

The achievement of autonomy paradoxically makes more possible the transcendence of self-consciousness and of selfishness.

—ABRAHAM MASLOW

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TIME FOR THE JUMP

The man stands at the edge of the pool and listens to his teacher explain to him the movements he has to make; that is good and necessary. But if we see him go on talking, talking, talking, we become suspicious that the talking and understanding have become a substitute for the real swim. No amount of depth of psychological insight can take the place of the act, the commitment, the jump.

—ERICH FROMM

IN many, many ways, the present is a time when the need for making an actual jump—as individuals, as societies, cultures, or nations—is becoming more and more apparent. History, as H. P. Blavatsky points out in *Isis Unveiled*, moves forward in great surges of creative endeavor, and much time has passed since affirmative vision has been the driving force in human affairs.

It is a question, really, of the nature of man, and of gaining a new faith in human potentiality and capacity. The old doctrines of materialism are little more, today, than habits of mind. The old ideas of “success” and achievement, in economics, in politics, and most of all in personal life, are now chiefly slogans repeated without thought, because the spokesmen of the status quo in this period know nothing else to say. And beneath the surface of conventional life move the currents of many kinds of ferments. It is as though people now do what others have done before them much as somnambules go through the motions of ordinary existence without awareness of what they are about.

The forms of readiness for some kind of "jump" become evident in the inarticulate protest of the young, in determined acts of resistance by small minorities of reformers—as in the case of the rejection of war—and in multifarious cultural expressions. The endless questionings of the time resolve themselves into the one central cry of great simplicity: What will give men that sense of courage and strength needed to make them act according to what they already feel in their hearts?

Needless to say, there can be no simple verbal response to this hungering inquiry. Such answers as may come will be a concert of many declarations, many insights, many flashing movements of the intuition. But behind them all, the Theosophist may suppose, will be the driving energy of egoic perception, brought closer to the surface of human life by the turning of the cycle, and by the exhaustion of all other avenues of cognition. Men will begin to act as souls because, by outward frustration as by inward monition, there is nothing else left to do.

Students of Theosophy can hardly predict the character of the precipitating causes that will lead men to make the jump that means a new sort of beginning in the life of soul. The soul, after all, follows no familiar definitions, needs not the "security" of models of behavior provided by the habits and ways of the world. The life of the soul, whatever else it may be, is a life guided by direct perception of what is right, true, and compassionate. The way to the life of the soul may be pointed out, but only by invitation and invocation, not by the help of the maps and charts with which other things are accomplished. For, from beginning to end, the life of the soul is made up of acts of the imagination, and these are sustained by an awareness which penetrates beyond the veil of past, present, future. The soul acts out of an independent self-knowledge, and only *seems* to be dependent upon the thoughts and counsels of other men.

Each age, quite naturally, has its own distinctive form of self-knowledge, and each man, again, his own insight into himself that is unique to him. So when it comes to the work of a Teacher, the instruction—such instruction as is possible in such matters—is at a level of generality that is not so easily recognized by minds caught in the grooves of habit and established tradition. Indeed, it is the method of the teacher to wear away those grooves, to disregard or break with confining tradition.

So it is that, as students of H. P. Blavatsky, we may find ourselves

obliged to project and apply what we learn from the teacher, in order to see only a little of how the lessons of the Theosophical literature may eventually be reworked and assimilated as living perceptions with emancipating power for the struggling humanity of our time. The nourishment of philosophy must somehow turn into the blood of conviction, the bone of stability, the sensitive tissue of sympathy and concern for others. And in all the wide variety of the modern world, this process of "transubstantiation" may on occasion assume extraordinary forms.

It is the additional faith of students of Theosophy, as distinguished from their faith simply as human beings, that the writings of H. P. Blavatsky are suited to be the raw material of these practical developments in human awakening. And so they have, as she once wrote, a *special* work to do.

THE TRANSITION

We are like children who repeat by rote the sentences of grandames and tutors, and, as they grow older, of the men of talents and character they chance to see—painfully recollecting the exact words they spoke; afterwards, when they come into the point of view which those had who uttered these sayings, they understand them, and are willing to let the words go. When we have new perception, we shall gladly disburden the memory of its hoarded treasures as old rubbish.

Whenever a mind is simple, and receives a divine wisdom, then old things pass away,—means, teachers, texts, temples fall; it lives now and absorbs past and future into the present hour. . . . Life only avails, not the having lived. Power ceases in the instant of repose; it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state; in the shooting of the gulf; in the darting to an aim. This one fact the world hates, that the soul *becomes*.

—EMERSON

THE BOOK OF THE GREAT MYSTERY

In one aspect, the *Bhagavad-Gita* is a personal book. It is for each man. . . . It is indeed the book of the great mystery; but that problem was never solved *for* any one; it must be settled and solved *by* each one *for himself*.

—*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*

HOW does one evaluate the *Bhagavad-Gita*, as pertinent to the awakening mind today as it was five thousand years ago? Time is no barrier. The searching Soul, sensing its immortality, transcends *all* barriers in the fullness of time. Races and civilizations cycling onward in fulfillment of destiny provide vehicles or bodily instruments and patterns of living that accommodate the Soul's karmic needs—containing it temporarily. Tradition and social customs channel and bind its activity. Consecrated customs hold it fast. Under the influence of crystallized forms of thought, sanctified through use by venerated generations, the perceptive power of the Initiator of actions becomes dulled, overpowered, immobilized. To these also the *Gita* speaks. Who are they? Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras—men of all castes. He who has *solved* the great mystery is of no caste, “yet belongs to each and all.”

To one interested in the philosophical content of the *Gita*, what matters who wrote it and when? Yet these are minor mysteries. Of the author, Vyasa, the *Theosophical Glossary* says:

VYASA (Sk.). *Lit.*, one who expands or amplifies; an interpreter, or rather a *revealer*; for that which he explains, interprets and amplifies is a *mystery* to the profane. This term was applied in days of old to the highest Gurus in India. There were many Vyasas in Aryavarta; one was the compiler and arranger of the *Vedas*; another, the author of the *Mahabharata*—the *twenty-eighth Vyasa or revealer in the order of succession* and the last one of note was the author of Uttara Mimamsa, the sixth school or system of Indian philosophy. He was also the founder of the Vedanta system. His date, as assigned by Orientalists, is 1,400 B.C., but this date is certainly too recent. The *Puranas* mention only twenty-eight Vyasas, who at various ages descended to the earth to promulgate Vedic truths—but there were many more.

And in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 562-3), H.P.B. comments on another scholarly concern:

The theory of Anquetil du Perron that the *Bhagavad-Gita* is an independent work, as it is absent from several manuscripts of the *Maha-Bharata*, may be as much a plea for a still greater antiquity as the reverse. The work is purely metaphysical and ethical, and in a certain sense it is *anti-Vedic*; so far, at least, that it is in opposition with many of the later Brahmanical interpretations of the *Vedas*. How comes it, then, that instead of destroying the work, or, at least, of sentencing it as uncanonical—an expedient to which the Christian Church would never have failed to resort—the Brahmins show it the greatest reverence? Perfectly *unitarian* in its aim, it clashes with the popular idol-worship. Still, the only precaution taken by the Brahmins to keep its tenets from becoming too well known, is to preserve it more secretly than any other religious book from every caste except the sacerdotal; and, to impose upon that even, in many cases, certain restrictions. The grandest mysteries of the Brahmanical religion are embraced within this magnificent poem; and even the Buddhists recognize it, explaining certain dogmatic difficulties in their own way.

