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# THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT  
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY  
THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY  
AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XLI, 1952-1953

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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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# THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS

## DECLARATION

The policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great Founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable basis for union among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect; yet belongs to each and all."*

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*Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.*

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signatures will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with. Write to:

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A H M

Those are the enlightened great souls of this world who happen to be firmly fixed in eternal unborn Calmness. The world can not even dream of it.

—Gaudapadacharya

# THEOSOPHY

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## THE GIFT OF A TEACHING

THEOSOPHICAL students often discover that the greatest recurring necessity for progress in their inner lives is the determination to establish distinctions, ever "clearer and cleaner," between Theosophy and religions. As our sense of "belonging to the tribe of man" as a whole, and not to any of its temporary divisions, increases, we must own, first of all, perhaps, to a common possession of all those psychological tendencies which have given the doctrinal religions of the world their characteristic dominance. Thus we come to see that we are never entirely beyond the propensities for oversimplification, categorization and self-righteousness—prime causes of the establishment and the belligerent defense of dogmas. We all have a conditioned, personal outlook which forms a certain kinship with the dogmatists, an outlook which, unless recognized, blocks a universal sense of sympathy and compassion.

The fault has never been with the scriptures themselves, but with the men who misuse them. For a reading of scripture with the inner eye discloses, not a world of satisfying conclusions, but a world of philosophy, and the world of philosophy is open to us only when we realize that "truth" must always be self-discovered, can never be fully "transmitted." What *can* be transmitted are clues for exploration, maps or guide-posts, but never maps complete in all their details. There never has been a religion, nor even a system of philosophy, without its stimuli to exploration, but, conversely, none has ever charted the entire continent of thought.

Yet because "the religious story," and "the philosophical story" as well, are the very long story of the soul—the ancient as well as the modern story of ourselves—we can often find, particularly in the oldest scriptures, some of the most profound illuminations. *The Bhagavad-Gita*, for instance, performs today the dual function of demonstrating that the whole span of religious history for 5,000 years is *our* history, and of removing us, temporarily, from the familiar contexts of current debate about religion.

The commentary on religion furnished by Krishna in Chapter Seventeen is extremely subtle, occurring as a sort of parenthesis between evaluations of the delusions wrought in the minds of "false pietists of bewildered soul." Krishna declares that many religious austerities are practiced with unknowing hypocrisy, for the sake of obtaining respect for oneself or for fame and favor, and that such austerities belong "wholly to this world"—the world of dogmas and forms, rather than to the world of enlightenment. He then proceeds to a discussion of "gifts," in a way that invites us to liken all doctrinal presentations, transmissions or promulgations to the act of bestowing, wise or unwise, pure or tainted, as the case may be. "Those gifts," Krishna says, "which are bestowed at the proper time to the proper person, and by men who are not desirous of a return, are good and of the nature of truth. But that gift which is given with the expectation of a return from the beneficiary or with a view to spiritual benefit flowing therefrom, or with reluctance, is bad and partaketh of untruth." Also, "gifts given out of place and season and to unworthy persons, without proper attention and scornfully, are wholly bad and of the nature of darkness."

Hidden in these lines, we may think, are the reasons why truths are forever liable to distortion during transmission. The "truth" is not a thing, a claim, or a doctrine, but is dynamic—it is that which leads to self-discovery by individuals. No "gift" can mean exactly the same thing to two men; no presentation of Theosophy can awaken precisely the same type of response, nor stir identical motivations. The secret is not in giving the "gift" of Theosophic writings, but in knowing how and when to present the gift, and it will *remain* an individual secret, since no doctrines can direct us here. Expectation of any particular sort of result from our "giving" is the "expectation of a return from the beneficiary," even though acceptance may be the only "emolument" in mind. When an attempt is made also to "give" indiscriminately,

strong likelihood exists that the eagerness to give conceals "a view to spiritual benefit flowing therefrom." Thus have doctrines been "given" to "unworthy persons"—that is, to those who should not, cannot, be tested in that way, nor at that particular time and place.

The conventional religions of both East and West have deviated from Krishna's counsel in all these significant respects. The priest or authority almost invariably expects a return from the beneficiary—the return of recognition of spiritual authority and the acceptance of guidance. If the hidden motivation for transmission of doctrine is one's own spiritual benefit, the result is likewise bound to "partake of untruth," for the very transmission will be infused with the selfish aspiration from which the relationship was engendered.

If the story of religion is the story of all men everywhere, the pitfalls are exactly the same for Theosophists. Often they, too, in discouraging recapitulation, will tend to institutionalize—or try to institutionalize—truth. They, too, may look for certain results—hope to bind the recipient with a gratitude which they have no right to expect. Yet this is to be considered: Theosophic teachings, in all of their genuine presentations, embody these very subtleties of warning, Theosophic "doctrine" itself encouraging the elimination of delusions from the mind of the would-be teacher.

