

Perhaps we might refer to still another example. We say, “I am the Ego,” and Krishna says, “I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings.” Are we, then, Krishna? The answer, we know, is both “yes” and “no.” It is just this slipshod reading and thinking

that has made us miss one of the essential teachings of Theosophy as brought out in *The Key to Theosophy* (p. 34):

We distinguish between the simple fact of self-consciousness, the simple feeling that “I am I,” and the complex thought that “I am Mr. Smith” or “Mrs. Brown.” “Mr. Smith” really means a long series of daily experiences strung together by the thread of memory, and forming what Mr. Smith calls “himself.” But none of these “experiences” are really the “I” or the Ego, nor do they give “Mr. Smith” the feeling that he is himself, for he forgets the greater part of his daily experiences, and they produce the feeling of *Egoity* in him only while they last....

It is interesting to note in this extract that “I am I” is a “simple feeling,” whereas “I am Mr. Smith” is a “complex thought.” Perhaps a meditation on this idea would be worthwhile.

There is another side to this effort of ours to emphasize accuracy; it may lead us into pettifogging criticism. Here we have another instance of a virtue merging into a vice by small degrees. We can get into the habit of losing sight of the forest while we see only one tree!

How often do we emphasize impersonality and forget H.P.B.'s injunction “to rather sin through exaggerated praise than through too little appreciation of one's neighbour's efforts” (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 250). Many a budding writer or speaker has been put off from making further effort by the stony silence of others after his efforts, whereas genuine sympathy and encouragement might have been the very things he needed.

With regard to actions, how often have we been warned that heedless actions, even seemingly inconsequential actions, can cause catastrophes! We know of how a little neglect may breed mischief:

For the want of a nail the shoe was lost,
 For the want of a shoe the horse was lost,
 For the want of a horse the rider was lost,
 For the want of a rider the battle was lost,
 For the want of a battle the kingdom was lost —
 And all for the want of a horseshoe nail.

An action has to be judged by the reaction of the environment in which it is performed. That environment implies not only a place, but also all those affected by the action, and as every person differs from the others, the same word or action will produce different effects on different persons. The environment is not necessarily only of today, for today makes the Karma of tomorrow, next incarnation, lives ahead. Mr. Judge puts this well in *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Book II, Letter II: “The future, then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment, so we shift the future up or down for good or ill.” And in Letter VI he wrote: “It is the small rift in the lute that destroys it; in human history small and unexpected events alter the destiny of nations.”

So let us watch for the small things in life. Let us not leave undone what should be done, nor do what should not be done; and more than anything, let us not do what is not necessary, for by doing the unnecessary we set in motion a new action which will not be harmonious. This is true of actions (the result of feeling-thought), as also of feelings (the result of thought-action), and of thoughts (the result of our entanglement in the mass of humanity and in Nature, of which we are a part). We have to do, in fact, *our* duty, in its deepest aspect, and not undertake something which is not our duty or is the duty of another; and that duty has to be performed with all the care and attention we can muster, for by carelessness we start a cycle of disharmony in our already disharmonious world.

WHOEVER has in his heart even so much as a rice grain of pride,
 cannot enter into Paradise.

—MUHAMMAD

UNDERSTANDING GOOD AND EVIL

THERE is no difficulty in recognizing the fact that good and evil exist within and without us, and that in our cycle evil appears to predominate over the good. It is so on all sides. It is likewise obvious that some means have to be found to control the evil and bring out the good. A thousand remedies are suggested, but the problem will not be solved until a clear perception is gained of how evil springs up and flowers into what it now is, and how human beings with their wrong morals and ways of living contribute to the evil in the world.

So our first task is to find the origin of evil. A clear perception of what we call evil shows that it is the result of a seed which has its natural place in the scheme of things. Also, that which we call good must be understood in a proper fashion. Failure to grasp these concepts has made some fall into the error of believing that there is nothing wrong about indulgence in evil; for, they argue, since God is everywhere and is responsible for all things, we shall be with God, no matter what we do. It is therefore necessary to note what H.P.B. writes in *The Secret Doctrine* regarding the origin of good and evil:

Archaic philosophy, recognizing neither Good nor Evil as a fundamental or independent power, but starting from the Absolute ALL (Universal Perfection eternally), traced both through the course of natural evolution to pure Light condensing gradually into form, hence becoming Matter or Evil. (I, 73)

The expression “pure Light condensing gradually into form” suggests a concretization of Light. Light and darkness thus represent good and evil, and are rooted in the One Absolute. We ought, therefore, at once to get rid of the idea that there is a God who creates good, and a Devil who creates evil. Once that we have grasped the fundamental metaphysical idea as given in the above quotation, we will be able to find for ourselves the remedy for the evil in us and in nature.