At whatever level of consciousness or from whatever point of interest one approaches this masterpiece, the mind marvels and the heart is humbled. Time in the popular sense loses meaning. The dynamism of interwoven destinies pervades the atmosphere. A modern Commentary serves as illustration:

The *Mahabharata* is the greatest single effort of literary creation of any culture in human history. It is difficult for any mind to conceive the mind that conceived it; and the effort to do so is almost itself a liberal education. A walk through its table of contents is more than a Sabbath-day's journey. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are episodes in it: and the celebrated *Bhagavad-Gita* is simply the record of a single conversation on the eve of one of its many battles. ("New Standards in Art and Literature," by A. R. Orage, *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1925.)

Wm. Q. Judge presents an unsuspected dimension in an article, "Two Lost Keys" (*Path*, August, 1890):

The *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Zodiac, while differing so much from each other in that one is a book and the other the sun's path in the heavens, are two great storehouses of knowledge which may be construed after the same method. It is very true that the former is now in book shape, but that is only because the necessities of study under conditions which have prevailed for some thousands of years require it, but it exists in the ideal world im-

bedded in the evolutionary history of the human race. Were all copies of it destroyed tomorrow, the materials for their reconstruction are near at hand and could be regathered by those sages who know the realities underlying all appearances. And in the same way the Zodiac could be made over again by the same sages—not, however, by our modern astronomers.

The “evolutionary history of the human race” excludes no man of any caste, clime, or time. A subtle side of the study of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is its transforming power. It is a personal book, but for each one as a member of the human race—not for himself alone. Mr. Judge wrote in *Letters That Have Helped Me*: “Inquirers ought to read the *Bhagavad-Gita*. It will give them food for centuries if they read with spiritual eyes at all. Underneath its shell is the living spirit that will light us all. I read it ten times before I saw things that I did not see at first. In the night the ideas contained in it are digested and returned partly next day to the mind. It is the study of adepts.”

Thoreau's biographer, Canby, says of this American individualist: “It is not too much to say that Thoreau was made by two books, (Emerson's) ‘Nature’ and the ‘Bhagavad-Gita.’” Thoreau's solitary life stands in contrast with that of M. K. Gandhi, who “articulated the potential strength of India's religious culture and engaged it in the struggle for national liberation. He was able to relate the non-sectarian principles of the *Bhagavad-Gita* to the moral battlefield; and he became, thereby, in a very real sense, all India's *guru*, for the work of the guru, or spiritual guide, is to be ‘adjuster’ rather than instructor or director.” (*Manas*, August 18, 1948.)

Gandhi's acquaintance with the *Gita* began in 1888-89 with the “verse translation by Sir Edwin Arnold known as the *Song Celestial*.” He says:

Even in 1888-89, when I first became acquainted with the *Gita*, I felt that it was not a historical work, but that, under the guise of physical warfare, it described the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind, and that physical warfare was brought in merely to make the description of the internal duel more alluring. This preliminary intuition became more confirmed on closer study of religion and the *Gita*. A study of the *Mahabharata* gave it added confirmation. I do not regard the *Mahabharata* as a historical work in the accepted sense. (*Gospel of Selfless Action*.)

I find a solace in the *Bhagavadgita* that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. When disappointment stares me in the face

and all alone I see not one ray of light, I go back to the *Bhagavad-gita*. I find a verse here and a verse there and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies—and my life has been full of external tragedies—and if they have left no visible, no indelible scar on me, I owe it all to the teachings of the *Bhagavadgita*. (*Young India*, 1925.)

The *Gita* speaks to all conditions, the individual and the collective need. The “undisturbed” mind and the “unselfish” heart permit participation in or communion with the *essential Gita*—“wisdom itself, the object of wisdom, and that which is to be obtained by wisdom; in the hearts of all it ever presideth.”

Perhaps to remind the student and the *chela* of the ever-present possibility of true Knowledge, each chapter of the *Gita* closes with the phrase which begins: “Thus in the *Upanishads*. . .” The *Theosophical Glossary* is instructive on this pertinent point. It says, in part:

The term *Upanishad* is explained by the Hindu pundits as “that which destroys ignorance, and thus produces liberation” of the spirit, through the knowledge of the supreme though *hidden* truth; the same, therefore, as that which was hinted at by Jesus, when he is made to say, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (*John* viii. 32). It is from these treatises of the *Upanishads*—themselves the echo of the primeval Wisdom-Religion—that the Vedanta system of philosophy has been developed. . . . They treat of very abstruse, metaphysical questions, such as the origin of the Universe; the nature and the essence of the Unmanifested Deity and the manifested gods; the connection, primal and ultimate, of spirit and matter; the universality of mind and the nature of the human Soul and Ego.

The *Upanishads* must be far more ancient than the days of Buddhism, as they show no preference for, nor do they uphold, the superiority of the Brahmans as a caste. On the contrary, it is the (now) second caste, the Kshatriya, or warrior class, who are exalted in the oldest of them. As stated by Professor Cowell in Elphinstone’s *History of India*—“they breathe a freedom of spirit unknown to any earlier work except the *Rig-Veda*. . . . The great teachers of the higher knowledge and Brahmans are continually represented as going to Kshatriya Kings to become their pupils.” The “Kshatriya Kings” were in the olden times, like the King-Hierophants of Egypt, the receptacles of the highest divine knowledge and wisdom, the *elect* and the incarnations of the primordial divine Instructors—the Dhyani Buddhas or Kumaras. There was a time, æons before the Brahmans became a caste, or even the *Upanishads* were written, when there was on earth but one “lip,” one religion and one science, namely, the

speech of the gods, the Wisdom-Religion and Truth. This was before the fair fields of the latter, overrun by nations of many languages, became overgrown with the weeds of intentional deception, and national creeds invented by ambition, cruelty and selfishness, broke the one sacred Truth into thousands of fragments.

The closing phrase of the chapters echoes the ancient condition of the brotherhood of mankind. The ninth chapter—midway of the book, and a turning point in the perceptive life of Arjuna, reads:

Thus in the *Upanishads*, called the holy *Bhagavad-Gita*, in the science of the Supreme Spirit, in the book of devotion, in the colloquy between the Holy Krishna and Arjuna, stands the Ninth Chapter, by name—

DEVOTION BY MEANS OF THE KINGLY KNOWLEDGE
AND THE KINGLY MYSTERY.

THOREAU ON THE "GITA"

"Action is preferable to inaction. The journey of thy mortal frame may not succeed from inaction," says Kreeshna in the Bhagavat-Geeta. Asiatic philosophers dwell on the inevitability and unchangeableness of laws, on the power of temperament and constitution, the three *goon* or qualities, and the circumstances of birth and affinity. And who will say that their conservatism has not been effectual. "Assuredly," says a French translator, speaking of the antiquity and durability of the Chinese and Indian nations, and of the wisdom of their legislators, "there are there some vestiges of the eternal laws which govern the world."

The New Testament is remarkable for its pure morality; the best of the Hindo Scripture, for its pure intellectuality. The reader is nowhere raised into and sustained in a higher, purer, or *rarer* region of thought than in the Bhagavat-Geeta.