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### THE HIGHEST PLACE

Some devotees give sacrifice to the Gods, while others, lighting the subtler fire of the Supreme Spirit offer up themselves. Some men by meditation, using contemplation upon the Self, behold the spirit within, attain to that end by philosophical study with its realization, and others by means of the religion of works. Others, again, who are not acquainted with it in this manner, but have heard it from others, cleave unto and respect it; and even these, if assiduous only upon tradition and attentive to hearing the scriptures, pass beyond the gulf of death.

The man of meditation who knoweth all this reaches beyond whatever rewards are promised in the *Vedas* or that result from sacrifices or austerities or from gifts of charity, and goeth to the supreme, the highest place.

—*Bhagavad-Gitā*.

## WE CREATE OUR OWN WORLD

**A**S man, we stand at a special place in evolution because we form a link between the Highest and the general world of beings. Man is the Highest, and his world is composed of all the kingdoms of nature. He is the Highest and meets within his sphere all of life manifested. He is the One, the unmanifested, and in his world is all the manifested. Hence he is the top and includes the intermediate realms and is also part of the lowest.

The Highest beings may work without bodies made up of the familiar kingdoms of nature. The less evolved beings work in the kingdoms of nature without the awakened Highest. Man consciously forms in himself a link between the two.

He has not realized here in waking life the Highest which he is, and at present is primarily conscious of what he considers "his own world." But in reality it is man who creates "his own world," made up of both the Highest and the lowest, and "human nature" is a combination of the two.

Our world we have created by the use of Life. Drawing together the five senses and the mind, we incarnate in our world. We create it out of responsive elements. We keep our work in existence by the power of our attention. We use it for its length of life, then withdraw. Our world goes to pieces when we withdraw our attention from it. It is gone as a personal world; it remains, basically, as an impersonal world for our work as impersonal beings.

Our world then becomes a lens through which we can see the whole. The lens must be kept clean and a cleaner is required. If the cleaning is not done, we cannot see and may become blind. Then our course is obscure; we find obstacles and difficulties. For we can bring into our world elements that pull us away from the Real, the whole, and we will then die away.

This world we have created has its place and use, and since we have borrowed the materials for it from nature, we cannot use it for ourselves alone. We have to use it for the good of all. We can go contrary to the law and, forgetting others, live in this world for ourselves

alone. Shutting ourselves off, we separate ourselves until the main arteries to Life are severed.

Balance in our world is maintained by following the course of moderation, and by partaking of all things which go to make up our life in the right proportion.

This world of ours has to become the Path itself, a manifestation, a re-creation, with the materials of our nature, of a balance reflecting the great truths of Life.

In the individual world there can be either peace or war. We are at war when we have separated ourselves from the whole. We can compare the movements in nature's world to the movements in ours. Nature moves with certainty, following the ways of Life—with ease and with triumph in action. We move with uncertainty, following our own inclinations and desires, often with difficulty and often ending in failure.

It is of deep significance that we speak of "natural ways," referring to nature, and find there guidance to help us in our ways. Nature's ways are not nature's creations; nature follows the ways of Man, true Man. We should refer to nature not as an example, but to Man himself as creator and example. Nature is the result of Man's activities, but man has often strayed far from the path of Life and its ways.

We can, through our world, contact any part of nature and come to know it. We can feel in ourselves the pulse of life's heart-beat. Turning to this world, then looking outward, the world becomes not merely a vast accumulation of things, but a manifestation of the Real, with its network of arteries and veins, its life-force and activities all working toward the great end. Our world is a sounding board along which play the harmonies of nature.

Since our world is made up of parts, each must synchronize with the others or we cannot live in it. We can identify ourselves with any one of the parts or divisions of our nature and make it seem the complete world. For fixation which selects one point in a limited area can become a kind of enchantment, and we are often self-enchanted.

Our task is to "let go," and the process is one of expansion, of increase in range of vision and moral balance. We do not die when we transcend our personal world; we begin life on a more universal basis, which is a kind of birth.

We can realize the fact that we create our own world and live in it by thinking about experiences. Suffering, enjoying, or perceiving does not depend on the experience, but on ourselves, on what happens in our world as we go through the experience. This shows that we are not our world; that is why we call it our *world*. We are an individual, yet a world because we are composite.