The Absolute, Parabrahm, is *nirguna* (attributeless). It is

qualified neither by light nor by darkness, neither by Spirit nor by Matter, but is the container of all. Out of this ever-unknowable, Light emanates as the first manifestation, and that Light casts no shadow. It is pure luminosity. From it emanates that which we may call Life. Thus Light and Life are the first manifestations within the attributeless eternal and absolute background. Light is thus seen to concretize progressively, and as it continues its work of emanation, life emerges. The action of Light on Life on this side of manifestation casts a shadow, and this is the root of Evil.

In the *Gita*, we are given two aspects of Krishna, the One Self: the manifested and the unmanifested. “I established this whole Universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate.” The centre of Light rises from the background of the Absolute. This emanates the “superior nature” of Krishna, *Para Prakriti*, spoken of in the seventh chapter of the *Gita* as that which gives rise to and sustains the universe. Krishna, then, speaking of his “inferior nature,” *Apara Prakriti*, calls it the root of matter, and associated with it are the three *gunas* (attributes)—*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

What we call “good” comes from the superior nature of Krishna, and what we call “evil” comes from the inferior nature with its three attributes. Krishna says that his inferior nature consists of “earth, water, fire, air, and akasa, Manas, Buddhi, and Ahankara.” From this arises all that we call evil. This needs to be understood. Krishna's superior nature is the Knower, the indwelling Spirit, “the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings.” The thirteenth chapter of the *Gita* carries further this division between the higher and the lower, *kshetra* and *kshetrajna*, *prakriti* and *purusha*, the perishable and the imperishable that go to make up the whole of manifestation and all beings of whatever kind. As evolution proceeds, the predominance of *prakriti* (matter) over *purusha* (spirit) increases the aggregate of that which we ordinarily call evil. This aspect of evil arises under the law of necessity, because of the contrast between spirit and its shadow—matter. In her *Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. wrote:

Everywhere the speculations of the Kabalists treat of Evil as a FORCE, which is antagonistic, but at the same time essential, to Good, as giving it vitality and existence, which it could never have otherwise. There would be no *life* possible (in the *Mayavic* sense) without *Death*, nor regeneration and reconstruction without destruction. Plants would perish in eternal sunlight, and so would man, who would become an automaton without the exercise of his free will and aspirations after that sunlight, which would lose its being and value for him had he nothing but light. Good is infinite and eternal only in the eternally concealed from us, and this is why we imagine it eternal. On the manifested planes, one equilibrates the other. (I, 413-14)

Perfection, to be fully such, must be born out of imperfection, the *incorruptible* must grow out of the corruptible, having the latter as its vehicle and basis and contrast. Absolute light is absolute darkness, and *vice versa*.... Good and Evil are twins, the progeny of Space and Time, under the sway of Maya. Separate them, by cutting off one from the other, and they will both die. Neither exists *per se*, since each has to be generated and created out of the other, in order to come into being; both must be known and appreciated before becoming objects of perception, hence, in mortal mind, they must be divided. (II, 95-96)

What happens in the lower kingdoms, where *prakriti* unhindered is at work, is different from what happens within human beings. Man alone is capable of producing *unnatural* evil—that which need not be, which is not intended in the scheme of things. This is because man will not follow the pattern given to him and plainly visible in nature. “*Light and darkness* are the world's eternal ways.” The evils seen in the lower kingdoms of Nature are not deliberate, but natural, as, for instance, one animal preying upon another; but, we have a different proposition when we consider human beings. Man has the power of choice and can deal with the three qualities or aspects of nature in himself and around him. No animal is capable of doing this; according to the *guna* (natural quality) predominating in it, it acts naturally. We human beings

have the power to readjust and balance the three *gunas* and proceed from *tamas* to *rajas*, and from *rajas* to *sattva*, and beyond *sattva* to the superior nature which is within each one of us. Let us not, therefore, accept the mistaken thinking of false philosophers who give out that we inherit our evil from Krishna along with everything else. Much of the evil that exists in the human kingdom today comes from ourselves. It takes a human being to produce wine out of grapes; it does not come of itself—and that is the difference. It is important for us to realize individually and collectively that two-thirds of our evil is caused by ourselves.