—THOREAU

ON FIRST ACQUAINTANCE— “THE SECRET DOCTRINE”

XII

Spirit, then, or Cosmic Ideation, and Cosmic Substance—one of whose *principles* is Ether—are one.

(*The Secret Doctrine* I, 339.)

TO think of the subjective and the objective as a unity may help us to arrive at order within our life, but to think of the inner and outer aspects of ourselves as being similar to that of others may be a stronger aid to ethics; for, once we become convinced that our life is lived inside of others and that they live within us, altruism takes on a compelling quality.

If we were to consider the consciousness which we are experiencing, as if it were a Ray of an abstract “something” that was in our trust as our “way” of learning what it is we are supposed to be doing, we might shortly come to see more clearly how we could, say, live inside a Master and He could live within us. By searching for the Universal Consciousness within the sphere of subjectivity which we normally call ours, we might discover that duty we owe to the abstract element of consciousness reflected in the varying grades of matter. By listening within ourselves we build a more real unity with others than by guiding our life according to the need of appearances.

True, our conscience is forever asking of us the martyrdom of our personal life. No sooner do we try to follow our inner-idea than we find our personal life beginning to wither. One might say that there is an area within our subjective life which is forever calling us to live for “ends” that cannot be encompassed by the physical man. Thus, our seventy years inside a particular body begins to be a life lived on behalf of *something else*—something that our Mind can encompass but which our flesh cannot; something in which the Conscience finds a natural habitat.

It is interesting to note that this part of our inner life is not peculiarly given to mortifying the flesh, but simply wants to use it for its own ends; ends that, in a particular sense, are similar to the general ones which it follows in another way. It is as if there

were an invisible, abstract human within the particular one—one that cannot manifest but which can use the body harmoniously to high purpose.

It might be that by searching for this abstract human within we can discover most surely and positively our identity with others; for by searching out the general duty we owe to the field of consciousness, the fulfillment of our relation to others becomes natural and organic. This naturalness seems to occur because it is an unfolding from the universal into the particular. Instead of searching the horizontal plane of fragmentation and appearance, we have gone to that which binds us all together, and may root our particular deeds in a motive so oriented. The more we follow whatever premonitions we have in this direction, the more they become a source of protection and growth, making us "brother" to others, not by compulsion or sentimentality, but naturally.

Once, when H.P.B. was insisting that Universal Brotherhood was the best protection against hypnotism, and Charles Johnston asked how this could be, she answered:

By purifying the hearts of people who would misuse it. And universal brotherhood rests upon the common soul. It is because there is one soul common to all men, that brotherhood, or even common understanding is possible. Bring men to rest on that, and they will be safe. There is a divine power in every man which is to rule his life, and which no one can influence for evil, not even the greatest magician. Let men bring their lives under its guidance, and they have nothing to fear from man or devil. (*Blavatsky: Collected Writings*, Vol. VIII, pp. 407-408.)

Of course, one might ask: If this common source, and our consciousness of it, is the root of our growth and protection why are we separated? However, this is rather like the cells of our body saying: Why are we under the strain and duress of being bounced around within the human body when we could be stretched out as protoplasmic amoeba somewhere? Our answer to the cells might be: Because we need you in order to become *conscious-experiencers*, as you, too, on your level, will do likewise because of the great good fortune of being inside a human body. Now isn't this what the overall soul would answer us? Is IT not in the process of becoming conscious, too? Analogy points to this postulate even though the grandeur of that awakening may stagger the imagination.

It would seem that when a general being specializes into a vehicle for certain purposes, there occurs an enlivening dichotomy. This

idea might become clearer if we reflect upon the action of light in pure water. There is no light, at least so far as our eyes are concerned, or at best, light is there in an *unmanifested* condition to our physical vision. If this light is to become part of our perceptions, we need the opacity of an object, and thus, it might be in this sense that we need bodies to make our unconscious reality a "self-analyzing reflection."

With this sort of idea in mind we may achieve a clearer grasp of Plotinus' meaning when he says of an Ideal form that its nature "is to be, of itself, an activity; it operates by its mere presence. . . ." As an illustration of his idea, Plotinus remarks that in the presence of a Melody:

The causes originating the movement may be likened to the musician; what is moved is like the strings of his instrument, and, once more, the Melodic Principle itself is not affected, but only the strings. (*Enneads*, Mackenna translation, p. 205.)

A questioner asks:

But why have we to call in Philosophy to make the Soul immune if it is thus (like the Melodic Principle of our illustration) immune from the beginning?

To which is answered:

Because representations attack it at what we call the effective phase and cause a resulting experience.

This last statement of Plotinus', is also what H.P.B. teaches as a prime reason for the contrast of incarnated life: that we may become conscious experiencers rather than unconscious mediums.

The idea that sentient matter arises from our being incarnated and not from any inherent reality caused incredulity in Plotinus' day as it does also in ours, for one of his questioners further asked:

But Body, a non-existence? Matter, on which all this universe rises, a non-existence? And how . . . can we on the contrary, attribute Being, and the only Authentic Being, to entities like Soul and Intellect, things having no weight or pressure, yielding to no force, offering no resistance, things not even visible? (*Ibid.* p. 207.)

And Plotinus shows by his answer that corporeality is more nearly a criterion for lack of Being, than otherwise, for:

. . . the resting earth has certainly a scantier share in Being than belongs to what has more motion and less solidity—and less

than belongs to its own most upward element, for fire begins, already, to flit up and away outside of the body-kind.

In fact, it appears to be precisely the most self-sufficing that bear least hardly, least painfully, on other things, while the heaviest and earthiest bodies—deficient, falling, unable to bear themselves upward—these, by the very down-thrust due to their feebleness, offer the resistance which belongs to the falling habit and to the lack of buoyancy. It is lifeless objects that deal the severest blows; they hit hardest and hurt most; where there is life—that is to say participation in Being—there is beneficence towards the environment, all the greater as the measure of Being is fuller. (*Ibid*, pp. 207-08.)

From what started as a physical analogy Plotinus comes to a moral and ethical conclusion. The duality of his analogy seems a subtle way of emphasizing our need for self-reliance combined with Love—not sentimental love, particular love, or love mixed with passion, but love which wants the total realm of its experience to move onward. True, our “understanding” needs to search out whence it came and where it tends, to make this non-specific Love into a useful *driving force*, but it is as powerful and overwhelming as the passions of our animal nature and can as imperiously rule our life as the passions once did, making us an automaton for its own purposes. Take this power and back it with intelligence and we have a focus for beneficence.

What do we mean when we say “sentimental”? We mean that most of us will admit the terrible condition of mental life *in general*; we will admit that the *herd* should change its direction, but this conviction has not become so forceful as to make us an “abnormal scapegoat” that leaves the herd. The sentimental person, in this use of the term, has recognized the problem, but he hasn’t yet recognized himself as the point from which solution begins. That he is the hub of the revolution, the *center* of all useful sacrifice on behalf of the vision has not yet become a “working fact” for him—his body-life still sings too loudly that he is one among many. That three billion humans could live inside him and yet be outside as well has not yet been apprehended.