This world is our environment and not the outer world. Nothing in that outer world affects us save as we register it in our own world. Our world allows us comparisons because we can register through the senses, the mind, and other faculties. We are constantly busy as builders—enforcing ideas by thinking about them, constantly rejecting others, modifying, rebuilding. Our world is not made up at once, but is always changing. Therefore we are not subject to it, but the creators of it, constantly creating and recreating. We are essentially builders and workers.

Everyone and everything belongs to our real world; man is essentially "hospitable." He shuts no being out. "Our world" is made up of every part of nature, entwined in the fabric of our being. By the same fact we belong to everyone else's world.

By expanding and growing through our world we reach to a greater world, that of the Self. Our world is not then gone, only the barriers which made it small are gone. We have extended our perception so that our horizon now includes the whole of life, not merely the boundaries of the present.

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The Self-Existent inflicted a curse on the senses in endowing them with a tendency to objectivize; it is hence that they tend to objects without, and not to the subject within. Some rare Sages desirous of immortality see the Self, turning their eyes within. Children find pleasure in the objective, and become bound in the expansive net of death; the wise, knowing immortality as the only thing stable, care not to desire anything of the impermanent.

—*Kathopanishad*

## THE IMPERATIVE DELUSIONS

**B**ACK in the twenties a wave of "dual personalities" struck England. A London dispatch states that six hundred people disappeared each month, according to police reports. Sociologists became alarmed when the average rose to thirty men and women per day—people who suddenly wrenched themselves away from all home ties and relations. Well-educated persons including doctors, university graduates and business managers vanished from comfortable homes without apparent cause. *Dual Personality* was declared to be the only sound explanation. One magazine of the day commented, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde is no mere fancy; the world is full of unaware Dr. Jekylls and Mr. Hydies!"

Dual or split personality presents today's outstanding challenge of medical skill. In his recent book, *The Biology of Schizophrenia*, Dr. Roy G. Hoskins writes:

One fifth of all hospitalized patients in this country are victims of this single disorder. . . . Apart from the 150,000 citizens annually removed from society to be maintained at a large cost in special institutions, there are many schizophrenics living outside hospitals ranging from inoffensive incompetent to criminally insane, with hoboes, prostitutes and other less offensively queer people fitting in between. . . . It casts a path of undeserved stigma upon the family in which it strikes and no family can know itself to be exempt.

Fundamentally, schizophrenia represents a distortion of the personality which in previous centuries was regarded as devil-possession and punishment for sin, therefore fitting within the purview of religion. This concept led to much abuse of innocent victims in attempts to exorcise their indwelling demons. Dr. Hoskins likens the schizophrenic personality to the distorted image of a man seen in an irregularly curved mirror. "Its explicit cause remains unknown. The schizophrenic problem in this year of grace presents a jigsaw problem that many of us have tried in vain as yet to solve." As one of a group which had studied this ailment during the previous eighteen years at the Worcester State Hospital, Dr. Hoskins summarized the findings in relation to the lengthy literature on psychoses, involving as it does every aspect of human nature—physical, mental and social—offering problems in

sociology, psychology, physiology, and general medicine.

A Robert Louis Stevenson has a less difficult task than the physician. He does not have to heal. He seeks only to observe the kaleidoscopic pattern of human behavior about him. Untrammelled by practical matters (medically speaking), the romance and mystery writers were delving into psychopathology several centuries before orthodox medicine. Writers of power, Hugo, Dostoievsky, and Tolstoy cause the reader temporarily to lose his identity in the compelling realism of the inner problems and environment of their characters. The intricate workings of the dual nature of man, his loves, hates, aspirations, and fears, constitute the contradictions in life which occur so constantly that they afford fuel to the novelist. Only the most recent medical researches enable us to see the disturbing accuracy of Stevenson's "fantastic" tale.

Dr. Henry Jekyll traced his "punishment" back to his youth, to the worst of his faults—"a certain gaiety of disposition" which he found hard to reconcile with an "imperious desire to carry my head high, and wear a more than commonly grave countenance before the public." From such naïve deception emerged a train of events famous in literature and screen, which at last plunged its victim into the "insurgent horror" of schizophrenia.

The unfortunate doctor's scientific studies only served to speed his self-destruction. Each day brought his moral and intellectual intelligence to see more clearly "that man is not truly one, but truly two." In his own person he learned to recognize a primitive duality, two natures contending in his field of consciousness, causing "a perennial war" among his members. Dr. Jekyll realized that even if he could be said to be either of these personalities, it was only because he was *both*.