It is sometimes argued: “If evolution means the gaining of experience, then why not do evil to experience the result?” This is a most dangerous course to follow. The more we indulge in evil, the more difficult it becomes to eradicate it, and for the evil-doer eventually there cannot be anything but sorrow and suffering. “It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart,” says *The Voice of the Silence*. Evolution proceeds in non-self-conscious kingdoms in harmonious and smooth ways, with no kind of hindrance, but, when we come to man we see that the cycles of nature are hindered, and new cycles come into existence, resulting in evil.

The passage from *The Secret Doctrine* quoted earlier speaks of pure light condensing gradually into form. The astral light is not this real light; it is the illusive radiance which dazzles us. We have to seek for the archetypal universe where the true light of *Daivi-prakriti*, of pure *akasha*, ever shines. The astral light is the invisible region that surrounds our globe, and from it radiates on humanity every evil influence. It is sometimes called the Serpent—the Tempter. But, says H.P.B.,

why not add that the Astral Light gives out nothing but what it has received; that it is the great terrestrial crucible, in which the vile emanations of the earth (moral and physical) upon which the Astral Light is fed, are all converted into their subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming epidemics—moral, psychic and physical. (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

So man by his free will impresses the astral light with self-conscious actions and adds to the evil in the world, and therefrom are produced reactions upon him. Krishna tells Arjuna to take possession, firm possession, of his own lower nature. This puzzles Arjuna and he asks how it is possible for one to do so; for, though he wants to eschew evil, yet at times he seems to be led into it “seemingly against his will and as if constrained by some secret force.” Man has bound himself hand and foot to his past actions. Recognizing the astral light as the recorder of all our acts, we have to free ourselves from its evil influence—through knowledge, understanding, dispassion and diligence in the right performance of our natural duties, without caring for the results.

The Great Buddha has pointed to this truth in another way—in his exposition of the Four Noble Truths which lead to sorrow's ceasing and to emancipation. If we do not arouse in ourselves the desire for the higher life, then it is the desire for the lower that will continue to predominate and will eventually lead to destruction.

WHEN someone speaks to you curtly, disregards what you say, performs what seems to be a thoughtless gesture or even an outright evil act, think to yourself, “If I were that person and had endured the same trials, borne the same heartbreaks, had the same parents, and so on, I probably would have done or said the same thing.” We are not privy to the stories behind people's actions, so we should be patient with others and suspend our judgement of them, recognizing the limits of our understanding....When people do not act as you would wish them to, exercise the muscle of your good nature by shrugging your shoulders and saying to yourself, “Oh well.” Then let the incident go.

—EPICTETUS

MAN'S HERITAGE

WHAT can man's heritage be except the sum total of all that has been known and experienced by him from time immemorial—*i.e.*, the accumulated Wisdom of the ages?

But man is born into a civilization which, though heir to that accumulated Wisdom, has forgotten it or covered it over with dross, and he does not know his real heritage. Therefore it is that throughout history and legend we read of great teachers, philosophers, leaders of men and others who reiterate the old knowledge which percolates through the dross, so that those who will can avail themselves of their inheritance.

Every man has, therefore, two types of inheritance: one pertaining to the time and the clime in which he is born, and the other pertaining to the accumulated Wisdom of the ages.

But he has also a third inheritance: “He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed.” That is, each one comes to reap the effects of what he has done in past births. His character is such an effect, his knowledge and experience are such effects. As life follows life, he builds in the present for the future.

If we can understand these inheritances in our lives we shall have made considerable progress in understanding life and ourselves. This is one of the purposes of Theosophy, to awaken in each one the knowledge of these aspects of our heritage, to point to the knowledge gained in our own day, to refer to the greater heritage embodied for us in the sacred books of the past, the essence of which has been and still is being reiterated by those great of soul who have made that knowledge their own.

One important point comes out as we think on these things, namely, that though Humanity seems an “orphan,” it has “never been without a friend.” What are such characters as Krishna, the Buddha, the Christ, and other extraordinary men of power and compassion who have worked openly or secretly, but such “friends”? Though we may and do miss the vitality of their physical presence, we can benefit by the vitality of their teachings if we

will. These teachers and benefactors of mankind but taught the same “exhaustless doctrine” of which Krishna speaks in the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

The fundamental question asked by each thinking man at some time or other is, What is the meaning of life? This leads to the query, Why do we take birth? What is the prime source or mover of it all? The answers to these questions are to be found in our day and generation in the writings of Madame H. P. Blavatsky, for it is the same “exhaustless doctrine” that she was taught and has recorded for our benefit. Known as Theosophy today, it gives us what we need for our time and era, but, as with other precepts down the ages, it has been covered over with dross, so that much going under that name is not the Theosophy taught by her.