YOUTH FORUM

Theosophical writings, although they help one gain invaluable perspective on life, present somewhat of a problem to the student, since they speak a great deal about invisible processes and supramental states of being and are therefore likely to be incompletely or incorrectly understood. The teachings are said to appeal directly to the soul of man, yet at times the student may read about such concepts as the "Higher Self" or the "Nirmanakayas," and find himself unable to feel any deep response. How can one reach beyond the words and in some way grasp the reality underlying them?

Jung tells a story about a student who came to a rabbi and said, "In the olden days there were men who saw the face of God. Why don't they any more?" The rabbi replied, "Because nowadays no one can stoop so low." Such words may at first sound strange to students who have become accustomed to thinking in terms of a "higher" and a "lower" self, or who have pondered about the mantram, "As above, so below." And yet on further reflection it becomes clear that the old rabbi's answer does not necessarily contradict theosophical principles, but implies an unusual and perhaps searching approach to them. Essentially it seems to be a warning against reliance on metaphors, against the mind's tendency to think in spatial terms, and to evade metaphysical realities. To many of us, as a result of this tendency, it seems that the Higher Self is "up there somewhere," and "above it all." We think we want to know the great truths of life, and may even do a great deal of studying, but there seems always to be a part of ourselves (well yes, the "lower" part) which is working to prevent a full realization of truth and truth's implications. Our capacity for self-deception is great and subtle, and becomes all the greater since we deceive ourselves as to how strong it really is. At the center and immortal essence of our being, of course, we do want the whole truth about ourselves and life, but our personality, the person we take ourselves to be and which is therefore practically all-powerful on this plane (and even in some after-death states), is absolutely determined that we shall

not know the truth. This is because in one sense truth would mean death for the personality—and torture before that death. Some of the theosophical terminology seems very abstruse to us; words like “Nirmanakayas” strike no response within our hearts. But let us realize that we have unknowingly yet skillfully arranged for that lack of response.

But more specifically—what have we done? The little things (and most of our evasions have to do with little things) are difficult to catalogue because they are practically innumerable, and because each person has his own particular set. We put off duties, indulge our whims, reject new and uncomfortable ideas, or even reject familiar ideas as being “old hat,” unaware that we label them thus in order not to have to consider them seriously. Sometimes we even accept ideas for that same purpose of being able to disregard them; for it is only in the moment of direct confrontation that our complacency is threatened. And having become skillful in avoiding these minor confrontations, it becomes easier to avoid major, even potentially tragic, encounters. We use the word God, for instance, and find ourselves looking up in the sky, as though He were “up there”; and we unconsciously create images of Him, perhaps suddenly realize we are creating images and censure ourselves for it, then begin creating more images; yet all the while forgetting to try to look deeply into the eyes of our own children who are standing in front of us.

And it is not only ideas, and not only other people, that we refuse to meet halfway, it is also our guilt. There may be a pattern to the universe, but it is certainly not such a patent pattern as the eighteenth century conceived of. Indeed, the idea of the Absolute is terrifying in more ways than it is reassuring. And man, an emanation from the eye of this universal vortex, is potentially enormously powerful—and when self-deceived or self-concerned, enormously dangerous. Evil in man is real. We must not try to muffle this fact by imagining evil to be merely the absence of good; for if we do, we are giving it all the more chance to grow in insidious ways. For instance, by rejecting the possibility of there being evil in ourselves (which usually means just that we don't have the guts to do something forthrightly evil on our own), we may tend to become self-righteous, and feel inclined therefore to attack the external evils of society, not realizing that these are just straw tigers, easy targets by which we are diverting our criticism from ourselves.

It is likely that we would be far more sensitive and kind than we now are if we were willing to recognize that to be human is in some sense to be "guilty"—responsible for pain, at least. Even if we were saints, we still would kill thousands of plants and animals just by walking through a field, or driving a car to town. We may of course excuse ourselves on the grounds of physical necessity, but that kind of reasoning seems a step away from one kind of reality and significance, leading to further rationalizations. But if we do take upon ourselves this onus of responsibility, we may discover new and deep possibilities for beauty and goodness. We destroy and mangle and maim, and the guilt is ours to bear; but by the same token we can create, we can pour our pity and love, like balm, into the very wounds in life which we have inflicted; and by shaping life into art, instinct to intelligence, we can raise the quality of the whole world's life.

We dislike extremes these days, and at the same time wish we could feel more deeply the significance of our daily life and our philosophical conceptions. Yet significance does not come from conservatism or rationalization but from a full-blooded acknowledgement of all our potentialities, for good as well as for evil. Only when we truly realize that we could become an Eichmann do we have any chance at all of becoming a Christ. Such a realization is not very pleasant, and most of us have so far succeeded in avoiding it. But if we are serious in our aspirations, we must learn to face life head-on, to ascertain the relative strengths of our search for knowledge and our desire for comfort, and ask ourselves quite simply: Do we place truth first or second?

Great ideas come into the world as gently as doves. Perhaps then, if we listen attentively, we shall hear, amid the uproar of empires and nations, a faint flutter of wings, the gentle stirring of life and hope.

—ALBERT CAMUS

KARMA OF RELEASE

TOWARD the end of 1963 the release of a “lifer” at the age of 84 was announced. He had spent sixty-four years in prison, having been convicted when twenty years of age. He could have been released earlier but, having outlived all near relatives, he had no place to go. Eventually a distant connection was found, one who was willing to care for him, and his release was accomplished. Thus through a criminal act this man had darkened a period longer than many attain as their full life span.

Every being is subject to the conditioned existence which matter imposes. In those kingdoms below man there is no crime. There is, however, constant taking of life; each hierarchy thus provides food for itself, there being no surcease to the turning of this wheel of life and death. To meet the demands of inexorable law, life is destroyed at prodigal rates, especially in the lower categories. In the human kingdom, however, the conditioned existence in matter takes on other aspects. Man may create a life-renewing society, he may purposefully fulfill the cycle of youth, adulthood, and old age. This is because his life in matter is modified by the self-conscious mind.

There are many degrees of intelligence, from that of the smallest amœba which wraps itself around the object it wishes to devour to that of the greatest self-conscious thinker. But there are conditions which intelligence alone has never fully overcome, and they tend to modify greatly the life in a body. They are the modifications caused by the three *gunas* or “qualities” of the *Bhagavad-Gita*—*satwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—which pervade our universe of matter. Subject to the first, one may be wise and good; to the second, active and evil; to the third, indifferent and ignorant; and as these qualities mix and come and go in most personalities, affecting the workings of both body and mind, the accumulated karma is mixed. In full sunlight we see clearly, during twilight less so, and when the darkness comes on we stumble. Light and darkness will continue to come and go as long as we are unable to rise above the qualities.

There is a little-known verse in the Bible referred to by Jesus when in danger of being stoned. He had spoken of himself as being one with God. To vindicate his words he quoted from the "law": "... and I said ye are gods." This quotation is part of a verse of the 82nd psalm. There is no other direct mention of the inner god in the Bible, and the verse quoted is qualified further on in the same psalm by the statement, "... but ye shall die like men." To die like men can have but one meaning; he who thus dies is spiritually blind to his true heritage. And, lacking the truth, he is apt to trip and fall. He may then be in the position of the youth who lost his freedom and at an advanced age had no place to go when release was in sight. Each one, therefore, through his manner of thinking, may fetter the soul and "die like men," or he may energize the soul's powers to live like a god.