This dual personality grew daily more unwelcome to the well-known, highly-respected physician. If only each personality could be housed as a separate entity! Then "*the unjust might go his way delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil.*"

Why did the doomed Dr. Jekyll write his pathetic confession? First, because he had been made to believe that when we attempt to cast off the burdens of our life, they return upon us "with more unfamiliar and more awful pressure." By a drug mixture, he succeeded in objecti-

fyng his other "self" as Mr. Hyde: "I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evils and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine." Even as good shone upon the countenance of kindly Dr. Jekyll, evil was broadly and plainly written on the face of Mr. Hyde. After a debauch as Hyde, when his "conscience slept," Jekyll was no worse. He woke again to his good qualities seemingly unimpaired; he would even make haste, where it was possible, to undo the evil done by Hyde. . . . "It was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty."

But the day came when Hyde, nourished by exercise, threatened to overthrow permanently the balance of Jekyll's nature. In his final confession the doomed doctor wrote: "I was slowly losing hold of my original and better self, and becoming incorporated with my second and worse. . . . Between these two I now felt I had to choose . . . and it fell out with me, as it falls with so vast a majority of my fellows, that I chose the better part and was found wanting in the strength to keep it."

How does modern science appraise the facts and situations of Dr. Jekyll's life? Of a group of 173 patients at the Worcester State Hospital, under investigation by Boisen, 130 showed some form of *evading the issue*—concealing the actual terms of conflict. This concealment mechanism was described by Boisen as *externalization of conscience*, which was evident in 113 of the 130 cases. Accusing, rebuking voices of unworthy behavior were heard by 73 of this group. Others thought the secrets of their mind were being read; 70 of the 130 cases felt themselves to be under the control of someone else, usually an enemy which, in the patient's mind, exonerated him of all blame or guilt. "These ideas may all be regarded as indications of a resisted and uneasy conscience," said Boisen. Very commonly it is as if the conscious self descends to some lower region where it is no longer in control, but is at the mercy of terrifying ideas and imagery that throng in upon it; or, put another way, as though Jekyll is well in the clutches of Hyde.

This sort of schizophrenic is isolated from his fellows through a social judgment which, consciously or subconsciously, he accepts and pronounces upon himself. From this an intolerable loss of self-respect results, the victims of which have been classified into three groups: (1) These patients show little concern, but *drift* into the state of

schizophrenia. The world would say they lack ambition. They choose the easy way to satisfy their desires, gradually withdrawing from the world of reality into the world of fantasy. Seldom showing any great emotional disturbance, they flow along to dissolution and destruction. "It is as though they become psychotic because they do not take the trouble to remain sane." (2) In the second group are those chiefly concerned with "face saving." In their great desire to escape a sense of failure or to avoid admitting defeat or error, they come to accept distortions and delusions. (3) The emotional stresses in this group are the greatest, described as *panic*. "In its extreme form this emotional disturbance may appear as that profound despair and hopelessness in which the sufferer loses all interest either in the external world or in himself and he feels himself to be dead." These three patterns of schizophrenic behavior appear more often in combinations than as single types. The schizophrenic illness is "almost as varied in its individual manifestations as is human nature itself."

The relative potency of "nature or nurture" in the causation of schizophrenia is a matter of long-standing debate. A man may have a perfectly normal heredity, but the normal flowering of that personality may never take place. This has been called "interrupted heredity" when temporary inclinations of parents otherwise normal have affected the human embryo. Dr. Hoskins proposes "That the schizophrenic represents an end and result of a generalized failure of adaptation that arises from defective evolution of the maturing process." The obvious alternative to the "immaturity" concept of schizophrenia is that the psychosis may arise from specific pathology which may also be the fundamental origin of the postulated "immaturity." However ardent the debate between "nature and nurture," the problem is far from solution. The philosophic explanation can be found only in the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Since true maturity is beyond all else the purpose of life and evolution, the subject deserves further consideration.

Evidence of mental immaturity is generously supplied in schizophrenic literature—qualities all men possess in some degree and which each can recognize in himself at some time or other. We laugh at our forgotten New Year's resolutions, but do not smile at the sheer magic-mongering of one patient who, to improve his character, repeatedly wrote the golden rule on a slip of paper and swallowed it. Or take

the common sleepless night, the worries which feed our nightmares. These are a faint taste of the grim, terrifying, torturing, mocking reality within the patient's brain. An initial feeling of strangeness is rather common and was described by one subject as being often beset by "a flood of mental pictures as though an album within were unfolding itself." Gods, devils and heroes cross the stage in endless procession, rather than the worries and anxieties most people have entertained in a steady stream during these past troublous war years. There seems to be an *emotional dulling*—real or apparent, sometimes manifested as moodiness or bursts of irritability. The patient is likely to complain that he is unable to concentrate or muster his former energy.