THERE is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not just the Hindu religion, but the *religion* which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies....

True religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. Religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil.

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man, for instance, cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God on his side.

—GANDHIJI

MAN—A LITTLE UNIVERSE

IN his article “Universal Applications of Doctrine” (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 3*), Mr. Judge reiterates the teaching of the hermetic philosophy that “man is a copy of the greater universe.” We are fairly familiar with this idea, but in the following words—“He is a little universe in himself, governed by the same laws as the great one, and in the small proportions of a human being showing all those greater laws in operation, only reduced in time or sweep”—we have the former statement brought to life, as it were, and it becomes practical and useful. We often talk of universal laws and of the sevenfold universe, but we fail to see that all this is reflected *in ourselves*. Study of the wider universe takes us away from self-centredness, but it is also necessary for us to study ourselves, the little universe, in order to understand that greater universe. If, therefore, all the universal laws are at work within us, that is where we must turn to learn about them.

Starting with the definition of the “Monad,” we read in *The Theosophical Glossary*:

In Occultism it often means the unified triad, Atma-Buddhi-Manas, or the duad, Atma-Buddhi, that immortal part of man which reincarnates in the lower kingdoms, and gradually progresses through them to Man and then to the final goal—Nirvana.

Though H.P.B. asks us to be metaphysically-minded when speaking of Monads or Monad, we have to see that, as Mr. Judge wrote in “The Synthesis of Occult Science” (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 3*), “Every Monad that is enclosed in a form, and hence limited by matter, becomes conscious on its own plane and in its own degree.” Therefore, the atom is a Monad, every form is a Monad, and, though the degree of consciousness varies, yet all are one, for Nature must be regarded

as one complete whole, and so the student of occultism may stand at either point of observation. He may from the standpoint of Nature's wholeness and completeness follow the process of

segregation and differentiation to the minutest atom conditioned in space and time; or, from the phenomenal display of the atom, he may reach forward and upward till the atom becomes an integral part of cosmos, involved in the universal harmony of creation.

Just as the atom is an integral part of the cosmos, so it becomes essential for us to grasp that we, too, are an integral part of the cosmos.

As H.P.B. says in *Transactions*:

He who would be an occultist must not separate either himself or anything else from the rest of creation or *non-creation*....He must think of himself as an infinitesimal something, not even as an individual atom, but as a part of the world-atoms as a whole, or become an illusion, a nobody, and vanish like a breath leaving no trace behind.

If all is one, and yet there are many states of matter, many states of consciousness and the evolution of many forms, how can we find universal law operating in us?

We are sufficiently familiar with the laws of evolution working up to the human kingdom, and it is because we fail to grasp the difference between man and the animal that we are muddled in our thinking and in our application of the laws of human evolution. We fail to grasp that though there are different degrees of awareness or of consciousness operating throughout, yet in every atom are all the powers of the One. These powers are either latent or active. The object of evolution is to activate that which is latent. If this be so, we have to find out what is the next step for us, what latent power in us has to become active. As Mr. Judge wrote in "The Synthesis of Occult Science":

When...the Monad has passed through the form of the animal ego, involved and unfolded the human form, the higher triad of principles awakens from the sleep of ages and overshadowed by the "Manasa-putra" and *built into* its essence and substance.

We, as human beings, have, therefore, to think of the higher

triad, the Atma-Buddhi-Manas. We know that Atma is everywhere. But what *is* Atma? It is not enough to say that it is "Spirit." We need to think of it as forming a triad with Buddhi and Manas. Evolution is the bringing down of divine or cosmic ideas on to the plane of denser matter, and the agent for this is the mind.

The Manasic or mind principle is cosmic and universal. It is the creator of all forms, and the basis of all law in nature. It is still in the process of development in us. The danger facing us at present, as Mr. Judge wrote in the same article, is that "self-consciousness, which from the animal plane looking upwards is the beginning of perfection, from the divine plane looking downward is the perfection of selfishness and the curse of separateness." It is therefore incumbent on us to learn more about the development of mind in us.

Mind, we are told, "is the latent or active potentiality of *Cosmic Ideation*, the essence of every form, the basis of every law, the potency of every principle in the universe," and we have still to see the practical aspect of this. Mr. Judge continues: "Human thought is the reflection or reproduction in the realm of man's consciousness of these forms, laws, and principles."