There are many forms of meditation which tend to control the mind, from that of the hermit of the sixth chapter of *The Bhagavad-Gita*, who prepares his seat in the forest with kusa grass covered by a skin and a cloth, to Edison's intense concentration for unnumbered hours, which brought forth his great inventions. Others, like Thoreau, find a pond or a wilderness and commune with nature: unknowingly they worship the "Adi-bhuta" (the Supreme Spirit dwelling in all elemental nature through the mysterious power of nature's illusion), and return richly inspired. Though few are blessed with the genius for such undertakings, the thinking of a lifetime takes upon itself a definite form and tendency. If uncontrolled or misdirected upon the sense life, the thoughts "become an army and bear him off a captive slave."

The first effort in the Theosophical life is control of the mind. It is not a simple problem. At the outset each one faces his past thinking. Like dust carried by the wind, all the useless mental deposits of the past arise to blind him, and aspirations fade and disappear in the storm. Many retreat at the first onset, little knowing that in so doing they are but postponing, perhaps to a less favorable future, that which will open the way to spiritual knowledge. All effort, therefore, should be used to create a mode of meditation directed toward the higher aspects of thought. One cannot gain control of the mind if any element of irritation is present. (And let us here note that a large percentage of irritation arises from small and trivial causes.) This does not mean that benefit can be had by withdrawal from ties of family or occupation to which karma has

led us. In seeking the karma of release the mind must be prepared to sustain itself upon a plane of thought in which it is free from hindrances, while the body is active on the plane of its birth. No one can rise spiritually who attempts to flee that which karma has decreed. That his position may not seem paradoxical, one has only to recall that acts performed as sacrifices to the Supreme "are dissolved and left without effect on him." Thus even the necessary activities of the body, at first seen as a hindrance, can become a source of inspiration.

Those who have heard their own recorded voice for the first time are apt to exclaim—is that my voice?—never having given attention to the modulations of their own speech. An analogous experience may occur on the inner planes of being, for thought is an inner voice which speaks from the earliest use of words in childhood, until the soul reaps what it can in death to sustain the devachanic bliss. Wise are those who listen to the modulation and tone of thought, and thus learn to correct the faults of this inner form of speech. Devotion to the Supreme Spirit transforms the inner man, and from such devotion comes control of the wayward mind. And part of this devotion may express itself in the silent recall from memory of sacred verses from great devotional works—an efficient method of expelling that which becomes as dross to the awakened mind.

We will now assume that the mind—whether of small or greater capacity—has attained a firm control through devotion. It is able to spend appreciable time in some form of planned meditation. Further, this mind is able to retain throughout the daily routine the fruit of that meditation even though it must identify itself with necessary action. It is as if the actor could at one and the same time perform and yet be part of his audience. Such a mind is fully conscious of the surge of life, and may direct some of its eddies and currents, but remains undisturbed because the fault of attachment to the results of action has been overcome.

In the light of this achievement we shall attempt to study what will be the effect upon the karmic accumulations of the past: what new karma the present will produce; and, having arrived at a fair perspective, attempt to glimpse the future. (It must be remembered in all discussions of karma that the ego's identity remains the same at all times, only the vehicles change. And even though the mind may be reconstructed by the power of the will, the hidden past also remains. Sooner or later, in one life or another the appropriate

vehicle will appear and delayed karma will act. It is a fact that wealth may become a hindrance to spiritual progress just as much as poverty, but it is also true that the awakened mind is proof against the changing vicissitudes of life. It has the power to perceive that which is changeless and therefore to devote itself to the inner life of spirit. In this enlightened condition the ego attains a state of calm and complete indifference to that which strikes or that which caresses, thus rising above the qualities.)

The twenty-seventh aphorism on karma states: "Measures taken by an ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted." So far there has been given but a sketch of that which is needed to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and counteract by setting up different causes. But a sketch, by subordinating details, may express the fundamental composition the more forcefully; each one must fill in the details according to his own intuitive powers. It is this effort which will afford an understanding of present karma. But the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted will indicate the success or failure in altering the sway of karmic tendency, and the opening of the way for new karma which will break the bonds of past actions.

The new freedom, the treasured idea of release, may not be realized fully in one life, but future incarnations will be inspired by the effort made. One aspect of release will, however, be felt very soon. It is the release afforded in the higher plane of thought through detachment from the fruit of action. The deeply imbedded roots of binding action will die out and their elimination will release greater energy for right action, the fruit of compassionate motivation. Thus the mind will gather power, it will then face with confidence and resourcefulness the problems confronting the spiritual nature while struggling to overcome the illusions of matter. The secret of success, of course, lies in sustained intention. In other words, there can be no relaxation in the drive toward an attainment of spiritual knowledge, the knowledge of right motivation, and consequent right action, in all planes of possible perception and states of self-consciousness: "... it is a resolute continuance in the study of Adhyatma, the Superior Spirit, and a meditation upon the end of acquirement of a knowledge of truth."

The nature and ways of karma can only be revealed by a perception that penetrates the occult side of human nature, and its devious comings and goings on the highways and by-ways of history. We suffer or enjoy in a great ocean of thought that reaches back, in its tides and currents, to immemorial ages lost to our present conscious minds. But our psychic nature and its lower mind float in this ocean, the ocean of unappeased desires. The disturbances of the present are but surface ripples compared to the gigantic tidal waves of the unknown past that have swept nations and races into oblivion. It is therefore the part of the individual, conscious of what has been and may again occur, to so control his lower nature that it will rise above these unseen inner conditions. The body may die, or it may live on to afford a greater opportunity for this purifying process, but in either case nothing can be lost that the higher self achieves. He has earned an account which will draw interest and be carried forward and added to in future lives.

Thus the path of release may be sought. This path leads to the "karmaless" condition, the condition of final release, in which the inner man, having paid all debts, is free to choose to help suffering humanity with the great wisdom he has gained. So the Buddha, in each man, becomes Bodhisatva.

LIBERATION THROUGH WISDOM

Those who are strong in their faith, and full of confidence that the divine power in man can protect him against all evil influences, whether they come from an incarnated or a discarnate entity, cannot be harmed by either. But if a weak person is obsessed by such an evil influence and is unable to drive it out, then it is necessary that some other person who possesses that spiritual power should drive it out in his place. . . . If his mind is weak and his soul not protected by faith and confidence, evil may enter. Therefore, the best remedy is a strong mind, illuminated by the interior light of wisdom coming from God.

—PARACELSUS

letters • questions • comment

Editors, THEOSOPHY: A primary theosophical objective, as everyone knows, is an honest brotherhood of all races and creeds—a venture not beyond the capability of success. But the existence today of several societies bearing the name theosophical, largely fenced off from each other by decades of misunderstandings and outworn tradition—this is a mockery of brotherhood, the brotherhood all profess. No Theosophist denies that Brotherhood is the basis of his society's platform, but does he face the logical corollary deductions that stem from this simple declaration? Are we furthering our objective when we remain aloof from each other, uncommunicative, when we view each other's activities with suspicion verging on antipathy? *In our minds* we may give service to working towards brotherhood. But *in our hearts we fail*, because when it comes to other theosophical societies we hedge, we dodge, or we ignore the issue. And because of this we are open to the charge of moral cowardice. We prefer the dismal twilight zone of Status Quo because its tricky light permits us to hide from thoughts that are too strong for us, to refrain from answering questions too challenging, and to substitute straw men for real facts so that we may knock them down and fool ourselves with false activity. And finally we dismiss the whole aggravating problem with the sweeping statement that our differences are basic because they concern interpretation of teaching and therefore any acts toward a final unity would be hypocritical.