Whether all this be called "weakness of the ego" or "intrapsychic ataxia," it is the breakup of the individuality into disjunctive fragments. Now the individual directs his attention to this fragment, now to that, in a fashion which precludes logical thinking and effective action. The delusion of "voices" and foreign influences arises from repudiating unacceptable fragments of his disintegrating personality. Dr. Hoskins sums up the current scientific picture: "Rather literally several warring persons exist in the same body and the patient is truly bewildered as to which one to accept as 'I'—hence the fairly common symptom of depersonalization."

Concerning remedial treatment Dr. Hoskins writes: "First of all we should have an adequate appraisal of the value of the various therapeutic modalities that are now in vogue. Aside from a certain amount of inadequate evidence regarding the value of shock therapies, we know practically nothing in a decently quantitative way as to the value of any. Indeed we do not even know how good psychiatry is for psychotics." It has long been known that a shock of any kind is often effective in the treatment of mental abnormality. A dash of cold water will often bring a person out of a hysterical fit, while every mother knows the value of a cold bath in breaking a childish tantrum of rage. In the seventeenth century, doctors would whirl mental patients in revolving chairs or shoot guns behind their backs. But whether it be the screams and pounding drums of a primitive shaman, the impressive exorcism of a medieval priest, the shock of insulin, metrazol, or electricity, that have been used in the past, the duty of the doctor is to give his patient the strength to begin his hard journey back to normality and to stand by him each step of the way. This he can do by unlocking the door that

the patient was unable to open for himself. The wrong kind of "shock" may slam the door forever.

Returning to the moral and ethical problem of the schizophrenic which Stevenson so forcefully dramatized, the intense selfishness of this pathological outlook on life follows a fairly consistent pattern known as *withdrawal*. The patient gradually becomes less approachable, spends more time at home and ceases to make new friends; finally he is overwhelmed with dullness, as indifference and lack of spontaneity dominate the picture. To counteract this separative tendency from his fellow-beings, the patient should be led as much as possible to give of himself to others, rather than be compelled to be the recipient of pampering or pauperization. Jung called the schizophrenic "a dreaming man in a waking world." What actually is schizophrenia and what can be done about it on the mental and philosophical plane?

Each of us can find in ourselves those faults which in the schizophrenic represent a failure in the maturation process. Frighteningly familiar are these childish and adolescent symptoms which are by no means confined to the young: Exhibitionism, unco-operativeness, fault-finding, tantrums, absurd and irritating thoughts, mental blankness, etc. These terms awaken us to the living danger of common thought-habits. Too often, moodiness, impatience, anger, nervousness, and indifference are considered merely temporary states and therefore, unimportant; but they are symptomatic of an inner unrest that is deep-seated and which, unless corrected, may grow beyond control. Have we not all lapsed into panic or despair on occasion, or reasoned ourselves out of unpleasant situations called by medical men "delusional misinterpretations"?

Certain physicians, through the gentleness of their compassion and the tenderness which illumines their medical understanding, live in the memories of those who contacted them, even after decades. Such an one was Selden Haines Talcott, a homeopathic physician who was for many years superintendent of the Middletown State Hospital in New York. His wide influence stems from such views as he expressed to his students in lectures at the Flower Hospital of New York City. He felt that:

Moral hygiene consists in transmitting soul encouragement from the strong to the weak. Doctors and nurses should seek by kind and soothing and stirring words to inspire new spiritual energy in the

lives and motives of their patients. Many a patient has been erratic and undisciplined throughout his life, and it is this lack of discipline which often brings a patient to a hospital for the insane. The establishment of mild but judicious direction on the part of those in charge of such patients is a prominent portion of their duty. Every faculty must be cultivated by means of moral hygiene; every emotion must be restrained, and every passion must be subdued, in order to enable mental invalids to possess that perfect self-control which is the loftiest attribute of sanity and strength.

While some might with accuracy describe Jekyll-Hyde as a nightmare tale, others might with equal accuracy see in Stevenson's story a modern mystery drama equal in its way to the ancient mysteries of Greece and Egypt, in which philosophic lessons were taught through the medium of dramatized versions of what we now refer to as "myths." Reflection shows that, rather than being a modern story, the tale of Jekyll versus Hyde is a timeless parable of the higher and lower nature. Like the universal allegories of old it has varied, potent applications for those who have eyes to see them.

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#### PEACE OF INTEGRATION

The illusion of self is not a denial of the sense of identity, it is the superstition that one identity is more important than another, that we are not cut off when we cut ourselves off from our brothers, that we can be blown free of the wreckage in one piece when they are turned to cinders in their bunks.

Nirvana is not void, it is consciousness void of illusion, it is the sense of peace and freedom which fills the mind when it is emptied of all attachment to illusion; it is the subjective realization of resolved conflicts, of attained integrations; it is totality felt by the whole, not a light that one sees, but the light by which one sees.

