

THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL
MOVEMENT, AND
THE BROTHERHOOD
OF HUMANITY



THE STUDY OF
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PHILOSOPHY, AND
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H. P. B.

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*M*AN ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of Ideas, by becoming to the best of his ability a co-worker with nature in the cyclic task. The ever unknowable and incognizable KARANA alone, the Causeless Cause of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart—invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through "the still small voice" of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence, making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the Universal Spirit, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the PRESENCE. —H.P.B.

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(b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and

(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A H M

All things in this age move like lightning and so with all our Karma.
—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XL

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No. 7

THEOSOPHIC VISTAS

JUST as with every teaching, so with every one whom man has called Teacher, there is a dual aspect to be comprehended—the apparent and the subtle, the exoteric and the esoteric. What is written, what is said—these belong to the apparent; the motivations for the teaching and the saying, the perspectives from which their basic structure derives, these are the subtleties and the deeps. And while it is presumption to claim knowledge of the quality of motive which inspires a truly great and universal teacher—while the perspectives of such as they can hardly be comprehended in exactitude by any student—those whose philosophy centers on the view of man as a pilgrim soul can realize that a great Teacher is one who has consciously blended the experiences and instructions of many lifetimes. This it is which the greatest of teachers manifest to us in what we try to signify by the term, "universality" of knowing.

Universality of knowing becomes, in action, many other things. The quality of compassion is its ethical manifestation. Ceaseless activity of mind represents its intellectual embodiment—for the more that is known, surely, the more can be seen to need further, more exact, and immediately useful knowing. Fearlessness of both mind and body is yet another proof of wisdom, for it is only ignorance which fears, and, fearing, complains or accuses.

It is through a partial sharing of these qualities that the student comes to know something of the manner of being H.P.B. was and is. Just as none can become a great teacher without a compassionate comprehension of man in all his idiosyncrasies, so none can fathom

the nature of a great teacher without having become, at least in part, the knower and experiencer of the qualities which lead and enable the great to teach. The life of William Q. Judge explains to us his "knowing" of H. P. Blavatsky, for the same qualities existed, too, in this one, who knew, always, how to be a *thinking* disciple. So, in a sense, it may be said that only those who *participate* in the life and vision of H.P.B., through a sharing of the qualities so nobly embodied in her, can be held to be her true students. All men have the potentiality of such sharing; many Theosophists have reached, at least for a time, the necessary balance of devotion and inspired thought; but, if the balance wavers, the essence of H.P.B. is lost, her instructions become beclouded and her example misconceived and misconstrued.

Yet while even the humblest may know something of great teachers through a sharing of some of the qualities of their aspiration, there is another aspect of Great Beinghood which will long escape the direct comprehension of the average man, no matter how pure and noble he may be in attitude and aim. He may lack what could be called a sense of history, by which is meant a specific knowledge of the karmic forces and opportunities of the given moment. In such wisdom lies the continuity of all the past, synthesized by a soul long incapable of losing the thread of meaning running through the events of bygone ages. For such a being, the past has not, in fact, gone by: what we call the "past" is but a causal stage of the present, just as the future can be seen to be an unfolded present.

This "sense of history" is but the sense of continuity, flowing from æons of uninterrupted, knowing participation in the historical process, and must make it possible for a great teacher to understand precisely what each moment calls for. Here is the knowledge "beyond the word of the Vedas"; here is the "sense of the fitness of things" which never seems to desert those who once possess it. They who hold firm this power are the true administrators of history. These know, with a sure knowing, what is possible of accomplishment at any special point in time. They are the true evaluators of "trends," the true selectors of "points of emphasis" in instruction, argument and example.

It is not easy to appreciate the sense of history possessed by a Buddha or a Christ. While their ethical precepts are familiar to us, the

history of their days is far removed from ours. Mankind was then in a different cycle of evolutionary confusion and evolutionary development. But H. P. Blavatsky was of our age, living in the time when had already emerged all the trends and forces now still conspiring to make future history. Those, then, who have been persistent in Theosophical study, and whose faith in the reality of her greatness as a teacher is assured, gain more from her sense of history than can be gained from the records of teachings offered by Krishna, Buddha, Plato, or the Christ.

All of H.P.B.'s articles and books afford aid in developing the sense of history. Even in her definitions of occult phrases, in her transmissions of the "Secret Doctrine," there is always suggested the dynamism of applicability to the present. She constantly attempted to employ every insight which could be utilized in the total structure of the Theosophical perspective, even when these needed modification and revision before they could be made to serve. This is apparent in her treatment of contemporary science and religion, in her copious annotations embodying the speculations and formulations of anthropologists and psychologists. In her articles for the *Theosophist*, and for *Lucifer*, especially, we come to see the horizons of H.P.B.'s mind—horizons both awesome and inspiring in their breadth. Thus, there could be no more fit commemoration of the month of her passing, for so many theosophists throughout the world, than the study of those articles, one of which—perhaps the greatest and most perennially useful—is reprinted in this issue. "What Are the Theosophists?" declares the catholicity, the cosmopolitanism of attitude, which alone can represent the theosophic spirit.

"What is Theosophy?", reprinted last month for the third time since the opening volume of THEOSOPHY is another intimation of H.P.B.'s "sense of history," and of the scope of her horizons. Students may take particular note of her use of a passage from Kenneth Mackenzie, author of the Royal Masonic Encyclopædia. Mackenzie spoke of the centuries when no formal schools of theosophy existed, but during which the currents of ideas were preserved through *individual* inspiration: "Entirely speculative, and founding no school, they [the Theosophists] have still exercised a silent influence upon philosophy; and no doubt, when the time arrives, many ideas thus silently propounded may yet give new directions to human thought."

H.P.B. quotes this before her brief description of the founding of the Theosophical Society of 1875, indicating that the word "speculative" may have stood for something more than theorizing—for, perhaps, what Vaughan had in mind when he distinguished a Theosophist as one who gives "a theory of God" or "the works of God, which has not revelation, but an inspiration of his own for its basis." Though H.P.B. claimed far more than "speculative value" for the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine*, it is yet apparent that she counselled against any loss of the spirit of independent thought, a spirit which had made possible the continuance of theosophy through dark centuries. In fact, everything H.P.B. wrote on the subject of Theosophy or the Theosophical Society contained a warning against the dogmatic, self-satisfied, closed-minded spirit of the nominal theosophists of her day. Such, certainly, could never feel a sense of universal history, would come to be dependent upon "the words of the Vedas," and subsequently serve only to perpetuate another sect. However clear and pure the original teachings left by her, these could easily become words, and cease being *ideas*.

The leading editorial in *Lucifer* for February, 1888, was H.P.B.'s ringing article, "What is Truth?" There she wrote: "As no two minds can be absolutely alike, each has to receive the supreme illumination *through* itself, according to its capacity, and from no *human* light. . . ." Further:

As every philosophy and religion, however incomplete, unsatisfactory, and even foolish some may be occasionally, must be based on a truth and fact of some kind, the reader has the opportunity of comparing, analyzing, and choosing from the several philosophies discussed therein. LUCIFER offers as many facets of the One universal jewel as its limited space will permit. . . . Therefore, do you find the views of a Christian clergyman who believes in his God and Christ, but rejects the wicked interpretations and the enforced dogmas of his ambitious proud Church, along with the doctrines of the Hylo-Idealist, who denies God, soul, and immortality, and believes in nought save himself. The rankest Materialists will find hospitality in our journal. . . . For, as said, Theosophy allows a hearing and a fair chance to all. It deems no views—if sincere—entirely destitute of truth. It respects thinking men, to whatever class of thought they may belong. Ever ready to oppose ideas and views which can only create confusion without benefiting philosophy, it leaves their expounders personally to believe in whatever

they please, and does justice to their ideas when they are good. Indeed, the conclusions or deductions of a philosophic writer may be entirely opposed to our views and the teachings we expound; yet, his premises and statements of facts may be quite correct, and other people may profit by the adverse philosophy, even if we ourselves reject it, believing we have something higher and still nearer to the truth.

This, indeed, is breadth of horizon, and in the same article we find explanation of why it is that all comfortable routines of thought must be transcended, if one's own innate powers of philosophic perception are not to be stifled:

When man lives at a maddening speed that leaves him barely time for reflection, he allows himself usually to be drifted down from cradle to grave, nailed to the Procrustean bed of custom and conventionality. Now conventionality—pure and simple—is a congenital LIE, as it is in every case a "simulation of feelings according to a received standard"; and where there is any simulation *there cannot be any truth*. How profound the remark made by Byron, that "truth is a gem that is found at a great depth; whilst on the surface of this world all things are weighed *by the false scales of custom,*" is best known to those who are forced to live in the stifling atmosphere of such social conventionalism, and who, even when willing and anxious to learn, dare not accept the truths they long for, for fear of the ferocious Moloch called Society.

Thus, H.P.B. explains, it can never be the policy of a Theosophical publication to contribute to the *narrowing* of horizons, whatever the excuse in the name of "purity of teachings." In the name of "purity" how many times have the citadels of dogma been fortified, how often that spirit of impartiality, which is the scientific ideal, been denied?

Surely *something* of the horizons of H.P.B. can be understood by reflection upon her continual emphases. When the following article, "What Are the Theosophists?" is read and studied, we shall find that the spirit of the Theosophy of every age lives and breathes in her words, and all students, in their varying degree, can find themselves able to make application of the wisdom it inspires to the complex problems of their own times. Our age needs, more than anything else, faith in *man* rather than faith in a religion, however noble it may be, or how pure in moral counsel.

WHAT ARE THE THEOSOPHISTS?

By H. P. BLAVATSKY

ARE they what they claim to be—students of natural law, of ancient and modern philosophy, and even of exact science? Are they Deists, Atheists, Socialists, Materialists, or Idealists; or are they but a schism of modern Spiritualism,—mere visionaries? Are they entitled to any consideration, as capable of discussing philosophy and promoting real science; or should they be treated with the compassionate toleration which one gives to “harmless enthusiasts”? The Theosophical Society has been variously charged with a belief in “miracles,” and “miracle-working”; with a secret political object—like the Carbonari; with being spies of an autocratic Czar; with preaching socialistic and nihilistic doctrines; and, *mirabile dictu*, with having a covert understanding with the French Jesuits, to disrupt modern Spiritualism for a pecuniary consideration! With equal violence they have been denounced as dreamers, by the American Positivists; as fetish-worshippers, by some of the New York press; as revivalists of “mouldy superstitions,” by the Spiritualists; as infidel emissaries of Satan, by the Christian Church; as the very types of “*gobe-mouche*,” by Professor W. B. Carpenter, F. R. S.; and, finally, and most absurdly, some Hindu opponents, with a view to lessening their influence, have flatly charged them with the employment of *demons* to perform certain phenomena. Out of all this pothor of opinions, one fact stands conspicuous—the Society, its members, and their views, are deemed of enough importance to be discussed and denounced: *Men slander only those whom they hate—or fear.*

But, if the Society has had its enemies and traducers, it has also had its friends and advocates. For every word of censure, there has been a word of praise. Beginning with a party of about a dozen earnest men and women, a month later its members had so increased as to necessitate the hiring of a public hall for its meetings; within two years, it had working branches in European countries. Still later, it found itself in alliance with the Indian Arya Samaj, headed by the learned Pandit Dayánand Saraswati Swami, and the Ceylonese

NOTE.—This article first appeared in the *Theosophist* for Oct., 1879.