These errors are now being challenged. The worst of them is the disposition to disconnect ourselves from the other groups; to have little or no communication with them. But all the groups have beauty and strength and good character, even though, as in all human relations, they likewise have their share of error. It is ridiculous and untheosophical for these groups to think that they are The Chosen Group. Yet that is the attitude which they hold. Certainly H.P.B. gave us warning enough: That any group which became bigoted would find itself stranded on some sand bank. There is a

good deal of bigoted thinking among us. The challenge is to reunite and become reconciled to our brother theosophists.

READER

The criticisms and perspectives focused by this letter may be employed to further either an ecumenical movement among theosophical organizations or an emergence of one institutional body. Both proposals have been made during recent years, in terms of specific steps which might be taken, and the general atmosphere of communication between Theosophists of various affiliations has become more tolerant and less divisive. So much so, in fact, that the extreme criticism of the writer of this letter seems to be directed against views that have already either been replaced or modified.

There is an important difference, however, between seeking a theosophical front which presents a single ideological base, and working for reciprocal understanding among Theosophists whose concern in the Theosophical Movement is of a somewhat different nature. The working Theosophist, according to H.P.B., might be "either a philanthropist, or a scholar, a searcher into Aryan and other old literature, or a psychic student." In other words, the mutual assistance possible among Theosophists engaged in promulgation of a distinct theosophical perspective is a matter of discovered feasibility, proceeding from self-determination in respect to those aspects of theosophical dissemination dearest to one's own heart. H.P.B. also warns against the attempt to proscribe viewpoints and methods of endeavor by the man who merely "understands Theosophy in his own—if the expression may be used—sectarian and egotistic way." This applies not only to the characteristic limitations of small organizations, but may also apply equally to a large and impressive "united front." Nothing could be more disastrous to the Theosophic ideal than the idea that Theosophy is *now* properly represented before the public.

Madame Blavatsky, herself, was neither by temperament nor design an organizer. She was a philosopher, a teacher, a psychologist—and above all an occultist. She fully comprehended that which few enthusiastic partisans in any movement have been able to comprehend: that, as historian Carl Becker puts it, true "revolution must be accomplished in men's minds before they make it a work of their hands." It is difficult to think that any organizational basis for pre-

senting Theosophy to the world can be enlightened by enough philosophical understanding to enable the embodiment of those universal perspectives which Theosophy should ideally represent. One wonders if the most effective beginning for uniting the good wishes and background of many formerly differing Theosophists will not have to be a recognition of the need for developing a completely non-sectarian, nonpartisan language. This might be a language which evolves in part from the theosophical tendencies in contemporary psychology and religion—to which the Theosophist, proper, can contribute, but which he can neither entirely design nor control.

A single institutional body representing Theosophy before the world might easily tend toward an enthusiastic partisanship. But proselyting is not the way of theosophical growth, and the Theosophist can best demonstrate breadth of perspective by avoiding proselytism and partisanship in all of his endeavors. H.P.B. was primarily concerned with the many works of publication which made theosophical study possible for the interested individual, whatever his background. In the *Theosophist*, her opening articles, "What Are the Theosophists?" and "What Is Theosophy?," gave the broadest possible base for theosophical definition and sought to establish the fact that Theosophy was not and should not become a "religion." In *Lucifer*, she provided an open forum so that the conceptions of philosophy emphasized in theosophical study could exist side by side with other viewpoints. She obviously hoped that the modulus of *Lucifer* might be widely extended. In her basic volumes, *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, she found countless ways of demonstrating that Theosophy is not of any particular group—that no group was "chosen" in an authoritative historical sense to be a doctrinal fount. She relied, finally, upon "a conviction on the part of many, and *knowledge* by a few, that there must be somewhere a philosophical and religious system which shall be scientific and not merely speculative." But this reliance was upon a natural intuition present in any human being who undertakes a search *beyond* partisanship.

All in all, the Theosophical message is so complex that the appearance of any single institutional representation militates against the broadest reaches of theosophical philosophy. If Madame Blavatsky herself is regarded as a special "authority," it is primarily because all her labors were directed towards widening the receptivity of students to this sort of comprehension.

on the lookout

William Q. Judge—an Appreciation

The March American *Theosophist* took occasion to reprint a THEOSOPHY lead under its original heading, "The Continuing Theosophical Movement," and introduced the article by the following editor's note:

March 21 is the 68th anniversary of the death of Mr. William Q. Judge. This article, reprinted by permission of the editors from the magazine THEOSOPHY for January 1964, is based on the writings of Mr. Judge and is included here in recognition of his services as the first president of The Theosophical Society in America and of the contribution he made to "The Continuing Theosophical Movement."

The significance of this reprinting lies, not only in its reference to name and purpose of William Q. Judge, but in the fact that this article illuminates the role of a man of Judge's stature as philosopher and psychologist. In the beginning it was H.P.B. who constructed the foundations of philosophy which would establish the true nature of a "moral universe." But what of disciples and companions?

There are others, of course, who helped. There were those who saw her design and understood it, or some part of it, and worked along with her. William Q. Judge was one who seems to have seen the plan whole. His writings, at any rate, bespeak this sort of understanding. What he said and did accomplished a further penetration, a further gathering and arrangement of the materials of meaning and reality for the moral universe. And so it happened, in the decades after 1875, that there were those who saw and started in to speak and act *as if* the moral universe were indeed the true world. They fed the slow processes of an inner metabolism of organic growth in mind and in comprehension of the rule of law in every thing and in every circumstance. Here alone, in these awakenings, in these perceptions, in these roots of attitude and behavior which see in the affairs of men the struggle of souls to find a meaning for their lives, and which seek to light up the arena of this struggle with timeless concepts of meaning, is the true strength and progress of the Theosophical Movement.

Further Appreciation

Further evidence of the growing comprehension of Mr. Judge's role in the Movement is shown by the lead in the Canadian *Theosophist* (March-April). Titled "William Quan Judge," the article begins:

It is heartening to observe throughout the Theosophical Movement an increasing respect for the life and work of William Q. Judge. Until a few years ago his very existence was ignored by some groups, and while he is not everywhere looked upon as one of the founders of modern Theosophy (which he certainly was) his unique contribution to our cause is now almost universally acknowledged.

Judge is and will be remembered not only for his writings, which present the age-old, ever-new Divine Wisdom in clear, unequivocal language, but also for his example to students. His unselfish devotion to the Society, his almost superhuman efforts to promote and teach Theosophy, his pure conception and practice of brotherhood stand as ideals to which we should constantly aspire. . . .

His achievements, however, are not to be measured only in terms of organization. What he did was to show *how* to be a Theosophist. If our own attempts fall short of his standard, we still know, by his example, that greater things are possible for us. Judge never ceased *trying* to reach perfection, and the least we can do is to *try* within our limitations, to follow his path.