Our work is, therefore, with the mind, especially mind as the "conscious principle of the Monad." Our duty is to use the mind with understanding of its place in the scheme of things, that is, we have to take this centre of consciousness from the animal in us to the human in us, and then from the selfishness of the human-animal to the unselfishness and universality of the divine.

To understand this as a practical rather than a theoretical proposition, we have to familiarize ourselves with the idea that

as the dawn of humanity illumines the animal plane, and as a guiding star lures the Monad to higher consciousness, so the dawn of divinity illumines the human plane, luring the monad to the supra-human plane of consciousness.

To make use of this idea, it is necessary to understand that when the Monad involves into matter and unfolds the human form, "the higher triad of principles awakens from the sleep of ages."

The fact that the animal-man is built into and overshadowed by the essence and substance of the *Manasa-putra* makes of man the “vehicle of a fully developed *Monad*, self-conscious and deliberately following its own line of progress”—a very different line of evolution from that of the insect, and even the higher animal, in which the higher triad of principles is absolutely dormant.

We read in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 273):

...the evolution of Spirit into matter could never have been achieved, nor would it have received its first impulse, had not the bright Spirits sacrificed their own respective super-ethereal essences to animate the man of clay, by endowing each of his inner principles with a portion, or rather, a reflection of that essence.

We owe all we are, therefore, to this higher influence. But we also learn of the degradation into which man fell by reason of possessing the creative power.

No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, than he felt himself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his *inner* God, each felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the “Sons of Light.” Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the slaves of Matter. From “Sons of Light and Wisdom” they ended by becoming the “Sons of Darkness.” They had fallen in the battle of mortal life with Life immortal, and all those so fallen became the seed of the future generations of Atlanteans. (*S.D.*, II, 272)

The tragedy appears worse when we remember that

the Demon of Pride, Lust, Rebellion, and Hatred, has never had *any being before* the appearance of physical conscious man.

It is man who has begotten, nurtured, and allowed the fiend to develop in his heart; he, again, who has contaminated the indwelling god in himself, by linking the pure spirit with the impure demon of matter. (*S.D.*, II, 274)

We are now at a crucial point in our evolution. Mind must rise triumphant and move towards Spirit, or it will sink into the depths of matter. We are past the middle point of the Fourth Round; we are in the Fifth Race, the Aryan, and in the fifth sub-race of that Race. Already there are signs that the sixth sub-race is preparing to be formed. Human Races, we learn “are born one from the other, grow, develop, become old, and die” (*S.D.*, II, 443-44). There is no escape for us.

Humanity is the child of cyclic Destiny, and not one of its Units can escape its unconscious mission, or get rid of the burden of its co-operative work with nature. Thus will mankind, race after race, perform its appointed cycle-pilgrimage. Climates will, and have already begun, to change, each tropical year after the other dropping one sub-race, but only to beget another higher race on the ascending cycle; while a series of other less favoured groups—the failures of nature—will, like some individual men, vanish from the human family without even leaving a trace behind. (*S.D.*, II, 446)

What should we do, here and now, lest we too fall by the way and “vanish from the human family”?

In *An Epitome of Theosophy* Mr. Judge wrote:

As to the process of spiritual development, Theosophy teaches:

First. That the essence of the process lies in the securing of supremacy, to the highest, the spiritual, element of man's nature.

Second. That this is attained along four lines, among others.

The first of these four lines is “the entire eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of *broad, generous* sympathy in, and effort for the good of others.”

He goes into other details also, but we must note in the above

quotation the italicized words—“*broad, generous, sympathy*”—a quality we need to develop. No amount of struggle to attain the other steps in the process of spiritual development will be possible or useful without this quality, for it lies at the basis of all effort towards progress. Mr. Judge also speaks of “effort for the good of others,” and this, along with sympathy, gives us an idea of the dawning of Compassion and the development of the Spiritual Will. Note also the word “cultivation” in the above quotation. We sometimes think that all we need to do is to recognize what is right, what we ought to do; but if consistent, steady effort to cultivate this new aspect of life is lacking, we cannot but meet with failure. Cultivation is not easy. The ideas to be cultivated start in the mind, but, as with all thoughts, before they materialize in action we have to be permeated with the desire to achieve and to go on and on.

Let us find out our way, take the vision beautiful as our guiding star, and strive to remember during all our waking moments that “The Universe...exists for the sake of the soul's experience and emancipation.” It is not what the personal mask achieves in life that matters; it is what the Ego can take away with it to *devachan* and beyond, and build into future lives, that counts.