Buddhists, under the erudite H. Sumangala, High Priest of Adam's Peak and President of the Widyodaya College, Colombo.

He who would seriously attempt to fathom the psychological sciences, must come to the sacred land of ancient Aryâvarta. None is older than she in esoteric wisdom and civilization, however fallen may be her poor shadow—modern India. Holding this country, as we do, for the fruitful hot-bed whence proceeded all subsequent philosophical systems, to this source of all psychology and philosophy a portion of our Society has come to learn its ancient wisdom and ask for the impartation of its weird secrets. Philology has made too much progress to require at this late day a demonstration of this fact of the primogenitive nationality of Aryâvart. The unproved and prejudiced hypothesis of modern Chronology is not worthy of a moment's thought, and it will vanish in time like so many other unproved hypotheses. The line of philosophical heredity, from Kapila through Epicurus to James Mill; from Patanjali through Plotinus to Jacob Böhme, can be traced like the course of a river through a landscape. One of the objects of the Society's organization was to examine the too transcendent views of the Spiritualists in regard to the powers of disembodied spirits; and, having told them what, in our opinion at least, a portion of their phenomena are *not*, it will become incumbent upon us now to show what they are. So apparent is it that it is in the East, and especially in India, that the key to the alleged "supernatural" phenomena of the Spiritualists must be sought, that it has recently been conceded in the *Allahabad Pioneer* (Aug. 11th, 1879), an Anglo-Indian daily journal which has not the reputation of saying what it does not mean. Blaming the men of science who "intent upon physical discovery, for some generations have been too prone to neglect super-physical investigation," it mentions "the new wave of doubt" (spiritualism) which has "latterly disturbed this conviction." To a large number of persons, including many of high culture and intelligence, it adds, "the supernatural has again asserted itself as a fit subject of inquiry and research. And there are plausible hypotheses in favour of the idea that among the 'sages' of the East . . . there may be found in a higher degree than among the more modernised inhabitants of the West traces of those personal peculiarities, whatever they may be, which are required as a condition precedent to the occurrence of

supernatural phenomena." And then, unaware that the cause he pleads is one of the chief aims and objects of our Society, the editorial writer remarks that it is "the only direction in which, it seems to us, the efforts of the Theosophists in India might possibly be useful. The leading members of the Theosophical Society in India are known to be very advanced students of occult phenomena, already, and we cannot but hope that their professions of interest in Oriental philosophy . . . may cover a deserved intention of carrying out explorations of the kind we indicate."

While, as observed, one of our objects, it yet is but one of many; the most important of which is to revive the work of Ammonius Saccas, and make various nations remember that they are the children "of one mother." As to the transcendental side of the ancient Theosophy, it is also high time that the Theosophical Society should explain. With how much, then, of this nature-searching, God-seeking science of the ancient Aryan and Greek mystics, and of the powers of modern spiritual mediumship, does the Society agree? Our answer is: with it all. But if asked what it believes in, the reply will be: "*As a body—Nothing.*" The Society, as a body, has no creed, as creeds are but the shells around spiritual knowledge; and Theosophy in its fruition is spiritual knowledge itself—the very essence of philosophical and theistic enquiry. Visible representative of Universal Theosophy, it can be no more sectarian than a Geographical Society, which represents universal geographical exploration without caring whether the explorers be of one creed or another. The religion of the Society is an algebraical equation, in which so long as the sign = of equality is not omitted, each member is allowed to substitute quantities of his own, which better accord with climatic and other exigencies of his native land, with the idiosyncrasies of his people, or even with his own. Having no accepted creed, our Society is very ready to give and take, to learn and teach, by practical experimentation, as opposed to mere passive and credulous acceptance of enforced dogma. It is willing to accept every result claimed by any of the foregoing schools or systems, that can be logically and experimentally demonstrated. Conversely, it can take nothing on mere faith, no matter by whom the demand may be made.

But, when we come to consider ourselves individually, it is quite another thing. The Society's members represent the most varied

nationalities and races, and were born and educated in the most dissimilar creeds and social conditions. Some of them believe in one thing, others in another. Some incline towards the ancient *magic*, or secret wisdom that was taught in the sanctuaries, which was the very opposite of supernaturalism or diabolism; others in modern spiritualism, or intercourse with the spirits of the dead; still others in mesmerism or animal magnetism, or only an occult dynamic force in nature. A certain number have scarcely yet acquired any definite belief, but are in a state of attentive expectancy; and there are even those who call themselves materialists, in a certain sense. Of atheists and bigoted sectarians of any religion, there are none in the Society; for the very fact of a man's joining it proves that he is in search of the final truth as to the ultimate essence of things. If there be such a thing as a speculative atheist, which philosophers may deny, he would have to reject both cause and effect, whether in this world of matter, or in that of spirit. There may be members who, like the poet Shelley, have let their imagination soar from cause to prior cause *ad infinitum*, as each in its turn became logically transformed into a result necessitating a prior cause, until they have thinned the Eternal into a mere mist. But even they are not atheist in the speculative sense, whether they identify the material forces of the universe with the functions with which the theists endow their God, or otherwise; for once that they cannot free themselves from the conception of the abstract ideal of power, cause, necessity, and effect, they can be considered as atheists only in respect to a personal God, and not to the Universal Soul of the Pantheist. On the other hand the bigoted sectarian, fenced in, as he is, with a creed upon every paling of which is written the warning "No Thoroughfare," can neither come out of his enclosure to join the Theosophical Society, nor, if he could, has it room for one whose very religion forbids examination. The very root idea of the Society is free and fearless investigation.

As a body, the Theosophical Society holds that all original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature whether materialists—those who find in matter "the promise and potency of all terrestrial life," or spiritualists—that is, those who discover in spirit the source of all energy and of matter as well, were and are, properly, Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of liv-

ing nature, and try to identify oneself with it. To revere that *Presence*, the invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent, and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there, and everywhere and nowhere; is ALL, and NOTHING; ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything; contained in all. It will, we think, be seen now, that whether classed as Theists, Pantheists or Atheists, such men are near kinsmen to the rest. Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought—Godward—he is a Theosophist; an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth with “an inspiration of his own” to solve the universal problems.

With every man that is earnestly searching in his own way after a knowledge of the Divine Principle, of man's relations to it, and nature's manifestations of it, Theosophy is allied. It is likewise the ally of honest science, as distinguished from much that passes for *exact*, physical science, so long as the latter does not poach on the domains of psychology and metaphysics.

And it is also the ally of every honest religion—to wit, a religion willing to be judged by the same tests as it applies to the others. Those books, which contain the most self-evident truth, are to it inspired (not revealed). But all books it regards, on account of the human element contained in them, as inferior to the Book of Nature; to read which and comprehend it correctly, the innate powers of the soul must be highly developed. Ideal laws can be perceived by the intuitive faculty alone; they are beyond the domain of argument and dialectics, and no one can understand or rightly appreciate them through the explanations of another mind, even though this mind be claiming a direct revelation. And, as this Society which allows the widest sweep in the realms of the pure ideal, is no less firm in the sphere of facts, its deference to modern science and its just representatives is sincere. Despite all their lack of a higher spiritual intuition, the world's debt to the representatives of modern physical science is immense; hence, the Society endorses heartily the noble and indignant protest of that gifted and eloquent preacher, the Rev. O. B. Frothingham, against those who try to undervalue the services

of our great naturalists. "Talk of Science as being irreligious, atheistic," he exclaimed in a recent lecture, delivered at New York, "Science is creating a new idea of God. It is due to Science that we have any conception at all of a *living* God. If we do not become atheists one of these days under the maddening effect of Protestantism, it will be due to Science, because it is disabusing us of hideous illusions that tease and embarrass us, and putting us in the way of knowing how to reason about the things we see. . . ."

And it is also due to the unremitting labors of such Orientalists as Sir W. Jones, Max Müller, Burnouf, Colebrooke, Haug, St. Hilaire, and so many others, that the Society, as a body, feels equal respect and veneration for Vedic, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, and other old religions of the world; and, a like brotherly feeling toward its Hindu, Sinhalese, Parsi, Jain, Hebrew, and Christian members as individual students of "self," of nature, and of the divine in nature.

Born in the United States of America, the Society was constituted on the model of its Mother Land. The latter, omitting the name of God from its constitution lest it should afford a pretext one day to make a state religion, gives absolute equality to all religions in its laws. All support and each is in turn protected by the State. The Society, modelled upon this constitution, may fairly be termed a "Republic of Conscience."

We have now, we think, made clear why our members, as individuals, are free to stay outside or inside any creed they please, provided they do not pretend that none but themselves shall enjoy the privilege of conscience, and try to force their opinions upon the others. In this respect the Rules of the Society are very strict. It tries to act upon the wisdom of the old Buddhistic axiom, "Honour thine own faith, and do not slander that of others"; echoed back in our present century, in the "Declaration of Principles" of the Brahmo Samaj, which so nobly states that: "no sect shall be vilified, ridiculed, or hated." In Section VI of the Revised Rules of the Theosophical Society, recently adopted in General Council, at Bombay, is this mandate:

It is not lawful for any officer of the Parent Society to express, by word or act, any hostility to, or preference for, any one section (sectarian division, or group within the Society) more than another. All must be regarded and treated as equally the objects of the

Society's solicitude and exertions. All have an equal right to have the essential features of their religious belief laid before the tribunal of an impartial world.

In their individual capacity, members may, when attacked, occasionally break this Rule, but, nevertheless, as officers they are restrained, and the Rule is strictly enforced during the meetings. For, above all human sects stands Theosophy in its abstract sense; Theosophy which is too wide for any of them to contain but which easily contains them.

In conclusion, we may state that, broader and far more universal in its views than any existing mere scientific Society, it has *plus* science its belief in every possibility, and determined will to penetrate into those unknown spiritual regions which exact science pretends that its votaries have no business to explore. And, it has one quality more than any religion in that it makes no difference between Gentile, Jew, or Christian. It is in this spirit that the Society has been established upon the footing of a Universal Brotherhood.

Unconcerned about politics; hostile to the insane dreams of Socialism and of Communism, which it abhors—as both are but disguised conspiracies of brutal force and sluggishness against honest labour; the Society cares but little about the outward human management of the material world. The whole of its aspirations are directed towards the occult truths of the visible and invisible worlds. Whether the physical man be under the rule of an empire or a republic, concerns only the man of matter. His body may be enslaved; as to his soul, he has the right to give to his rulers the proud answer of Socrates to his judges. They have no sway over the *inner* man.