The "Average" Theosophist and H. P. Blavatsky

In the spring issue of *Theosophia*, Boris de Zirkoff, the editor, notes "a growing realization on the part of many earnest and intelligent students [of Theosophy] that somehow or other they, and many others through the years, had been 'taken for a ride' . . ." There is reason, he says, for these students to have become "uncomfortable" and "disturbed"; for—

It is the fact that for over two generations, more or less, members of the organized Theosophical Movement have become progressively more and more ignorant of the basic teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy as brought forth by H. P. Blavatsky and her own Teachers. It is sufficient to take a casual trip to any part of the world, and to talk to the average member of the Theosophical Society, to realize very soon that he or she does not have any definite idea as to the *philosophical bases* of the system of thought known as Theosophy, and has but a scant acquaintance with the message, teachings and expositions of that system of thought as contained in the original works of the Founders.

It appears that this state of affairs came about as a result of

“psychic visions” and “astral investigations” by self-appointed visionaries and “sensitives” whose love for the spectacular and the mysterious had beclouded their reason and substituted imagination for common sense—a most uncommon sense, by the way!

Spiritualists (1918) and H. P. Blavatsky

If even Theosophists were susceptible to what Mr. de Zirkoff calls “psychic visions” and “astral investigations,” it should come as no surprise that some spiritualistic mediums were, they thought, in contact with H.P.B.’s “spirit.” An article in *Search* for May, by Carl Wickland, M.D., tells how, through the mediumship of Mrs. Wickland, his circle was visited by Mary Baker Eddy and Ella Wheeler Wilcox—both of whom contritely recanted their “earth-life” teachings and whole-heartedly ascribed to the Spiritualist teachings. Later, “very unexpectedly, Madam Helena P. Blavatsky, whose teachings and writings made world-wide the theory of Reincarnation, joined the Wicklands one evening to express her thoughts since ‘passing’.” “Madam Blavatsky” speaks:

I wish there were more like you to help us, to meet us on a half-way basis to understand that there is no death. I do wish I had taught this truth more, and also that I had tried to look further into it. I knew about it. I also had many manifestations. I do not know why, but when truth comes to us we shut it out. Truth is always hidden. We have to search to find it. Theories and dogmas seem to have more chance in the world than truth. Every one has some manifestations, but hides them instead of acknowledging them.

“Shallow Reflection of Wishful Thinking”?

“Madam Blavatsky” continues:

I wanted to be a leader in some way or other. Now I want to bring the truth to the world. I knew of spirit manifestations, for I had them myself. I did a great deal in my early days along this line, but then I commenced to investigate Theosophy. To me came Reincarnation. It appealed to me for a time, for I could not see truth clearly. . . .

When you study, especially when you study Theosophy, you develop your mind and live in an atmosphere of mind. You remove yourself as much as possible from the physical. Naturally you become sensitive, and naturally you feel the spirits around you. They speak to you by impressions, and their past will be like a panorama. You feel it and you live over again the past of spirits and make the mistake of taking this for the memory of your own former incarnations. I did not know this when I

lived. I took it for granted that these memories were true, but when I came to the spirit side of life I learned differently.

I studied a great deal. Theosophy is still the best and highest philosophy of life intrinsically, but let us study the truth. Let us live up to the truth of it and forget theories. . . .

This message, purportedly from Mme. Blavatsky, and lacking all hallmarks of her authentic writing, clearly substantiates the statement in *The Theosophical Movement* (p. 36): "The doctrines of the Spiritualists were a shallow reflection of wishful thinking, well-intentioned, but without either intellectual strength or firm moral foundation."

Imagination Confounded

It seems impossible that any person who had ever read the authentic writings of H. P. Blavatsky could respond to such statements except with laughter. To begin with, H.P.B. never "studied Theosophy": she "studied" *Occult Science*, passing on, under the name "Theosophy," as much as was permitted and speaking always with the authority of knowledge. Compare for validity, say, the conversation recorded by the Wicklands with the following passage from H.P.B.'s Second Message to the American Theosophists:

We have had, as said before, to hold our own against the Spiritists, in the name of Truth and Spiritual Science. Not against the students of the true psychic knowledge, nor against the enlightened Spiritualists; but against the lower order of phenomenals—the blind worshippers of illusionary phantoms of the Dead. These we have fought for the sake of Truth, and also for that of the world which they were misleading. . . .

Or with this from the Third Message:

What I said last year remains true today, that is, that the Ethics of Theosophy are more important than any divulgement of psychic laws and facts. The latter relate wholly to the material and evanescent part of the septenary man, but the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man—the reincarnating Ego. We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practice, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races. Do not work merely for the Theosophical Society, but *through* it for Humanity.

Authentic versus Spurious Teachings

Returning to Mr. de Zirkoff's article, "Some Healthy Doubts," we find him suggesting that "a little bit of honest-to-goodness study of

H. P. Blavatsky's writings, a little closer attention to her warnings, and a stronger sense of ethical values . . . could have avoided three-quarters of the trouble. . . ." He continues:

The result of a closer acquaintance with the works of H. P. Blavatsky and of her own Teachers may be somewhat disconcerting at first. You may find that what she taught about such matters as the after-death states, cycles, Hierarchies, planetary evolution, the inner structure of man, and the invisible kingdoms of life in nature, are vastly different from what has been taught and written on the same subjects in a large number of books officially published by Theosophical Organizations for many years past. This may come as a shock. But shocks are not to be feared. They are salutary, in the sense that they show the presence within man of either a group of ideas or a bundle of feelings which *are shocked*, and *can be* and *are*, *disturbed*. If they can be disturbed, they can be shaken; if they can be shaken, they have no permanent root; if they are not permanently rooted, they cannot be true; hence something is wrong; it should be remedied; it *can* be remedied by throwing out of one's consciousness that which does not correspond to truth. And even if some feeling of *void* temporarily invades the mind and soul, a deeper realization will dawn in due time, and what has been gained will be immeasurably greater than what has been lost.

True Line of Succession

There were, however, a few of H.P.B.'s students and co-workers who never wavered from their allegiance to her as *Teacher*. Mr. de Zirkoff acknowledges their influence as he concludes:

It should be stated that in the considered judgment of the present writer there certainly *are* other writers and students, besides H. P. Blavatsky herself, who have both spoken and written along genuine lines, with a vast knowledge of Theosophy, and an inner spiritual realization and awareness all their own; what they have to say has been and is valid, but it is so only because it does not deviate from the original message of the Founders.

The "undeviating student" best known to members of ULT is, of course, Robert Crosbie, whose life was devoted to the promulgation of Theosophy *as presented by* H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge. Everything he said or wrote exemplified this dedication:

I am no believer in diluted Theosophy. The Masters did not dilute it. We either carry on Their work or we do not; there is no need for hypocrisy nor self-deception. Others in the world, not able to perceive the Oneness of Theosophy, nor its bearing at the present time, may and do use portions of it—some of them.

it is to be feared, to their own condemnation and the further bewilderment of mankind. . . . Theosophy has to be held aloft in such a way as to confront errors of every kind, with their handmaidens of cant and hypocrisy.

Age of Man Now Estimated at 2,000,000 Years

Dr. Louis Leakey has just reported the finding of "human" bones more ancient than any other known specimens (Los Angeles *Herald Examiner*, April 3). Until this find, Dr. Leakey had classified "Zinjanthropus" (see THEOSOPHY 50:94) as "human" and believed him to have been the direct ancestor of man. Later evaluation, however, caused him to change his mind. According to the *Herald Examiner*:

Zinjanthropus lived without change for another 500,000 years in Olduvai. (Radioactive data had established the age of his bones as 175 million years.) But from the beginning he was different from man—he was chunky and squat, his jaw was massive, his teeth were obviously designed to chew roots and other coarse vegetation, his brow ridges were formidable.