—EDMOND TAYLOR

# THE FUTURE AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

IN 1888 H. P. Blavatsky wrote:

“Night before last I was shown a bird’s eye view of the theosophical societies. I saw a few earnest reliable theosophists in a death struggle with the world in general and with other—nominal and ambitious—theosophists. The former are greater in number than you may think, and *they prevailed*—as you in America *will prevail*, if you only remain staunch to the Master’s programme *and true to yourselves*. And last night I saw . . . The defending forces have to be judiciously—so scanty are they—distributed over the globe wherever theosophy is struggling with the powers of darkness.”

Every member of the Society should be, and many are, deeply interested in the above words. The outlook, the difficulties, the dangers, the necessities are the same now as then, and as they were in the beginning of this attempt in 1875. For, as she has often said, this is not the first nor will it be the last effort to spread the truths and to undertake the same mission as that taken up by Ammonius Saccas some centuries ago—to lead men to look for the one truth that underlies all religions and which alone can guide science in the direction of ideal progress. In every century such attempts are made, and many of them have been actually named “theosophical.” Each time they have to be adapted to the era in which they appear. And this is the era—marked by the appearance and the success of the great American republic—of freedom for thought and for investigation.

In the above quotation there is a prophecy that those few reliable theosophists who are engaged in a struggle with the opposition of the world and that coming from weak or ambitious members will prevail, but it has annexed to it a condition that is of importance. There must be an adherence to the program of the Masters. That can only be ascertained by consulting her and the letters given out by her as from those to whom she refers. There is not much doubt about that program. It excludes the idea that the Society was founded or is intended as “a School for Occultism,” for that has been said in so many words

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long ago in some letters published by Mr. Sinnett and in those not published.

Referring to a letter received (1884) from the same source we find: "Let the Society flourish on its moral worth, and not by phenomena made so often degrading." The need of the west for such doctrines as Karma and Reincarnation and the actual Unity of the whole human family is dwelt upon at length in another. And referring to some of the effects of certain phenomena, it is said,\* "They have to prove . . . constructive of new institutions of a genuine practical brotherhood of Humanity, where all will become co-workers with Nature." Speaking of present materialistic tendencies, the same authority says:

- "Exact experimental science has nothing to do with morality, virtue, philanthropy—therefore can make no claim upon our help until it blends itself with metaphysics. . . . The same causes that are materializing the Hindu mind are equally affecting all western thought. Education enthrones scepticism, but imprisons spirituality. You can do immense good by helping to give the western nations a secure basis on which to reconstruct their crumbling faith. And what they need is the evidence that Asiatic psychology alone supplies. Give this and you will confer happiness of mind on thousands. . . . This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come and which will push the age towards extreme atheism or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

This is the great tone running through all the words from these sources. It is a call to work for the race and not for self, a request to bring to the west and the east the doctrines that have most effect on human conduct, on the relations of man to man, and hence the greatest possibility of forming at last a true universal brotherhood. We must follow this program and supply the world with a system of philosophy which gives a sure and logical basis for ethics, and that can only be gotten from those to which I have adverted; there is no basis for morals in phenomena, because a man might learn to do the most wonderful things by the aid of occult forces and yet at the same time be the very worst of men.

A subsidiary condition, but quite as important as the other, is laid down by H.P.B. in her words that we must "remain true to ourselves." This means true to our better selves and the dictates of conscience. We

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\**Occult World*, p. 101.

cannot promulgate the doctrines and the rules of life found in theosophy and at the same time ourselves not live up to them as far as possible. We must practise what we preach, and make as far as we can a small brotherhood within the Theosophical Society. Not only should we do this because the world is looking on, but also from a knowledge of the fact that by our unity the smallest effort made by us will have tenfold the power of any obstacle before us or any opposition offered by the world.

The history of our sixteen years of life shows that our efforts put forth in every quarter of the globe have modified the thought of the day, and that once more the word "Theosophy," and many of the old ideas that science and agnosticism supposed were buried forever under the great wide dollar of present civilization, have come again to the front. We do not claim to be the sole force that began the uprooting of dogmatism and priestcraft, but only that we have supplied a link, given words, stirred up thoughts of the very highest importance just at a time when the age was swinging back to anything but what the reformers had fought for. The old faiths were crumbling, and no one stood ready to supply that which by joining religion and science together would make the one scientific and the other religious. We have done exactly what the letter quoted asked for, led the times a step "to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans."