Such, then, is the Theosophical Society, and such its principles, its multifarious aims, and its objects. Need we wonder at the past misconceptions of the general public, and the easy hold the enemy has been able to find to lower it in the public estimation. The true student has ever been a recluse, a man of silence and meditation. With the busy world his habits and tastes are so little in common that, while he is studying, his enemies and slanderers have undisturbed opportunities. But time cures all and lies are but ephemera. Truth alone is eternal.

About a few of the Fellows of the Society who have made great scientific discoveries, and some others to whom the psychologist and

the biologist are indebted for the new light thrown upon the darker problems of the inner man, we will speak later on. Our object now was but to prove to the reader that Theosophy is neither "a new fangled doctrine," a political cabal, nor one of those societies of enthusiasts which are born today but to die tomorrow. That not all of its members can think alike, is proved by the Society having organized into two great Divisions—the Eastern and the Western—and the latter being divided into numerous sections, according to races and religious views. One man's thought, infinitely various as are its manifestations, is not all-embracing. Denied ubiquity, it must necessarily speculate but in one direction; and once transcending the boundaries of exact human knowledge, it has to err and wander, for the ramifications of the one Central and absolute Truth are infinite. Hence, we occasionally find even the greater philosophers losing themselves in the labyrinths of speculations, thereby provoking the criticism of posterity. But as all work for one and the same object, namely, the disenthralment of human thought, the elimination of superstitions, and the discovery of truth, all are equally welcome. The attainment of these objects, all agree, can best be secured by convincing the reason and warming the enthusiasm of the generation of fresh young minds, that are just ripening into maturity, and making ready to take the place of their prejudiced and conservative fathers. And, as each—the great ones as well as small—have trodden the royal road to knowledge, we listen to all, and take both small and great into our fellowship. For no honest searcher comes back empty-handed, and even he who has enjoyed the least share of popular favor can lay at least his mite upon the one altar of Truth.

Woe is set apart for those who, having started in the path with the aid of H.P.B., shall in any way try to belittle her and her work. That work, it would be well for the members of the Theosophical Movement to continue without deviating, without excitement, without running to extremes, without imagining that Truth is a matter of either longitude or latitude: the truth of the soul's life is in no special quarter of the compass; it is everywhere round the whole circle, and those who look in one quarter will not find it.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

NEAR THE HOLY FIRE

THE *Upanishads* are a portion of the most ancient as well as the most sacred of the Sanskrit works, the *Vedas*, which are said to have been first taught orally for thousands of years on the shores of Lake Mansarovara, in Tibet, before they were recorded. Their antiquity is sufficiently attested by the fact that they are written in such an ancient form of Sanskrit, so different from the form now used, that there are no other writings like them in the literature of this eldest sister of all the known languages. The Vedas are not a single work, but, evidently the production of various authors, written during various periods of the ethnological evolution of the Indo-Aryan race.

The Vedic writings are classified in two great divisions, exoteric and esoteric, the former being the division of actions or works, and the latter the "division of divine knowledge." The *Upanishads* come under this last classification, and truly seem the echo of that primeval Wisdom-Religion, called the eternal "Secret Doctrine." The term *Upanishad* is explained as "that which destroys ignorance, and thus produces liberation" of the spirit, through the knowledge of the supreme though hidden truth. Literally the word means "to sit down near," and describes how instruction was given, in ancient times, to chelas who were preparing for their initiation.

The *Upanishads* are to the Vedas what the Kabala is to the Jewish Bible. As one writer pertinently remarks, they "breathe an entirely different spirit" (from other Brahmanical writings), and "a freedom of thought unknown in any earlier work except in the Rig Veda hymns themselves." They speak of the origin of the Universe, the nature of Deity, and of Spirit and Soul, as also of the metaphysical connection of mind and matter. In a few words: "They CONTAIN *the beginning and the end of all human knowledge, but they have now ceased to REVEAL it. . .*" They require now the additional possession of a Master-key to enable the student to get at their full meaning. Pupils of H. P. Blavatsky will recall that her first great book, *Isis Unveiled*, was given the sub-title of "A MASTER-KEY TO THE MYSTERIES OF ANCIENT AND MODERN SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY." Those who have in any measure assimilated this work, together with the

whole body of teaching which constitutes the Message of Theosophy to mankind in this age, may find a key to the understanding of every religious scripture, the Upanishads included.

To Janaka king of the Videhas came Yajnavalkya, determined not to speak openly with the king. But when Janaka king of the Videhas and Yajnavalkya debated together at the offering of the holy fire, Yajnavalkya offered the king a wish. The king chose: to ask questions according to his desire.

—*Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad**

To the theosophist of the twentieth century, living in an age of much speaking and little self-restraint, these words afford a most valuable lesson—the lesson of *reticence*. At the outset of the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, we find Yajnavalkya, sage and teacher, coming upon the scene with fixed determination not to speak openly with the king. It is the same lesson that is found in the life and teaching of every great philosopher, and pre-eminently in the admonition of Jesus, to “cast not your pearls.” No real lover of Wisdom, which is the meaning of the term, “philosopher,” will ever initiate a discussion on the laws and principles of the soul, unless he sees a kindred interest in the mind of the listener. It is said of Robert Crosbie, founder of the United Lodge of Theosophists, that although philosophy was the nearest and dearest subject to his heart, of which he preferred most to speak, he would never, of himself, *open* discussion with an inquirer. With no desire to “indoctrinate,” he observed the occult rule of reticence, and waited for the occasion. The presentation even of the Secret Doctrine in this era was contingent upon the desire and the need for it as seen in the minds of theosophists themselves, “for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded.”

It would be almost impossible to calculate the damage that is done, the antagonism created toward Theosophy each day, by premature and unwise speaking on the part of over-zealous students. This means not that one need hide his philosophy under a bushel, or refuse help to those who are seeking, but rather that one should bear in mind the ancient and eternal truism that the human heart is like the kusuli

*The study herein pursued is based on an edition entitled *Selections from the Upanishads and The Tao Teh King* (The Cunningham Press, Los Angeles 32, California, 1951), in which the Upanishadic writings are presented in the translation of Charles Johnston.

plant, which opens its cup to the sweet morning dew, but closes it before a heavy shower of rain. "Theosophy is for those who want it, and for none other," and unless the petals of the plant are opened by impulse from within—unless the individual himself *desires* to hear—no amount of trying to force attention will avail. It is not possible to *create* interest where no spark of interest exists. The wiser course is seen in those who, having learned the value of reticence, direct their energies to the task of maintaining centers of work, to which all who will may come and re-light their own fires. And so we find Yajnavalkya determined not to initiate the discussion himself, but offering king Janaka a wish. The king chose to ask questions according to his desire, and with the assent of the sage, sitting down near the holy fire, the highly moral discussion on spirit and soul, and the powers and attributes of soul begins.

Western minds, educated under the influence of Christian ritualism, are well acquainted with the use of water in Baptism. "Holy water" signifies that the water has been blessed by the priest for sacred purposes, but the term "holy fire," as used in this verse, finds no response in such minds. In the ancient cycle of initiation, which extended over a long period of time, *water* represented the first and lower steps toward purification, while trials connected with *fire* came last. Water could regenerate the body of matter; FIRE, alone, the *inner* spiritual man.

Like all physical plane rituals, the "offering of the holy fire" undoubtedly contains an inner spiritual meaning that is not perceived by the careless or the superficial. Modern science has little to say of the *essential nature* of fire, but Occultism and the ancient Wisdom Religion, have. Fire, says Occultism, lies at the root of all life, and has always been held sacred. Like every other element in the manifested universe, fire is sevenfold in its nature, the visible flame being but the lowest and least powerful division of all. On its seventh, or highest plane, fire is pure spirit, or God, for "Deity," says *The Secret Doctrine*, "is an arcane, living FIRE," corresponding with the Biblical verse, "The Lord is a consuming fire." The primitive names of the gods are all connected with fire, while the chief problems of every theology lie concealed beneath its imagery and the varying rhythms of its flames. Among some peoples there is the custom, even to this day, of keeping a perpetual fire burning, but with the

rise of commercialism and the dying down of spiritual aspirations, the custom has never been adopted in the West. We gain benefits from fire according to the way we think of it. Some may sit near it, and feel only its heat, or see the brilliance of its glow. Others receive all that it has to give, metaphysically as well as physically.

But it is not likely that the offering of the holy fire, or the custom of the perpetual flame, will be adopted in the West until the ideas of the ancient Wisdom Religion, or Theosophy, find wider currency in the minds of the race. Until that time, it is the task of sincere theosophists to re-kindle the fire of devotion in their own hearts, to light their own torch of spiritual aspiration, striving to keep it burning uninterruptedly with a steady flame of pure light. Around such a fire, the fire of clear minds and pure hearts, men of good faith may join together at any time for a worth-while hour of calm debate.

ASSURANCE OF IMMORTALITY

Our interest in the future, how strange it is if we can never hope to see the future. That interest rarely seems to desert us, and in itself appears inexplicable were we not possessed of an intuition which tells us that we shall have a part in it, that in some sense it already belongs to us, that we should bear it continually in mind, since it will be ours. So closely are all human ideals associated with futurity that, in the absence of the faith that man is an immortal being, it seems doubtful whether they could ever have come to birth.

The soul must sink when told that human life is mere buffoonery, that the story is without a point, that men must leave the theatre in which they played their sad, incomprehensible parts with their instincts mocked, their understandings unenlightened. Give them assurance that it is not so, and the scene is changed. The sky brightens, the door is left open for unimagined possibilities, things begin to fall into an intelligible pattern. Man and the universe may yet be reconciled.

—W. MACNEILE DIXON

NOTES ON THE KEY

WITH the conclusion of Section IV of the *Key* (page 60, orig. ed.), the student may well reflect upon the transition thus marked. Section V has to do with "The Fundamental Teachings of Theosophy," and pertains to what H.P.B. calls the "philosophy" of those constituting the "inner body" of the Society. Section IV, in other words, serves as an *introduction* to the very specific content of the following: a re-statement of the fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*, a summary of Hindu and Theosophical teachings on the *skandhas* and the seven-fold nature of man, of the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and of the age old teachings concerning the after-death states. The opening of Section IV logically invites a review of all H.P.B. has previously said about the "inner body" of the Society. This, apparently, has served as a preparation for what is to come, and it is implicit that the distinctions clearly made between the esoteric and exoteric bodies of the Society are important to remember. One of these distinctions is emphatically laid down by H.P.B. on page 57:

The Society has no wisdom of its own to support or teach. It is simply the storehouse of all the truths uttered by the great seers, initiates, and prophets of historic and even pre-historic ages; at least, as many as it can get. Therefore, it is merely the channel through which more or less of truth, found in the accumulated utterances of humanity's great teachers, is poured out into the world.