However far removed we may be from the full radiance of the Higher Soul, we must find out what stops that radiance from shining through our every thought and act. What stops us from exercising control over the lower man? Perhaps it is because we do not yet separate what is lower from what is higher, and that higher from the Highest. We stand on the bridge. Self-effort in action, devotion to the Highest, and a constant struggle to “realize the Self” alone will help us.

Let us recognize ourselves as a little universe in which universal laws act. By learning how to use those laws we can prove our oneness with “God,” and therefore our immortality.

Anger is a momentary insanity.

—HORACE

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“Scientists have solved [or so they claim] the deepest mysteries of the cosmos. So why are they still confused?” asks William Underhill (*Newsweek*, October 20). Scientists hold on to the big bang theory and estimate the age of the Universe to be 13.7 billion years. Dr. Jeffrey Weeks, a mathematician in New York, argues that our Universe resembles a hall of mirrors with 12 sides. The universe is getting bigger all the time and the process of expansion has accelerated since the big bang. Such ever-increasing expansion has been attributed to a new mysterious force called “dark energy” that drives the galaxies apart against gravity, which is contrary to the expectations of the scientists. According to the “big crunch” theory, as the momentum of big bang lessened, the universe would begin to collapse. However, now the scientists at Dartmouth college have proposed still another theory: the “big rip.” Eventually, the ever-growing power of dark energy will rip apart everything from galaxies to individual atoms.

What is the universe made of? It is believed to be made of “mysterious theoretical stuff” called dark matter, which in turn is comprised of “dark matter particles,” designated WIMP (Weakly Interacting Massive Particles) that do not reflect light.

H.P.B. mentions in *The Secret Doctrine* that scientists are looking for a homogeneous basis for apparently widely different things. Metaphysicians postulate “One Form of Existence” as the basis and source of all things (*S.D.*, I, 46). However, this homogeneous matter cannot be discovered on our plane. She writes:

The whole Kosmos has sprung from the DIVINE THOUGHT. This thought impregnates matter, which is co-eternal with the ONE REALITY: and all that lives and breathes evolves from the emanations of the One *Immutable*—Parabrahm=Mulaprakriti, the eternal one-root. (*S.D.*, I, 340)

Theosophy affirms the 12-faced (*Dodecahedron*) shape of the universe. Thus:

Makaram is the tenth sign, and the term “Dasadisa” is

generally used by Sanskrit writers to denote the faces or sides of the universe. The sign in question is intended to represent the faces of the universe, and indicates that the figure of the universe is bounded by *Pentagons*. If we take the pentagons as regular pentagons...the figure of the material universe will, of course, be a *Dodecahedron*, the geometrical model imitated by the Demiurgos in constructing the material universe. (*Five Years of Theosophy*, p. 114)

It was taught in the *inner* temples that this visible universe of spirit and matter is but the concrete image of the ideal abstraction: it was built on the model of the first DIVINE IDEA...It was not the *One* who built the concrete form of the idea, but the first-begotten; and...it was constructed on the geometrical figure of the dodecahedron.... (*S.D.*, I, 340)

There have been numerous tales of Near-Death-Experiences (NDEs), such as travels down tunnels and encounters with angels or deceased loved ones. These were dismissed at first by doctors as hallucinations caused by changes in the dying brain. But such hallucinations could only occur if the brain maintained some function. Could a dead brain hallucinate? “That apparent paradox—that perceptions occur during NDEs when there is no functioning of brain through which to perceive them—has scientists, theologians and ordinary folks groping for answers,” writes Anita Bartholomew. (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., October 2003)

Scientists are led to believe that consciousness is independent of brain. Could consciousness be in every cell of the body? Dutch cardiologist, Pim van Lommel observes: “Each day, 50 billion cells die....This intensive cell turnover means that, eventually, almost all the cells that make up ‘me’ or ‘you’ are new. And yet we don't perceive ourselves as being different from what we always were.” He is of the opinion that cells making up different organs of the body form a network and “talk” to one another, which may account for our continuity of consciousness—in spite of daily destruction

of the cells.

NDEs have forced the scientists to reconsider questions such as: What is death? Where is the consciousness? Can science find the soul? If mind persists after the brain is dead, is it proper to transplant organs from the “brain-dead”?