But we can never hope to see the churches and the ministers coming over in a body to our ranks. It would be asking too much of human nature. Churches are so much property that has to be preserved, and ministers are so many men who get salaries they have to earn, with families to support and reputations to sustain. Many "houses of worship" are intimately connected with the material progress of the town, and the personal element would prevent their sinking the old and glorious identity in an organization like to ours. Congregations hire their priests at so much a year, to give out a definite sort of theology, and do not like to be told the truth about themselves nor to have too high a standard of altruism held up to them in a way from which, under the theosophical doctrines, there would be no escape. They may all gradually change, heresy trials will continue and heretical ministers be acquitted, but the old buildings will remain and the speakers go on in new grooves to make other reputations, but we may not hope to see any universal rush to join us.

Our destiny is to continue the wide work of the past in affecting literature and thought throughout the world, while our ranks see many changing quantities but always holding those who remain true to the program and refuse to become dogmatic or to give up common-sense in theosophy. Thus will we wait for the new messenger, striving to keep the organization alive that he may use it and have the great opportunity H.P.B. outlines when she says, "Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish."

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### NO EFFORT FAILS

Some otherwise loyal Theosophists think that the Movement has failed for this cycle, because of the dissensions and false doctrines so much in evidence. They ought to remember that Masters never cease working, and that it is always possible for even the humblest Theosophist who is clear-eyed and humanity-loving to aid Their endeavor. The way to know the truth is to get back to what the Teachers themselves gave, both in philosophy and in right work.

Students have missed much by careless reading. If this is a Movement inspired by Masters, and if H.P.B. and Judge were Their mouth-pieces, there is the necessity for looking into the meaning behind the words They used. To think that the *effort* had failed and that it was no use to try further, would show lack of faith in the Masters and a misunderstanding of the great occult laws that govern such a Movement as this. "The wheel of the Good Law moves swiftly on. It grinds by *night* and day. The worthless husks it drives from out the golden grain, the refuse from the flour." This must apply to the Movement, as well as to everything else—being Universal in its scope. I do not think that They used words purposelessly; it is for us and for all others who would serve Them, to apply, apply Their teachings. There is no time limit to effort.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND THEIR ATTAINMENT

ONE of the questions which a Theosophist is apt to ask, and to ask with some earnestness and intensity, is, How can I make progress in the higher life? How can I attain spiritual gifts? For the phrase "spiritual gifts," which is a rather loose-jointed expression, we are indebted to Paul, the Apostle and Adept, who thus wrote to the Corinthian Church: "Concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Among the "gifts" which he goes on to enumerate are these,—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, the speaking of divers tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. And while the Apostle urges the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts," he yet proceeds to show them a more excellent way, namely the supreme law of love. "Now abideth," he says, "faith, hope, charity (or love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity." Spiritual gifts, then, however desirable their possession may be, are plainly not, in the opinion of this good Adept, on the highest plane, not the supreme object of human attainment, or the most excellent way of reaching human perfection. They may doubtless properly be regarded as evidences of advancement on the higher planes of thought and spiritual life, and may be coveted and used for the benefit of others; but they are not in themselves the chief object of human desire. For man's supreme aim should be to become God, and "God is love."

But let us look at the matter a little more closely. In the first place, what is a "gift"? What is the common acceptation of the word? Clearly something given to or bestowed upon a recipient, not something which a man already possesses, or which he may obtain by a process of growth or development. The latter, strictly speaking, would be a "fruit," not a gift. A tree which has been producing nothing but leaves and branches for many years finally breaks out into blossom and fruit. No new "gift" has been conferred upon it; it has simply reached a stage of development in its natural growth where certain powers, inherent in the tree from the beginning, have an opportunity to assert

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themselves. In the same way the transcendental powers possessed by the Adepts are not gifts; but the natural result of growth in certain directions, and the necessary efflorescence, so to speak, of the profound development in their cases of those spiritual potentialities which are the birthright of all men.

Taking this view of the meaning of the word, I think most Theosophists will be ready to admit that the phrase "spiritual gifts" is a misnomer. There are and can be no gifts for man to receive. Whatever the student of the higher life is, he is as the result of his past labors. Whatever he may become in the future will be due to his own efforts. He may develop his latent faculties and in time become an Adept, or he may drift along the currents of life without aim or effort, till he finally sinks into oblivion. His destiny is in his own hands, and is in no way dependent upon "gifts."