Since so much material in the early sections is devoted to an explanation of the Second Object, which deals with the comparative study of religions and philosophies, we may conclude that the primary function of the T.S., as headed by Colonel Olcott, was to serve as an educational institution along the broadest of lines. This exoteric body enjoyed whatever perspectives its individual members were able to derive from H.P.B.'s teachings, yet these were proffered, and received or rejected, entirely on an individual basis—the Society itself proclaiming itself independent of allegiance to any particular interpretations of religions and philosophies. Though this was a platform for *one part* of the Theosophical Movement only, the intent and attitude reflected can easily be seen to be an always necessary part of a Theosophical program, for, unless it finds constant re-

embodiment in the present and future, one hallmark of the catholicity of Theosophy could easily be lost.

The "esoteric section" also existed, however, and, even within this body of the T.S., there were what might be called *two* groups of H.P.B.'s disciples. The first came gradually to give special attention to her rendition of the Secret Doctrine, which offered them a transition point between eclectic speculative study and the adoption of belief in a Gnosis which represented the core of all religious scriptures. But those who were *pledged* members of the esoteric section had attempted a further step beyond that of adopting the teachings of *The Secret Doctrine* as working intellectual premises. Such were concerned with the *application* of H.P.B.'s teachings in order to "purify the soul," as she phrases it in the *Key*. Thus the *specific* Theosophy she offered to members of the esoteric section was dedicated to the inculcation of specific *ethics*.

Many students have doubtless been puzzled at the strictness of the requirements for esoteric study as defined by H.P.B. on page 20, especially in view of the broad and liberal approach of the T.S. to all matters of religion as expressed by the formulation of the Society's Three Objects. For instance, she writes that for the esoteric study and application of Theosophy, the foremost rule of all is the entire renunciation of one's personality:

A *pledged* member has to become a thorough altruist, never to think of himself, and to forget his own vanity and pride in the thought of the good of his fellow-creatures, besides that of his fellow-brothers in the esoteric circle. He has to live, if the esoteric instructions shall profit him, a life of abstinence in everything, of self-denial and strict morality, doing his duty by all men.

What, it may reasonably be asked, does a life of "abstinence in everything" mean? What kind of asceticism is here implied as a requirement for successful study of the definite esoteric philosophy? In this connection, we may note, also, the many other statements in respect to the need for acceptance of the principle of "self-sacrifice." One of the rules of the inner section, already promulgated in 1880, is described in the section entitled "The Sacredness of a Pledge":

No Fellow shall put to his selfish use any knowledge communicated to him by any member of the first section (now a higher "degree"); violation of the rule being punished by expulsion.

Another paragraph, occurring on page 24, illustrates the same emphasis:

Theosophy has to inculcate ethics; it has to purify the soul, if it would relieve the physical body, whose ailments, save cases of accidents, are all hereditary. It is not by studying Occultism for selfish ends, for the gratification of one's personal ambition, pride, or vanity, that one can ever reach the true goal: that of helping suffering mankind. Nor is it by studying one single branch of the esoteric philosophy that a man becomes an Occultist, but by studying, if not mastering, them all.

From all of the foregoing we may be sure that H.P.B. desired each student to realize that he needed to know a great deal about the meaning of "Occultism" before professing the specific "intellectual" doctrines of Theosophic philosophy presented in Section V, in order to choose precisely what his relationship to that philosophy was to become. When H.P.B. stated that Theosophical teachings were not a body of purely speculative doctrines, she clearly meant that they could fully benefit only those who were willing to inscribe the *implications* of the teachings on their hearts, to see that extension of knowledge simultaneously meant an extension of action beyond the circumscribed field of egocentrism.

What is "Practical Occultism"? May it not be called the science of the conservation of man's energies, both for self-improvement and for the service of mankind? The ethics of Theosophy become the connecting link between "power" and "purpose," and the utilization of those ethics marks a transition between an inquirer—a "speculator"—and an Occultist. Thus the counsel that one cannot become an Occultist by studying "one single branch of the esoteric philosophy." Self-improvement was a goal of relative importance only, and even though self-improvement involved "conservation of energy," the purpose of those who truly might learn the science of Occultism would be to use the energy conserved towards the moral education, hence improvement, of all men who could be reached; the "purification of the soul," and even relieving the hereditary infirmities of the body, were seen to be *cooperative*, not personal, problems.

If one is to serve the ends of *any* educational endeavor, as a matter of fact, though, the mastery of "abstinence" is mandatory. It is necessary not only to *see* values beyond those of immediate personal

advantage, but also to learn the dynamics of will-control, so that personal advantages are never inadvertently placed first when a larger end might be served. The principle of abstinence is simply the principle of conservation and control, a deliberate saving of one's vital energies, mental, psychic, and physical, and the deliberate expenditure of them. The phrases "self-denial" and "strict morality" are but further expressions of the need which all genuine teachers feel for one-pointedness in their teaching and example.

Actually, anyone whose interest in religion or religions extends beyond academic curiosity will understand and respond to strict ethical precepts—in principle. But these become specific and difficult disciplines only when they are related to definite teachings as to the nature of man. Thus, while those whom H.P.B. calls the "lay" members of the Theosophical Society, and other students of comparative religions, could talk all they wished to in generalities about "self-sacrifice," strict morality, etc., only those who undertook the application of definite theosophical teachings to the problems of their own lives were *obligated* to cease being theoretical.

That such an obligation could be seen as a natural and demanding one for many of those who were members of the T.S. is clear. Thus H.P.B. writes that "the few real Theosophists in the T.S. are among the esoteric members." And following this remark, it is interesting to note, occurs a curious sentence which, while it certainly invalidates any criticism of H.P.B.'s presentation on the ground of "exclusiveness," again implies the obligation of moral decision among Theosophists themselves. Yet though the most "real Theosophists" in the T.S. were said by her to be members of the esoteric section, she also writes: "This does not imply that outside of the T.S. and inner circle, there are no Theosophists; for there are, and more than people know of; certainly far more than are found among the *lay* members of the T.S." Perhaps this implies more than a numerical distinction. Perhaps many of the "lay members," like the *manasa putras*, delayed or refused full incarnation into responsibility, and were thus more censurable than others whose karma did not precipitate such a decision at that time. In any case, such remarks apply to professing Theosophists only, not to members of the Society at large.

The value of the students' considering these and other statements before progressing to the specific teachings of Theosophy lies in the

fact that the infinite complexity of the Theosophical Movement is thus revealed. Always, we might think, there are circles within circles. Every stage and degree of academic study, philosophical speculation, ethical resolve, religious faith, and ethical practice were encompassed in the total periphery of H.P.B.'s Theosophical Movement. Each step on the Path of Theosophy implied its own particular obligations, which *The Key to Theosophy* has so often been a guide in clarifying for each one. The difference between what was offered by H.P.B. and what may be noted in all religious systems as various "degrees of ascendancy" lay in the fact that the specific terms of each obligation were met by the individual himself on the basis of the *philosophical* tenets he had undertaken to study and uphold. The word "esoteric" thus became essentially, even if not always so regarded, a relative rather than an absolute term. Each degree of dedication gave a new meaning to "esoteric" and hence Theosophy proffered a never ending "ascension" by self-induced and self-devised efforts.

THE SURRENDER OF INTEGRITY

What is the principle of authoritarian religion? Worship, obedience, and reverence lie not in the moral qualities of the deity, not in love or justice, but in the fact that it has control, that is, has power over man. Furthermore it shows that the higher power has a right to force man to worship him and that lack of reverence and obedience constitutes sin.

The essential element in authoritarian religion and in the authoritarian religious experience is the surrender to a power transcending man. The main virtue of this type of religion is obedience, its cardinal sin is disobedience. Just as the deity is conceived as omnipotent or omniscient, man is conceived as being powerless and insignificant. Only as he can gain grace or help from the deity by complete surrender can he feel strength. Submission to a powerful authority is one of the avenues by which man escapes from his feeling of aloneness and limitation. In the act of surrender he loses his independence and integrity as an individual. . . .

—ERICH FROMM

HIGH RESOLVE

ABANDON, O tormentor of thy foes, this despicable weakness of thy heart, and stand up." The *Gita* is often said to be filled with mysterious sayings, yet this sentence closing Krishna's first utterance in the poem will be plain to every reader. No one to whom the *Gita* appeals at all, but will experience here a profound fellow-feeling for Arjuna. His weakness is indeed familiar; but his strength—the heroism which is somehow born in him during the passage of an hour or two—this we long to understand, for often it seems to escape us with the very certainty that it is found, recovered, or made anew, by Arjuna.

What, then, are the springs of constancy, of unyielding determination? Before we join in this inquiry, however, there is a paragraph from Mr. Judge's Preface to *The Ocean of Theosophy* to consider:

The subject of the Will has received no treatment, inasmuch as that power or faculty is hidden, subtle, undiscoverable as to essence, and only visible in effect. As it is absolutely colorless and varies in moral quality in accordance with the desire behind it, as also it acts frequently without our knowledge, and as it operates in all the kingdoms below man, there could be nothing gained by attempting to inquire into it apart from the Spirit and desire.

Probably still other reasons exist as to why the subject of the will may seem "neglected" in Theosophical literature, not the least being the inordinate fascination which the idea of *power* exercises over the human mind. Yet, surely, there is no prohibition, philosophical or otherwise, against *thinking* about the Will, if only to dispose of misconceptions which give an unnatural artificiality to the ideal of "spiritual development."

How hard would we "strive," for example, if there were not the slightest possibility of our efforts ever being seen, or recognized? Let us concede that of course we should still strive—any other conclusion would simply be a way of condemning ourselves as moral exhibitionists—but to reconcile oneself with the idea of being unappreciated may be the first step of turning one's efforts toward genuine self-knowledge. To be "appreciated," after all, is not the purpose of

evolution. When, finally, a realizing touch with the heart of things is gained, the thrill of a greater selfhood will make forever forgotten the small motives of self-esteem. The striving, then, which belongs to the soul, no more involves the striking of grim indomitable attitudes than seeing brings a special posture to the eye. It is the nature of the soul to will, and when the soul becomes free to act, it will WILL.

But this freeing of the soul—how shall we go about it?

Mr. Judge has some sage words on the background of this question:

Student.—Has the age in which one lives any effect on the student; and what is it?

Sage.—It has effect on every one, but the student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man. Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights toward which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him. It operates in the same way as a structural defect in a vessel. All the inner as well as the outer fiber of the man is the result of the long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thoughts and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend. All those tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. . . . In that sense, therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under suggestions thus cast upon us.

Student.—Was that why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, *for they know not what they do*"?

Sage.—That was one meaning. In one aspect they acted blindly, impelled by the age, thinking they were right.