According to Theosophy, every atom has consciousness and every cell in the body receives and gives out impressions. Thus:

In ordinary waking life every one, without being able to disentangle himself, is subject to the impressions from the whole organism; that is to say, every cell in the body, to the most minute, has its own series of impressions and recollections, all of which continue to impinge on the great register, the brain, until the impression remaining in the cell is fully exhausted. (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 111)

Every atom of matter in the four (or five) Elements is an emanation from an inferior God or Goddess, himself or herself an earlier emanation from a superior deity; and, moreover, that each of these atoms—being Brahma, one of whose names is *Anu*, or atom—no sooner is it emanated than it *becomes endowed with consciousness*, each of its kind, and free-will, acting within the limits of law. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 20*, pp. 20-21)

As regards the function of the brain-cells H.P.B. observes:

There are cells in our brain that receive and convey sensations and impressions, but this once done, their mission is accomplished. These cells of the supposed “organ of memory” are the *receivers* and *conveyers* of all the pictures and impressions of the past, not their *retainers*. (*Lucifer*, October 1891)

Our forests and wildlife are facing a crisis and it appears that humans are to be blamed for that. We are uncaring and exploitative. “We kill and maim without remorse, almost as a form of mob

entertainment. The Romans did a bit of that 2000 years ago, but that was less horrific than our blood sport,” writes Valmik Thapar. (*Sanctuary Asia*, August 2003)

We are responsible for the vanishing wildlife, and destruction of forests. We have turned uncaring and have become very selfish and self-centred. We do not hesitate to fight our colleagues, neighbours and friends. Valmik Thapar writes:

A frightening brainlessness typifies those who govern. Violence characterizes those who are supposed to keep the peace. And greed is now so strong that it eats away at anything decent....

Why does the Inspector General of Forests, Government of India, talk of breeding tigers to kill them? Why do the captains of the business world sit mute as the natural world is torn apart? Why do senior politicians feel that they have a right to plunder and pillage the natural and cultural heritage of our country?...It's an all-pervasive attitude of make-the-quick-buck, hire the right contractor, pocket the commission, bribe and be bribed and violate this nation's natural treasure house.

Where does the hope lie? In the thick of the human crisis, will the tigers survive? Can the natural world possibly be secure again? Will the tragic crisis afflicting humans be averted? Or have we lost ourselves to the extent that our life goals are forever changed? Will that powerful force called “greed” spur us on to destroy all that we have held precious?

Man is responsible for the evolution of the lower kingdoms. He has to raise “the entire mass of manifested matter up to the nature, stature and dignity of conscious godhood.” *The Voice of the Silence* says, “Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.”

It is hard to believe that slavery exists in the 21st century. Andrew Cockburn narrates the story of “27 million people worldwide who are bought and sold, held captive, brutalized,

exploited for profit” (*National Geographic*, September 2003). There are more slaves today than were seized during four centuries of African slave trade.

An Editorial comment in the same issue of *National Geographic* cites the example of a ten-year-old boy, who winds thread 14 hours a day for looms in Kanchipuram. His fingers bleed and his body is being poisoned by dye. “Thousands of child slaves work in India's silk industry.”

Slavery is not unique to India but is spread all over the globe. Annual contribution by slaves to the global economy is estimated to be 13 billion dollars. There is “a large network which uses Internet and bank accounts.” Women to be used in the flesh trade are categorized (qualitywise) and their price could be negotiated. Stringent restrictions on legal migration to countries promising employment is partly responsible for making the buying and selling of people a profitable business. Trafficking mafias and smugglers have been bringing people into Western Europe from Moscow and so also from Central America to U.S.A. “In Brazil slaves make charcoal used to manufacture steel for automobiles and other machinery; in Myanmar slaves harvest sugarcane and other agricultural products; in China child slaves manufacture fireworks; in Sierra Leone slaves mine diamonds. Slave labour has also been reported in the production of coffee, tea, and tobacco crops worldwide.”

Slavery is a crime against humanity. “Our voice is raised for spiritual freedom, and our plea is made for enfranchisement from all tyranny.” (*Isis*, I, xlv)

An article on “Slavery” expresses the Theosophical viewpoint thus:

The key to the problem of slavery is to be found in the Third Fundamental proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*. It furnishes the clue to the source and cause of slavery; also it enshrines the teaching which would cure humanity of this scourge. The slave-drivers of one age are driven as slaves in another, and the snowball work of Karma can be stopped only by an active contribution towards the spread of Pure Liberty and Freedom.