In an evolutionary sense, he represented a dead end. Leakey believes now that he "evolved away from man" and in the process became extinct.

Homo Habilis

Dr. Leakey and his wife found the fossil parts of five "homo habilis" (having ability) individuals in Olduvai Gorge, Tanganyika, their 1960-61 diggings. The bones were identified as belonging to an eleven-year-old child, an elderly woman, and a girl twenty to twenty-one years old. The description of *Homo habilis* and his habitat are given as follows:

Homo habilis, a pigmy by modern standards, took up residence in the Olduvai Gorge about 1,820,000 years ago. He stuck around for more than a million years. Others of his species apparently fanned out from Africa to what is now Europe.

The gorge is now a desert, except during rare rainy spells. Two million years ago, according to the fossil evidence, it was a wet tropical region rich in lakes and rivers and fish and game. *Homo habilis*, judging by his teeth, was omniverous—he ate meat as well as vegetable foods.

He stood 3½ to 4½ feet tall. His skull was small. But judging by its shape, he was "just like you or me." His hands and feet were similar in form and function to modern man's. His jaw was roomy enough to accommodate a tongue capable of forming words.

Homo habilis appeared at Olduvai before *Zinjanthropus*, shared the region with "zinj" (much as modern chimpanzees and gorillas share Africa today) and continued to occupy the gorge after Zinj had gone the way of other dying species.

It will be particularly interesting to Theosophists that evidence of a *man*-like species has been found which is so much older than any formerly discovered specimens of hominoids.

The Expanding Universe

Strictly speaking, it is not so much the universe, itself, as man's knowledge of it that is "expanding," as indicated in a Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner* story for Sept. 30, 1963. Dr. Allan Sandage, of Mount Palomar Observatory, had obtained "new information" by photographing a distant galaxy, M-82, through Palomar's 200-inch mirror reflecting telescope, the picture showing the "blowing up of five million solar systems" in the galaxy. (How many planets, if any, were exploded with the suns remains unknown.) Specifically, however:

The picture shows that the suns are bursting in the "nucleus," the central hub, of the galaxy M-82, which appears flattened in the middle, like a lens. From this general appearance it seems that the galaxy M-82 is essentially like the Milky Way in which we live, a system of about 150 billion suns, one of which is our sun. The picture is a photographic record of what happened when the rays left the galaxy about 10,000,000 years ago.

How Near is "Near"?

Some vague idea of the vastness of the cosmic reach is gained when we note that what most of us would consider a "distant" galaxy is called by astronomers a "near neighbor"—a mere ten million light-years away. Dr. Sandage and his associate, Dr. C. R. Lynds, interpret the photograph as follows:

The explosion in M-82 started 1,500,000 years before the hydrogen atomic rays photographed now left the galaxy. Explosion matter was spreading out with a speed of 20,000,000 miles per hour, it was estimated from the spectrograms which were made as the photographing was done.

A spectrogram is the photograph of the split light, the "rainbow," showing the different wave lengths of the light from the galaxy. It enables the scientist to determine how fast the light emitting atoms are moving, and in which direction and so forth. Part of the broken atoms, especially the protons, the cores of the hydrogen atoms, of the exploding suns of the Galaxy M-82

have been reaching us as "cosmic rays particles," and riddling and passing through our bodies day and night, without our being aware of them.

Numberless Centers of Cosmic Radiation

Other interpretations of the photographed phenomenon, however, are suggested by a passage in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 33-34), where H. P. Blavatsky quotes from the *Commentary*:

The Spheres of Being, or centres of life, which are isolated nuclei breeding their men and their animals, are numberless; not one has any resemblance to its sister-companion or to any other in its own special progeny.

All have a double physical and spiritual nature.

The nucleoles are eternal and everlasting; the nuclei periodical and finite. The nucleoles form part of the absolute. They are the embrasures of that black impenetrable fortress, which is for ever concealed from human or even Dhyanic sight. The nuclei are the light of eternity escaping therefrom. . . .

Thus there is but one Absolute Upadhi (basis) in the spiritual sense, from, on, and in which, are built for Manvantaric purposes the countless basic centres on which proceed the Universal, cyclic, and individual Evolutions during the active period.

Black Mass Rites Erupt

England, surprisingly, has long had her tradition of witches and Devil-worshippers haunting the heaths. *Time* for Dec. 7, 1963, notes the many occasions during that year when altars had been desecrated and churchyards vandalized:

Church defilement has lately become an occupational hazard of village vicars; England seems to be in the midst of a mild little revival of black magic. Recently, the Rev. J. L. Head of St. Clements at Leigh-on-see, Essex, found a sheep's heart stuck with 13 thorns on the grave of a woman believed to have been a witch. On All Souls' Eve, gravestones were overturned and hexes traced on the graveyard of the parish church in Appleton, Berkshire. . . . 1963, for no clear reason, has been a banner year for sorcerers. In March the pro-Labor *New Statesman* concluded that "black magic seems to be strong in southern England and . . . in Conservative constituencies."

These demonstrations have led to instances of "rehallowing" the altar after desecration, and in at least one instance (Los Angeles *Times*, Jan. 6) occasioned a public and authoritative "curse" by a Church of England clergyman. He said: "I pronounce a curse on those who touched God's acre, and on their sacrilege and the terrible

thoughts in their minds. May their days be of anguish and sorrow and may God have mercy on their souls."

In Marked Contrast

It is sometimes forgotten that the curse is as much a religious duty of the Roman and Anglican churches as is the blessing, though nowadays seldom performed. H.P.B. states (*Isis* II, 334) that "among the thousand rites, dogmas, and ceremonies copied from Paganism, the Church can claim but one invention as thoroughly original with her—namely, the doctrine of eternal damnation, and one custom, that of the anathema." It seems apropos, then, to turn for contrast to the rigid observance of Buddhist rules required of all "semi-monastics and semi-laymen." Of these rules, H.P.B. says:

The most important of these is *not to curse upon any consideration, for the curse returns upon the one that utters it, and often upon his innocent relatives who breathe the same atmosphere with him.* To love each other, and even our bitterest enemies; to offer our lives even for animals, to the extent of abstaining from defensive arms; to gain the greatest of victories by conquering one's self; to avoid all vices; to practice all virtues, especially humility and mildness; to be obedient to superiors, to cherish and respect parents, old age, learning, virtuous and holy men; to provide food, shelter, and comfort for men and animals; to plant trees on the roads and dig wells for the comfort of travelers; such are the moral duties of Buddhists. (*Isis Unveiled* II, 608.)

"New Catholic Universities in Latin America"

Not only are these universities "new" in point of numbers; they are also new in concept and emphasis. Many non-Catholics are enrolled, and scholarship takes precedence over creed. A paragraph from *Time* (Nov. 22, 1963) shows the new approach:

The new Catholic universities do not emphasize creed at the expense of scholarship. Some require several hours of religious study a week; others do not. Almost all accept Protestant and Jewish students, hire non-Catholic teachers. Leftist students? A black-robed Jesuit administrator at Guatemala's Rafael Landivar University shrugs his shoulders. "For all I know, they may be our best students. They keep their politics to themselves."