The man who would be free, therefore, has need to find out about his "structural defects," and to keep on searching until he discovers in what aspect he is "acting blindly." To long to become a being of strength and power is, implicitly, the assumption of greater responsibility. A strong man dare not "act blindly" in *any* aspect. The weaknesses he feels ought really to be regarded as Nature's way of protecting herself from the mistakes he might make were he great and powerful.

How much is "will" simply a matter of the responsiveness of the "lives"? In any determination to act, the mind, first, arrives at a decision. Then the mind gives instructions to the feelings, the body, or whatever the agency—physical or metaphysical—that must carry out the decision. But if the feelings and the body have not the *habit* of obeying the mind, the tension of psychic conflict may almost immediately ensue. A kind of psychic dialogue begins, in which the feelings "talk back" to the no longer sovereign power of the mind. The psychic nature presents its arguments, its emotional, even "ethical," reasons for doing what it wants to do. If the psychic nature is powerful, as it often is, it throws up a *maya* of another kind of universe in which the reference-points of the original determination fade into pale and meaningless markers. The strong compulsions of the moment masquerade in the dignified garb of first principles, until, at last, the "will" seems to have reversed itself.

But it is desire, and not will, which erects special psychic universes around the hungers of the personal nature. It is that same primeval Desire which first brought the Kosmos into being, but stepped down, inverted, and made to imitate the cosmic process in behalf of the petty *Brahma* of the personality. So illusion after illusion is created, each becoming the vessel of man's divided psychic energies, each a momentary form with which the "self" is identified, and each, in turn, a prison of the mind and a source of that "hypnotism" from the past from which the soul can escape only by acts of "violence."

To become free from illusion is at the same time to become strong in will. There must be, it is true, some "ultimate moment" of decision, in which the principle of self-control is asserted. Without that moment, we should not be men at all, but simply some kind of metaphysical mechanisms; but given that moment in which the soul sees and chooses as soul, the rest is a matter of training the instruments of the soul so that they will be able to carry out the soul's decisions.

The training of the instruments must be in some ways the opposite of the process of spontaneous "creation" from which the illusions of life proceed. The impulse which insists upon psychic adventuring, which demands in the name of "love," or "security," or "brotherhood," or even simple satiety and a sense of well-being, a new alliance of the feelings, cannot simply be "resisted." It must be exposed. To resist it without exposing it would be like calling illusions "bad."

Illusions are not "bad." All the processes of life are made up of illusions. What is bad is the mistaking of them for something other than they are. To expose an illusion is to define its nature in relation to eternal principles, and this is to reduce its power over the human being to the psychic level—where it belongs. It is natural for the psychic nature to have commerce in illusions. That is all the psychic nature can do, according to its *nature*. Illusions are destructive only when they enslave the mind.

The "saint" resists temptations, but the adept is free from illusion, and between the two there is all the difference which separates mind from matter, principles from forms. The saint exchanges his "bad" illusions for "good" ones, becoming vulnerable thereby to all the self-deceptions possible from the sattvic side of Great Nature. The sage, however, lives beyond both good and evil, in a world of knowledge of the true nature and true relationships of things. The "will" of the saint can be dissipated in a trice, when the good illusions of which he has made his fortress of resolve collapse before him. But the strength of the sage resides in his knowledge of the self, free from all illusions, in his psychological independence of all the forms of being.

Not only the hypnotisms of illusion come out of the past. Intensities of resolve, too, are brought forward from the hidden sources of egoic history. Strength of purpose has to be gathered, conserved, replenished, if it is to be always available when we sorely need it. A bankruptcy of motive-power is only a tragedy when it is not understood—when it leads to despair, instead of to a new beginning in the accumulation of moral power.

What stands in the way of these "first steps" toward knowledge and power? Nothing, actually, save the notion that we, as privileged beings, will somehow be excused by the Great Law from doing what all others are required to do. It is the miracle idea, the vicarious-atonement idea, the Personal-God idea, which oppose the strengthening of the will. We should all have become mighty centers of light and power, long since, were it not for the fascination of these anti-Law ideas.

The Personal-God idea sponsors both false egotism and false self-deprecation. The victim of the Personal-God idea is either too important or too weak to begin with small things, to fulfill those simple obligations out of which the habit of control is born. One imagines

that he may await a special destiny that will lift him out of his frustrating circumstances—that will carry off, as by some beneficent magic, the despicable weakness of his heart. Above all, he fears the simple truth that this is a universe of Law.

For every victim of illusion, however, there is this great consolation, that the principle of freedom and strength is the same for the beginner as for the adept. Both are participants in the great democracy of universal Law. "E'en wasted smoke remains not traceless" is true, no matter who starts the fire. A sense of weakness exhibits the same principle in nature as is proclaimed by a feeling of mastery and competence. It is therefore the principle that we must grasp, and not merely the competence, for all competences, however great, are ruled and surpassed by the principle.

The man who on this basis is willing to come to terms with the laws of nature is a man who can always be of good cheer. He *knows*, with the only "infallibility" that exists in the wide, wide universe, that he will eventually achieve what he sets out to do; and if he does not, he sees that it was not really the right thing to do; while by the time his "failure" is understood, it is no longer a failure but an experience by which he has profited—a "doing" which turned out to have another meaning than the one which he had expected.

There will always be pains, however, and even agonies. The mistakes men make, when seen, are bound to hurt. We may say to ourselves that the Self is bodiless and free, but the life that has been misused has its own way of declaring that it, too, is bodiless and free. The stark tragedy in which we play a part will demand its shooting paroxysm of self-accusation and aftermath of aching remorse. These are the processes of life and cannot be escaped. The freedom we seek is not from feeling these things, but from imagining them to be the measure and finality of all of life. We have to find that motionless center of honesty with ourselves, and there, throughout the storms, whether of weakness, passion, guilt, or anger, cherish and increase the feeling of independence from all these oscillations. Here, in the self-conscious integrity of the soul, is the seed and the root of our salvation. Resort to this center, together with patience, and the confidence which reliance on the law must surely bring, is the secret of our freedom, our strength, and our peace.

THE PURSUIT OF REPOSE

II

THE momentum of our present age, Kali Yuga, is said to be four times that of the more innocent and placid golden ages through which humanity has passed. This acceleration, plus the fact of the present evolutionary unfoldment of man's psychic and manasic faculties, furnishes a clue to the human situation. As we know, H.P.B. predicted that in the present cycle "psychologists will have some extra work to do, and the psychic idiosyncrasies of humanity will enter on a great change."

The question may arise of why the modern man is so specially afflicted with nervous disorders; surely his ancestors were not free from the vice of attachment to the body as well as to the results of action. Does the answer lie solely in the rapidity and artificiality of our civilization? Here is an interesting paragraph from Annie Payson Call's *Power Through Repose*:

Extreme nervous tension seems to be so peculiarly American, that a German physician coming to this country to practice became puzzled by the variety of nervous disorders he was called upon to help, and finally announced his discovery of a new disease which he chose to call "Americanitis." And now we suffer from "Americanitis" in all its unlimited varieties. Doctors study it; nerve medicines arise on every side; nervine hospitals establish themselves; and rest-cures innumerable spring up in all directions. . . .

It is because people are ignorant of the significance of these psychic and mental growing pains, that they are so alarmed by their manifestation in themselves, and through fear of mental unbalance, hold on to the body more than ever, increasing manifoldly the tension and friction therein. Mr. Judge gives warning of what fear does to the human system: "Its effect on the ethereal form is to shrivel it up, or coagulate and contract it. . . . Fear is the same thing as frigidity on the earth and always proceeds by the process of freezing."

In her book, *The Freedom of Life*, Miss Call considers this problem of gaining repose and freedom from fear in daily life. Be *willing*, she indicates, for all your fears to materialize, and then they

will have lost their hold over you. Be willing, for instance, to miss a train, and the resultant condition of relaxation will help you to get to the station on time. Be unwilling, and the muscles of the body will contract, impeding in every way your speed. To the poor sleeper, she says, be willing not to sleep and you may find yourself asleep in no long time, and if not, at least you will have reposeful rest. But, be afraid that sleep is impossible—your tenseness will make the night unbearable and the next day, too, owing to having wasted nervous energy in irritation and fear, together with physical energy in tossing from side to side the whole night through.

No method of relaxation is complete, however, without a comprehension of man's inner constitution. It is of vital importance to learn what part of the nature is to be "relaxed," and what part is the moving power doing the relaxing—standing forever above both action and inaction as the cause of both. The tool of the soul, according to Theosophy, is the ever-changing personality, composed of body, astral pattern body, vitality, personal desire nature, and brain-mind. To be a satisfactory instrument, a tool *must* be "relaxed" in the sense that it be entirely responsive to the dictates of its user. This would appear to be the true form of "passiveness" toward which the personality should strive. However, when the incarnated representative of the immortal soul, the reincarnating ego, succumbs to the delusion that *it* is the body and personality, then arises the cause for all friction and tension in that instrument.

Krishna, in *The Bhagavad Gita*, seems to imply this clearly. After observing that the creatures in the lower kingdoms (which include man's animal body) act according to their nature, and that man should likewise seek for that which is homogeneous with and act according to *his* nature—Krishna advises that one should do with the body alone the acts of the body. In the light of bitter experience, the constant repetition by the Theosophical Teachers of the idea that "I am not body, brain or astral man. . . . I am THAT, and THAT is the Supreme Soul," becomes advice of the highest practicality.

The lower kingdoms, when left to themselves, perform their Dharma in full accord with their own natures, and therefore exhibit perfect harmony and economy of energy in their movements—complete repose whether in action or at rest. But the reincarnating ego sometimes exchanges its duty as the *controlling* agent, concerned with

the ideas and motives behind actions, for the duty of the *acting* agent. Then, through identification with the body, we forget that "I am doing nothing in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing; even when speaking, letting go or waking, opening or closing eyes." . . . All this is but the domain of the instrument; then in truth, if the *soul* assumes the duty, it is the duty of another, and full of danger. In *Letters that Have Helped Me*, Mr. Judge makes specific admonitions on this subject of duty:

When one stops to think, to weigh, and to consider what is one's duty, or which of many duties should be performed first, it is indeed perplexing and difficult to know *what* to do. But if you will do just what lies before you without thinking about all the other things, and without troubling your mind about all the things you can't do, then it will all be different and everything will grow brighter for you. Do what you have to do now, and don't trouble about other things, they will be looked after in due time; but what will help you in all these matters is to be content, to do what you can, and to let the rest go.