Man is his brother's keeper. (*The Theosophical Movement*, Vol. 8)

“What makes you *you*? How does it feel to be you?” asks Graham Lawton (*New Scientist*, September 13). Psychologists resort to various means to measure and describe various types of personalities. However, they have not been able to answer these questions: Why do human personalities differ so much? Where does personality come from? According to the 2nd-century Greek physician Galen, personality is created by imbalances in the body's four humours: black bile (*melas khole*), yellow bile (*khole*), blood (*sanguis*) and phlegm—giving rise to the terms melancholic, choleric, sanguine and phlegmatic. Since the last few years, scientists are searching for a biological basis for personality. Some studies suggest that our personality is mainly determined by genes rather than by environment or upbringing.

Today, biologists divide human personality into five dimensions: “extroversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience.” It has been found that the Lesch gene [named after Klaus-Peter Lesch]—a gene concerned with the transmission of the mood-regulating chemical serotonin—exists in two different forms, “long” and “short.” Anyone with at least one “short” version of this gene tends to be more neurotic and is more likely to be depressed after stressful events. This is because this version of the gene makes the brain's amygdalae—structures involved in processing fear stimuli—more sensitive. Similarly, another gene has been identified, which also comes in two forms. People with a copy of “long” form of this gene markedly display a personality trait called “novelty-seeking,” equivalent to extroversion.

Many scientists are skeptical and feel that the links between genes and personality traits are not conclusive. It is felt that genetics and brain imaging cannot fully explain something as complex and human as personality. “And the distant goal of altering personality

for the better isn't even on the radar screen.”

Theosophy teaches that our personality is the result of the *skandhas* or aggregate of attributes generated by the Ego in past lives. The body includes one set of *skandhas*, the astral man another, and so on. These *skandhas* are being created from day to day, because every thought instantly combines with an elemental force and becomes an entity. The *skandhas* maintain a magnetic link with the Ego that evolved them. As to the link between the personality and heredity, Mr. Judge has this to say:

Heredity in giving us a body in any family provides the appropriate environment for the Ego. The Ego goes only into the family which either completely answers to its whole nature, or which gives an opportunity for the working out of its evolution, and which is also connected with it by reason of past incarnations or causes mutually set up....The limitations imposed on the Ego by any family heredity are exact consequences of the Ego's prior lives....Transmission of trait and tendency by means of parent and body is exactly the mode selected by nature for providing the incarnating Ego with the proper tenement in which to carry on its work. (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, pp. 77-79)

“Thou art That,” teaches the *Chandogya Upanishad*. “You are what you seek,” writes Suma Varughese (*Life Positive*, September 2003). We appreciate and accept it intellectually, but as our acts constantly belie our beliefs, doubt arises. For instance, after having taken credit for our subordinate's work, cheating on our income tax, coveting our neighbour's wife, we wonder whether “we” are that ineffable majesty and power that created us and sustains us. The purpose of the spiritual journey is to bridge the gap between “the poor miserable creature” and the “High Lord.” Remove the self-doubt and the gap melts away, so that “one fine day, you wake up to find that the ineffable is clothed in you.” We can extend this belief to others around us. Varughese writes:

You look at your children and all you can see are their shortcomings and defects. But remember that they are already what you want them to be. You want them to be punctual, disciplined, hard working? They already are that. When you can see that hidden potential and relate to that, in the most miraculous way, they fulfil your belief in them....By holding that belief powerfully in your mind, you can draw it out of them....

Even when someone does behave contrary to our belief, if we hold on to that belief steadfastly—and learn to separate the sin from the sinner—we will be able to settle the matter calmly and dispassionately, without hurting anyone's self-esteem. “A creative power can be yours if you would use it. Like a gardener cultivating his plants, you will cause your people to flower.”

Theosophy teaches that we are potentially divine and hence inherently perfect. But, we are what we think and it is important to have right beliefs. Mr. Crosbie writes in *The Friendly Philosopher*:

Everything depends on what one has in mind—his *fundamental* conceptions of Deity, Nature, and Man....H.P.B. says, “One has to have an *unshakable* faith in the Divinity within, an unlimited belief in his own power to learn....”(p.400)

We contract the divine power of the Spirit within us to the pin-holes of personal desires and selfishness....Do we not see that we ourselves stand in the way of the use of the power within us because our ideas are selfish, small, mean?...The action of the will is through ideas. The ideas give the direction. Small ideas, small force; large ideas, large force; the Force itself is illimitable, for it is the force of Spirit, infinite and exhaustless. (p. 270)

WHILE hating sin we must be gentle to the sinner.

—S. RADHAKRISHNAN