Why do people unnecessarily tense the muscles, hold on to their limbs as if these various parts will fly away unless persistently clutched, if not because they imagine that they *are* their bodies? Until one allows the body and the brain to do of themselves the acts they have been trained to perform—far more skillfully than we can do them—they will never function harmoniously. Miss Call furnishes in *Power Through Repose* innumerable evidences of this fact:

Take thinking, for instance. Most of us think with the throat so contracted that it is surprising there is room enough to let the breath through, the tongue held firmly, and the jaw muscles set as if suffering from an acute attack of lockjaw : . . . It is certainly clear, without a knowledge of anatomy or physiology, that for pure, unadulterated thinking, only the brain is needed; and if vital force is given to other parts of the body to hold them in unnatural contraction, we not only expend it extravagantly, but we rob the brain of its own. When, for purely mental work, all the activity is given to the brain, and the body left free and passive, the concentration is better, conclusions are reached with more satisfaction, and the reaction, after the work is over, is healthy and refreshing.

Observe, when performing some physical task such as unscrewing an obstinate bottle cover, the unnecessary distortions in the facial muscles. The flexing of these muscles has absolutely no relation to and gives not the slightest assistance to the arm muscles in this task. When one considers that all day long, and day after day, similar conflicts in bodily and brain duties arise, it is little wonder that people waste an enormous amount of nervous and physical energy in simple household and business duties. H.P.B. pertinently observes that "psychic and vital energy are limited in every man. It is like capital. If you have a dollar a day and spend two, at the end of the month you will have a deficit of \$30.00." Perhaps it is these deficits which cause the refrain heard on all sides these days: "I am always tired; my nerves are just exhausted."

The following sage advice from the writings of William Q. Judge, if thought over and gradually practiced, may provide welcome aids in attaining the much desired inner and outer repose.

The first step in *becoming* is Resignation. Resignation is the sure, true, and royal road. While the body may be requiring time to feel its full results, we can instantly change the attitude of the mind. If one fights one is drawn into the swirl of events and thoughts instead of leaning back on the great ocean of the Self which is never moved. The Master has so much wisdom He is seldom, if ever, the prey of reactions. That is why He goes slowly. But it is sure. Too much, too much, trying to force harmony. Harmony comes from a balancing of diversities, and discord from any effort to make harmony by force. If we are anxious, we raise a barrier against progress, by perturbation and straining harshly. It is better to acquire a lot of what is called carelessness by the world, but is in reality a calm reliance on the law, and a doing of one's own duty, satisfied that the results must be right, no matter what they may be.

By steady pursuance of this course one may not be engaging in any special relaxing practice, save those common sense commends, and the results may outwardly appear slow in manifesting, but the method is safe and sure and will carry one to the goal as certainly as the tortoise outran the speedy but foolish hare.

Here, in the psychic unbalance of the age, is highlighted the paramount need for understanding life, of realizing that there is absolutely nothing to fear or resist, for nothing can annihilate the

human soul, which is our very self. That soul has the power to step down the terrific momentum of the age at will and adapt it to the needs of each situation. Through the light of such knowledge, individuals may recognize that although "good systems" exist which aid in the amelioration of bodily and nervous ailments—and there may be wonderful case histories to support and justify each method—one is deluded to imagine that in any of them may be found final cures. In the last analysis, each must become, on all planes, his own physician, and obey the injunction, "Physician heal thyself."

THE PATH BEYOND SORROWS

We are never free from pain, sorrow, and suffering in the world. If we could see and understand the cause of the sorrow existing in every direction—not only the sorrows of the ordinary life but those brought about by the collective actions, such as wars are—we should cease to make that cause. We have assumed that all these sorrows are due to external causes—to some higher being or beings, or to some outside laws of the universe; never to ourselves. The cause of sorrow does not lie outside; it lies within each one. Each one contains within himself the power to cause sorrow; he also has the power to cause its cessation.

The wisdom of the ages teaches that each being is spirit; that the power of spirit is illimitable, although we limit it because we assume that it is limited; that the changeless spirit in the heart of every being is behind every form, the cause and sustainer of all forms; that spirit is the force behind evolution, and also the force that rules and relates all things of whatever grade; that every being is the result of an unfoldment from within outwards—of a *desire* for greater and greater expression.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

MEMORY has been offered as a proof of the existence of self. "Suppose," says one author, "that we see a ship on the sea and then turn away; we can recall that image at will and even compare it with the image of a ship we saw years ago. What is it that remembers, if not the self?" he asks. Yet in the teachings it is said that the pictures of memory reside in the Astral Light. How, then, can one prove this metaphysical reality in these terms, if astral substance—a form of PHYSICAL substance—is the stuff of memory?

The "Astral Light" is spoken of in *The Secret Doctrine*, in part, as "a faithful record of every act and even thought of man." And the *Glossary* says that the Astral Light is "the great terrestrial crucible, which gives out nothing but what it has received, in which the vile (and good) 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." This sort of definition would seem to add weight to the questioner's viewpoint, for it portrays the Astral Light as a passive physical substance, mechanical in operation. Like a mirror, it is a medium which reflects action—that is its nature. And, like a mirror, it needs no one to turn its powers on or off, yet it *would* need "selves," or some activating principle, to energize its operation.

What is the nature of memory? Does it in any other way support the contention of the author quoted above? In the *Key*, H.P.B. describes three kinds of "memory"; remembrance and recollection, which belong to physical memory, and *reminiscence*, which is an intuitional perception apart from and outside our physical brain. The kind of memory which is used to recall physical images such as the ship seen at sea, would seem to be remembrance rather than recollection. H.P.B. writes that "if an idea be sought after by the mind, and with pain and endeavor found and brought again into view, it is recollection." She also states that remembrance and recollection are connected with the healthy functioning of the brain. This sort of memory can be explained as a phenomenon of the psychic world.

Whenever a familiar sight, a similar series of events, or any such connecting link between experiences occur in the life of a man, simply by the law of the attraction of like things, the memory of that previous thing would, so to say, "fly down" to the man's consciousness.

But, what is it that *recalls* an image? What is that center before which the pictures and ideas of the past reassemble? No one can recall our memories for us. Unless there is a "self" present, there is nothing to recall memories, for the subject that remembers must surely be the same subject, the continuing self that formerly observed the ideas or pictures again recalled. This could not be the mind alone, for the mind changes and grows constantly, and if we look back many years to young childhood—we need not even look this far—we find that although the general character and tendencies of the mind were undoubtedly present then as now, our mind is not the same mind. As the mind grows in power, the memory, a *faculty* of the mind, may also extend its range and scope; but the energizing force—the self—uses the mind and powers "as a flame lights up a jar." Through memory it *allows* or *compels* the past to reappear.

Why are so many Sunday and Wednesday evening lectures devoted to a consideration of the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, since the basic principles upon which the "twin doctrines" operate are relatively simple and easy to comprehend and this much repetition seems unnecessary?

This question, by no means new since it has probably been considered in one form or another by all who regularly attend the evening lectures, is essentially concerned with the working policy of the Lodge, concisely stated in its Declaration. Obviously, the weekly evening lectures provide one of the means by which the spread of the fundamental principles of Theosophic philosophy is accomplished. The lectures, then, are arranged primarily to meet and stimulate the unacquainted mind of the newcomer, be he agnostic, Christian, or whatever else. From this we would deduce that the most "down-to-earth," reasonable, and vital—from the standpoint of everyday living—doctrines must be expounded.

In "reaching" the mind of the inquirer (and the mind of "the race"), it is reasonable to expect that the Theosophic conception of

the *soul-nature* of man be given more attention, even, than the natural laws which govern the effects of causes set in motion by each self-conscious soul, or the periodic life-cycle of re-birth which the soul follows. To the newcomer, the necessary hypothesis that man *is* a soul is at once asserted; expansion and elucidation of this concept necessarily brings out the soul-characteristics of self-reliance, continuing moral responsibility, and immortality.

Based on the premise of *soul*, the doctrines of Karma and reincarnation can be presented in very simple form, for, to quote the *Key to Theosophy*, "It does not require metaphysics or education to make a man understand the broad truths of Karma and reincarnation," and it is precisely this "man"—the lay majority of the Western world—with which the Theosophical Movement is most concerned. The misery and suffering, the turns in fortune and apparent injustice of environmental circumstances, common plagues among the masses, are to be understood solely through the verity: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," unless applied on a collective karma scale through the perspective of cyclic rebirth. This explanation, from a logical viewpoint, puts to shame the verbal Christian panacea: "It is the will of God."

The great psychological barrier, raised by the theological beliefs in vicarious atonement and the inherently sinful nature of man, has hindered and cramped the innate receptivity of the mind of the West to these "natural" doctrines. It is this obstacle that the Theosophical Movement must and will eventually overcome completely—allowing the "lost chord of Christianity" to be heard once again.

Why do materialists and agnostics show impatience or dislike for Theosophical postulating of an "Unknowable" yet "Divine" Principle as the essence of man?

In *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. writes that the principle of Reality proposed is one "on which all speculation is impossible, since it transcends the power of human conception and could only be dwarfed by any human expression or similitude." "How discouraging a thought!"—or, "How suspicious!" may say the agnostic. "Must we not start with what is known from experience, and build our temple of knowledge stone by stone with proven things?" In other words, an explanation, and perhaps even a "proposition," must be in terms of

the *known* to be intelligible. It may, then, seem that to introduce "The Absolute," and call it an "unknowable" principle confuses more than it explains.

Therefore we can suppose that any thoughtful man will see a certain logic in Chapman Cohen's careful development of some of the implications of the concept of an "Unknowable" God principle. Cohen writes in his *Materialism Re-stated*: "People have assumed that apart from the world given in consciousness, there is some other world of which we may acquire knowledge, and which has been dignified by the name of 'Reality,' as against the known world, which became, by implication, transient and illusory. It is a most extraordinary thing that the world we do know should be dismissed as illusory, while a world of which we know nothing whatever, of which we never can know anything, and of the nature of which we cannot form the slightest conception, is accepted as the one enduring 'Reality.' I do not wonder that theological philosophers have clung to it with such desperate affection. A world beyond knowledge, is a world beyond criticism, and a thing which is beyond knowledge and criticism is a truly ideal foundation upon which to build a theological system." Cohen here must mean any system whose exponents talk about a "metaphysical reality," yet Theosophy has never claimed the existence of a "*world* beyond knowledge," and is not this the most significant distinction?

There is another distinction, too, which can be made between Theosophy and the Christian religion and between Theosophy and science: What *question* is each most interested in? The church has concerned itself primarily with asking, "What?" "What is God?" The church's God, therefore, has been described endlessly, and been both limited and made an object of fear in different ways at different times. Science, on the other hand, has definitely confined itself to answering, "How?" "How do things work?" Theosophy, however, devotes itself to an interesting combination of the two, which could possibly be phrased, "How is 'God'—also myself—*at* work?" Theosophy does put down a "God premise," so to speak, yet then goes directly to the question of man's knowledge and aspirations, which does not take one away beyond "knowledge and criticism." The premise of a *Divine Principle* is a logical necessity, though, in order for the idea of man's own *capacity* for endless knowledge to exist.

ON THE LOOKOUT

ANIMALS' SIXTH SENSE

More and more, these days, the general public is becoming familiar with the name of Dr. J. B. Rhine of Duke University, whose researches in telepathy and clairvoyance used to be regarded with more derision than respect in scholarly circles. *Pathfinder* magazine for Dec. 26, 1951, for instance, contains an article entitled "3,000-mile Cats, 1,800-mile Dogs," which is something of a "trend" case in point. After telling of the phenomenal cross-country travels of pets in search of their masters, *Pathfinder* refers to Rhine's work and the interest which authenticated instances of such "internal direction finding" in pets hold for the Duke University's Parapsychology laboratory. Dr. Rhine, *Pathfinder* remarks, is "noted for his experiments in extrasensory perception. . . . In 20 years Dr. Rhine has established to his satisfaction the existence in humans of extrasensory perception (a \$5 word for mindreading). Now he wants to know whether animals, too, have a sixth sense." The account continues:

PSYCHIC CAPACITIES UNIVERSAL

Rhine now is engaged in the more exacting project of finding out if animals, particularly dogs, are capable of telepathy. Here there is some previous evidence to go on. There is the case of a New York youth of 19 who was taken to the hospital. His parents had no idea that on that particular night he was in a dangerous condition, with a high fever. But their English bull dog, Butch, shivered and moaned all night long. It was precisely at that time, hospital nurses said the boy's fever went down and he was out of danger.

Even precognition, the sensing of future events, is not unknown to animals. Dr. Rhine tells of a dog who daily accompanied an explosives plant employee to work. One day the dog, when halfway to the plant, suddenly ran home, whining. That afternoon an explosion shook the plant, killed the dog's owner.

What does all this mean? Dr. Rhine does not profess to say—yet. But he wants information about other cases. If you know of instances where animals are reported to have performed similar feats, write Dr. J. B. Rhine, Duke University, Durham, N.C. He needs all the help he can get.

A PHYSICIST WRITES ON ESP

To switch from a reporter's slant on a combined human-interest, animal-story to the realm of the Eminently Respectable, we find further recognition of Rhine's years of effort supplied by a well-known scientist who has lately been speculating on the meaning of Psi phenomena. In the Winter number of the quarterly *Journal of Parapsychology*, the distinguished German physicist, Pascual Jordan, writes briefly to endorse ESP research. Few men of international fame in the scientific field have been willing to lend the dignity of their names to a journal devoted to the exploration of extra-sensory perception, but a trend of greater interest in ESP is now unmistakable in such contributions as that of Dr. Jordan. This, of itself, is clearly indicative of progress along the lines of the Theosophical Movement's Third Object, and an occasional perusal of the *Journal of Parapsychology* might be considered a part of Theosophic education. Dr. Jordan's article, "Reflections on Parapsychology," was noted in the *New York Herald Tribune* (Nov. 25, 1951) under the heading, "Psychic Phenomena Beyond Physics," the physicist's statement being taken as signifying "that extrasensory perception (telepathy, clairvoyance) cannot be explained in terms of what we are taught to believe is reality. This means that it is useless to explain telepathy in terms of Physics."

A NEW CONCEPT OF REALITY

The content of the following passages is nothing new for Dr. Rhine's publication, but it is still rather novel to find a presumably orthodox man of physical science willing to step boldly past the psychic threshold. Dr. Jordan says:

The existence of psi phenomena, often reported by former authors, has been established with all the exactness of modern science by Dr. Rhine and his collaborators, and nobody can any longer deny the necessity for taking the problem seriously and discussing it thoroughly in relation to its connections with other known facts. Having just read Dr. Rhine's exciting book, *The Reach of the Mind*, I see that he denies strongly any possibility of "explanation" of psi phenomena in terms of physics; and this indeed is exactly also my own opinion. . . . Let us abandon the traditional idea of reality. It becomes clear that it is not possible to "explain" the facts in terms of physics, for the physical world, from this viewpoint, is

only a bordering zone of the world as a whole (differentiated by relations of complementarity) just as our conscious mind is only a bordering surface of the deep ocean of our whole psychic life. Then we gain a picture of Nature and Mind which is wide enough to include the empirical facts of parapsychology.

A MIGHTY TRANSITION

Dr. Jordan's conversion is a partial vindication of J. B. Rhine's prediction of 1947. In *The Reach of the Mind*, he wrote of the vast transition potential in the growing world interest in psychology:

Big changes, fundamental ones, are due in psychology. With the psychocentric view of man established, psychology becomes once again, in a more significant sense, the science of mental life. Man as a person is returned to the center of the psychological stage, in place of the behavioristic artifact, the cerebrocentric robot, which had supplanted him.

Now, too, psychology will have its own distinctive realm of study. It will no longer be merely an extension of physiology. The science of the psyche has its own peculiar principles, its own definite boundaries, its uniqueness. Its true domain begins where sensorimotor psychology leaves off, though what its full extent and outer bounds may be, no one can at present conjecture.

There will be many who will welcome this shift of center in psychology. They will be mainly those who are actually working with people and needing desperately to understand them better. Psychology will now come into more effective rapport with the practical needs of present-day culture. It will begin to understand men as they live their lives, not as they resemble familiar physical systems.

What is more, men will understand psychology and use it. Every broad field of human affairs—religion, education, mental hygiene, economics, government, ethics—must eventually respond to the radical change that seems inevitable in psychology.

PSYCHIC POSSIBILITIES

It is of further interest that the issue of the *Journal of Parapsychology* which presents Dr. Jordan's reflections also offers its readers a series of quotations on the significance of psychical phenomena from the weekly magazine, *Manas*—a periodical known to many Theosophists. The selections chosen by the editors, and printed on the back cover of the *Journal*, relate to the significance of work in extra-sensory perception from the standpoint of man as a *soul*:

Someone well may ask, can the humdrum routine of guessing at ESP cards lying face down on the table move us to such visions? The point is well taken; we doubt very much that the procedures of scientific investigation of psychic powers will inspire anyone to very much. But the birth of an idea that *is* inspiring may at least be eased and made more possible through the conscientious efforts of men who are attempting to wear away the skepticism that has been slowly built up over two or three hundred years.

It is not rigid skepticism which preserves the integrity of the scientific spirit, but disciplined open-mindedness and an unending quest for profounder relevances than have heretofore been recognized. It seems likely—at any rate, we are convinced that it is so—that a general reconsideration of the psychic factor in human life will be necessary before there can be a fruitful psychology and sociology, and before, indeed, there can be a social movement with genuine promise of the betterment of the world we live in. Man, to better himself, must first learn to honor himself, and while the realities of psychic phenomena are not necessarily uplifting in character, they often suggest the presence of hidden potentialities in human beings. They may, therefore, contribute to a conception of man that will move the heart and mind of man to greater things.

NEW DANGER IN BLOOD TRANSFUSION

Science News Letter for Dec. 15, 1951, refers to a sickness known as "homologous serum jaundice," resulting from the use of blood plasma in transfusions, and remarks: "Reports of a number of cases of this sickness following transfusions with plasma that has been sterilized by ultraviolet rays have been causing much concern in medical circles in recent years." This peculiar illness has increased in recent months, due, perhaps, to the more extensive use of plasma for both civilian and military needs, but to date no remedy has been forthcoming in either combatting or preventing it. One physician, Dr. Wolfgang Huber, has advanced the hope that "high intensity electron treatment of the plasma in the frozen state may be the answer to this pressing problem," but results so far "show nothing more than the possibility of a promising new method for the elimination of the virus of homologous serum jaundice from plasma and other fractions."

PLASMA

According to a report in the Los Angeles *Evening Herald Express*, Dec. 5, 1951, there is much speculation afloat on the "number of

cases" of "sickness following transfusions." The *Herald* article relates:

Dr. Disney A. Portis, Associate clinical professor of medicine at the University of Illinois College of Medicine, told his colleagues at an American Medical Association clinical session that physicians daily are being confronted with new cases of cirrhosis.

The disease has been associated in the past mostly with alcoholism, malnutrition, inflammation of the gall bladder and gallstones, he said.

But widespread prevalence of infectious inflammation of the liver during World War II produced sporadic inoculation of persons never before exposed to the virus. Many medical researchers believe there is a relationship between the infectious inflammation and cirrhosis.

Dr. Portis makes a surprising statement in calling attention to hidden forms of "miscegenation" which may flow from transfusions as well as from inoculations:

"No longer can one look upon blood transfusions as an innocuous procedure unless the medical history of the donor is known."

CORRELATION WITH BACTERIAL INFECTION

At the close of this press report, also, occurs a significant phrase drawn from the remarks of Dr. Clarence J. Berne concerning antibiotics—to some of which a patient's bacteria may be peculiarly sensitive. Dr. Berne, a professor of surgery, mentioned the *interrelationship* of bacteria in the body, stating that when "many different bacteria exist in the body each tends to increase the virulence of the others." This is in part the rationale of the long-standing objection of many Theosophists to *both* inoculations and transfusions.

DOCTOR WARNS AGAINST "MEDICAL MIRACLES"

The *Evening Herald Express* for March 5 reports a lecture given before the Second Annual Forum of the Society of Graduate Surgeons of the Los Angeles County Hospital. Dr. Calvin M. Smyth of Philadelphia, vice president of the American Board of Surgery, attempted to deflate both medical and popular beliefs to the effect that all one needs to do nowadays in serious illness is to procure penicillin, streptomycin, or undergo a blood transfusion. This observation is symptomatic of a constructive trend of revaluation on the

part of leading medical men. Dr. Smyth, as the *Herald* account shows, is particularly outspoken in his views:

The American public is insisting on paying big money to have itself overdosed with so-called miracle drugs which often do more harm than good and sometimes prove fatal, a leading surgeon [Dr. Smyth] declared today.

"The public has gone crazy over so-called miracle drugs. If anything goes wrong and the patient has not had the drug the doctor lays himself open to criticism by the survivors."

INCREASE OF VULNERABILITY

"There have been a number of fatalities with the ill-advised use of penicillin," Dr. Smyth declared. "In some cases the patient developed an eruption in the throat and larynx and choked to death.

"Streptomycin used simply as a prophylactic too far ahead of a planned operation, not only does no good, but increases the patient's vulnerability to the very organisms from which we are trying to protect him."

SALT WATER INSTEAD OF PLASMA

Dr. Smyth also stated there is much unnecessary resort to blood transfusions.

"Use of blood is necessary in practically all major operations," he said, "but on the other hand a patient in mild shock only needs fluid put back in the blood vessels—he doesn't need blood. Plasma or solutions of salt and water or sugar and water may serve just as well."

Dr. Smyth disclosed that the Department of Defense is developing a number of synthetic preparations calculated to accomplish the same results as blood plasma.

THE BIRTH OF BLOOD

Theosophical students have ample intimation by H.P.B. that the subject of the blood is profoundly complicated. In *Isis Unveiled* (II, 567), she suggests an occult view:

"Blood," says the Hindu Ramatsariar, "contains all the mysterious secrets of existence no living creature can exist without."

"Blood," says Levi, "is the first incarnation of the universal fluid; it is the materialized *vital light*. Its birth is the most marvellous of all nature's marvels; it lives only by perpetually transforming itself, for it is the universal Proteus. The blood issues from principles where there was none of it before, and it becomes flesh, bones, hair,

nails . . . tears, and perspiration. It can be allied neither to corruption nor death; when life is gone, it begins decomposing; if you know how to reanimate it, to infuse into it life by a new magnetization of its globules, life will return to it again. The universal substance, with its double motion, is the great arcanum of being; blood is the great arcanum of life."

INDIVIDUAL NATURE OF BLOOD

The inner constitution of the blood is, then, electrical and magnetic, as is the inner constitution of every cell. Each living organism gives off electrical emanations, which are affected by both internal and external conditions of the whole nature. (See THEOSOPHY 31; 333, on the discovery of M-rays.) It is thus clearly indicated in Theosophical teachings that the blood-stream of each individual is *peculiarly his own*—in fact, a man's blood could be said to represent "the psychic nature in solution." Aside, therefore, from obvious reactions such as homologous serum jaundice, there may often be other more subtle and more far reaching deleterious effects from the use of plasma. It seems possible that if medical men knew the real nature of blood—or knew the real nature of man, metaphysical as well as physical—they might discover the causes of many of the new and "mysterious" diseases and unexplained psychological ills which appear to result from invading the bloodstream with foreign elements.

DISCOVERIES IN BLOOD TYPING

Though there are similarities in all living organisms, there is also something else which particularly characterizes the *individual* organism, for not even two blades of grass, nor even two snowflakes, are entirely alike. Medical science, seemingly of necessity, has proceeded on the assumption that the body is a test tube wherein chemical reactions can be more or less accurately predicted. A "specific" remedy for illness has thus been thought to pertain to the whole species; but if the *electro-magnetic individuality* of each body be *recognized*, a "specific remedy" could only pertain to *one* organism with complete validity. Since the simpler view is obviously preferable to the doctor for a variety of practical reasons, one might suspect that a considerable amount of evidence supporting the opposing view has been suppressed—or, perhaps more accurately, ignored. A good case in point is the history of experiments in blood transfusions.

HISTORY OF TRANSFUSION

In 1900 a Viennese physician, Dr. Karl Landsteiner, discovered the existence of four basic blood-groups. Previous to that time, all blood was commonly imagined to be alike, since the major chemical constituents seem to be the same. In 1677 an experiment was made in introducing new blood to a patient—from a sheep. The patient died. Other experiments with human blood were subsequently made, but many of these patients also died inexplicably. Subsequent to Landsteiner's discovery of the four basic blood groups, transfusions have appeared to be "safe," yet there is much to indicate that the mysteries of blood types have hardly yet been touched. For instance, here are some curious remarks on the nature of blood—its *unknown* nature really, in an out-of-the-way article on crime detection by Edward D. Radin, a New York City reporter. Mr. Radin relates a few things doctors may know but seldom talk about, since he is concerned with the *differences* in blood streams rather than in similarities:

Criminals can't cover up their trails by changing their blood type. A person's blood grouping never varies during his lifetime despite any illness, and even if one underwent a complete change of blood being transfused with the blood of another person, within three months the body would have manufactured a replacement supply with the same old groupings.

In presenting the crime detection contributions of serologist Alexander Wiener, Mr. Radin continues:

Serology is the latest field of science to be harnessed to criminal investigation, and in the past few years has expanded its horizon with astonishing speed. The medical examiner's office was proud in 1938 because Dr. Wiener, under ideal conditions, could break down blood typing into some thirty-six different classifications and help point the finger of guilt or innocence more readily. While delivering a lecture in 1947, Dr. Wiener stated that the breakdown had jumped to some five hundred subclassifications. Today, using all the different blood factors that have been discovered, many of them by Dr. Wiener, it is possible to work out subclassifications well beyond the five *thousand* figure. And now it is considered probable that the day is approaching when blood identification will become as individual as fingerprints. Science has found, time after time, that nature never repeats itself exactly and the still-new field of blood grouping is again proving this to be true; everybody's

blood seems likely to have its own individual characteristics, minor variations in composition that will make it readily identifiable.

The tremendous increase in the number of blood-typing sub-classifications stems in large measure from the discovery of the Rh factor in blood during 1937 by Dr. Wiener and Dr. Landsteiner. Announcement of it was held up until 1940 because the two men then could see no practical application of their discovery. . . . (*Twelve against Crime*, Putnam, 1950.)

ROOM FOR GROWTH

There is some evidence that there are other practical substitutes for human blood which could be used in transfusions. (Of course this would eliminate the widespread psychological appeal which accompanies pleas for blood donations in connection with public support of the military. One recent television announcement revealed that we are now "short" 300,000 pints of blood.) However, it is hoped that with further discoveries such as those of Dr. Wiener, there will be serious investigation as to whether the uses of plasma and transfusions are not more detrimental than beneficial in the long run. But medical science appears to move at a snail's pace in projecting its "growing tip" into the area of a distinctive *Human* science.

LIFE EXPECTANCY STATISTICS

Facts disclosed by statistical analysis are often more interesting for what they may provoke than in the information provided. There is first the question: What *is* the important "fact" revealed? For example, *Prevention* for last December reports that the dramatic advances achieved by modern medicine apply almost exclusively to the young—that is, to persons under thirty years of age, and more particularly, to children of ten or less. This is the conclusion arrived at from study of life expectancy statistics for the past century. The *Prevention* article details figures drawn from insurance company tables, showing that while the general life expectancy of white males in the United States has increased from 38 to 65 years, during the 97 years from 1850 to 1947, this gain is represented almost entirely by the reduction of infant mortality and deaths during childhood years. In contrast to these general figures, based upon life expectancy at birth, are the comparable figures for ten-year-olds. In 1850, children of ten had a life-expectancy of 48 years, while ten-year-olds in 1947

had only ten years more, or an expectancy of 58 years. Thus, while the gain of 27 years from birth is dramatic, the gain is considerably less impressive for ten-year-olds, and 40-year-olds gained less than three years expectancy during the 97-year period. Seventy-year-olds, today, have *less* life expectancy than they had a century ago; likewise sixty-year-olds; and fifty-year-olds have hope of living a little over half a year more than the fifty-year-olds of 1850.

ONLY YOUTH IS SERVED

This, at any rate, is what the experience tables reveal: a child or infant has a far better chance of living to thirty or forty than the child of a century ago; but after he reaches forty, his general expectation has improved but slightly, and when he reaches sixty or seventy, his chances are poorer than those enjoyed by his great, great grandfather. The question of the *Prevention* writer, Dr. Wilfred N. Sisk, has considerable point: "Why are we able to do so much for infants and small children and so little for people over 40?"

What, then are the facts behind the figures? Can we conclude that better obstetrical practice, better antisepsis, better infant nutrition, and advances in sanitation, together with widely prevailing economic improvement, are responsible? If so, why shouldn't this progress affect the middle-aged and older people? There is the factor of degenerative diseases to be considered. Infectious diseases, to which children are peculiarly susceptible, have been waning for several generations, while degenerative diseases—diseases of metabolism such as cancer and heart disease—are on the increase. The degenerative diseases are also closely connected with afflictions thought to be psychosomatic, suggesting that children may enjoy a certain immunity from them until they grow up into what might be called the "neurotic zone" of human life—the period of maturity in which the cultural delusions of the race mind begin to take hold of the psyche, inflicting their tensions and ravaging conflicts upon the individual.

KARMIC FACTORS

Dr. Sisk thinks that the weakness of the middle-aged and older is due to bad nutrition, this, in turn, being caused by poor farming practice which has depleted the soil of essential trace minerals and

vitamins. He also proposes that food may be frequently poisoned by the use of poison sprays on fruits and vegetables. These causes doubtless play a part in the general bad health of maturity, along with the other factors that have been mentioned. The real explanation, however, probably lies in the karmic profundities of the metabolic processes, and will be arrived at through reflection, along the lines of correspondence and analogy, upon the general character of the degenerative diseases—the way in which they attack the body, the effect they produce in the cells, and the psychic accompaniments which play such a significant part in, say, the disease of cancer.

In any event, the better health of children is a hopeful sign. Likewise the notable attention being paid by this generation of parents to matters of diet and intelligent parent-child relationships. Conceivably, the good sense of parents in these directions may some day be extended to the larger problems of the adult years, with corresponding benefits to bodily health in maturity. *Prevention* has performed a useful task in singling out from the statistics on life expectancy the figures which outline this important problem, calling attention to it in a way that brooks no denial.

SAME FIGURES, DIFFERENT CONCLUSION

An interesting analysis of Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. statistics appears in the Los Angeles *Examiner* for Jan. 6, wherein a columnist furnishes a further breakdown. It appears that if those suffering from excess weight are eliminated from the statistics as reported above, the life-expectancy of even eighty-year-old persons is increased by 5.9 years! This analyst adds:

Statistics seem coldly impersonal . . . but statistics are *people*. For shocking example . . . from ages 45 to 50, an excess 25 pounds cuts life expectancy by 25 per cent.

And the alarming truth is that millions of Americans actually are 20 to 25 pounds above their normal weight!

Overweight is now considered the number one health problem in our country today.

This interpretation does not contradict Dr. Sisk, since overweight people are often found to be suffering from specific vitamin and mineral deficiencies. Usually the forsaking of a natural diet or a natural, active mode of life, or both, may be held physically account-

able, and accountable to such a degree that all the marvels of modern medicine are impotent to reverse the tide.

"OCCULT" ASPECTS OF NUTRITION

Hope of improvement remains, however, as suggested by the commentary on Dr. Sisk's article and because the philosophical implications of modern nutritional study seem to come closer each year to a theosophical view of a universe *living in all its parts, and responsive, interdependently, in all its parts*. Sir Cedric Stanton-Hicks, an English professor of human physiology, gives a concise and encouraging summary of the transition in the London *Vegetarian News*:

Until the recent war, the body was pictured as a machine, the structure of which, once completely developed, would, if wear and tear were replaced, and vitamins thrown in as a sort of anti-knock remedy, remain in going order.

Today, the whole concept has been swept away by the application of isotopes in metabolic research. Instead of a machine that is built and maintained in repair, the body, seen through the eyes of a new observational procedure, is an appearance resulting from equal rates of comings and goings of the material substance that is our food. As a whirlpool remains, whilst the stream flows, so does the living body of the organism remain, as long as the flow of the material substance is appropriately maintained.

This new outlook quite alters our basic notion of nutrition, for it becomes easier to see that health depends on the material nature of the stream of nutrients. Concerning the quantitative and qualitative nature of this stream we have but the vaguest notion, and vitamins and trace elements begin to appear as a vitally important key to the dynamic interchange within the cell itself.

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