Bearing in mind, however, the manifold nature of man, the subject may be looked at from another point of view. For all practical purposes man may be said to consist of body, soul, and spirit, the soul being the true ego, and the spirit one with the Supreme. And regarding these for the time as separate entities, it is perfectly true, as James, another apostle, puts it, that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above." Every aspiration of the soul for spiritual things, every resolve of the man to lead a purer life, every helping outstretched hand to a weaker brother, every desire for the truth, all hungering and thirsting after righteousness:—these and like yearnings and strivings of the soul have first of all come from above, from the Divine within. In this sense they may be called "gifts,"—gifts from the higher nature to the lower, from the spiritual to the human. And this action of the above upon the below is seen in those humane attributes, or qualities, or virtues—whatever one may be pleased to call them—which Paul in another place enumerates as the "fruits of the spirit"—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Looked at from either of these points of view, how can we attain spiritual gifts? The answer would seem to depend upon what we are really striving for. If the extraordinary powers of the Adepts have captivated our fancy and fired our ambition, then we must possess our souls in patience. Few, if any, of us are at all fitted for a "forcing" process. We must be content to wait and work; to grow and develop; line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, till,

ages hence perhaps, we come to the full stature of the perfect man. If, however, wisely recognizing our limitations, we strive instead after what may be termed the ordinary manifestations of the spirit, two obvious lines of conduct suggest themselves.

Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as though something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbor or friend, obey the suggestion without delay. If the wish to turn over a new leaf comes into the lower consciousness, don't wait till next New Year's before actually turning it over; turn it now. If some pathetic story of suffering has moved you, act on the emotion while your cheeks are still wet with tears. In short, put yourself at once in line with the Divine ways, in harmony with the Divine laws. More light, more wisdom, more spirituality must necessarily come to one thus prepared, thus expectant. How can a bar of iron be permeated with the earth's magnetism if it is placed across instead of in line with the magnetic meridian? How can a man expect spiritual gifts or powers if he persists in ignoring spiritual conditions, in violating spiritual laws? To obtain the good, we must think good thoughts; we must be filled with good desires; in short we must *be* good.

And this practical suggestion is to fulfill faithfully and conscientiously every known duty. It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we today can most readily make progress in the higher life,—slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things. We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers. We receive most when we sacrifice most. We attain to the largest measure of Divine love when we most unselfishly love the brethren. We become one with the Supreme most surely when we lose ourselves in work for Humanity.

DIES NON

## THE HIDDEN SELF

IN any study or pursuit which a person may undertake, there are both certainties and uncertainties. This is true of Theosophy, as of everything else, although Theosophical uncertainties, in the nature of things, are both obscure and of the highest importance. While what, in the abstract, may be clearest of all to the intellectual and the moral sense, such as, for example, the Law of Karma, the actual working of that law involves the student in endless mysteries. The conception of the Higher Self, identical, as we say, with the Absolute, is philosophically irresistible, yet strangely inaccessible to that portion of the mind which reaches after immediate realization of this idea. And so with other principles and doctrines. Apparently, it is a condition of being human to have to deal with subtle intimations in place of the demonstrated realities we long for; to do this, moreover, without losing heart, and without pretense to a kind of knowledge which is not yet ours.

How shall we make peace with our uncertainties, yet regard them as obstacles to be overcome? How, burdened by doubts which cannot be suddenly dispelled, shall we feel the confidence that we think we ought to feel to be of help to others? *The Secret Doctrine* is full of ringing declarations; the devotional books are rich in exhortation; and the world, meanwhile, is populated by hungry hearts. It is as though we have to deliver ourselves of sermons beyond our depth, of repetition which scores our own lack of understanding. So, at any rate, it must at times appear to us. And yet we know, or ought to know, that there is a suitability for every utterance and a conviction which neither magnifies its origin nor underestimates its validity.

Doubtless the secret, here, as with so many other "problems," is in forgetting oneself. This is a secret known to all in principle—a secret which the intellect readily acknowledges, yet one often difficult for the feelings, which seldom answer a peremptory summons, to endorse. This "self" which continually intrudes upon our reflections, bringing, sometimes, the glamor of vanity, sometimes, the chill of doubt, and if not these, then simple perplexity—this self needs understanding as much or more than anything within our experience, for it is only by understanding this self that we can be sure of our capacity to forget it

when we need to forget it.

Mr. Judge once wrote:

When the self is first seen, it is like looking into a glove; and for how many incarnations may it not be so? The material envelope throws up before the eye of the Soul waving fumes and clouds of illusion.

This sort of investigation, it seems apparent, is for those who are prepared to expose themselves to some discouragements. It represents some kind of "graduation" from the initial security and pleasure found in contemplating the logical simplicity of Karma and Reincarnation, in feeling the philosophic assurance of a God-idea which is rooted in the Self of All. The Fundamentals enable us to make our peace with Reason, and this is much; but after the broad philosophical outlines of the teaching have produced their natural effect of serenity at the intellectual level, we soon find, if we are serious about Theosophy, another kind of harmony far from being attained. There is the logic of human development as found in the doctrine of the Rounds and Races; but there is the more elusive logic concerned with the pressures and strains of the psychic and moral states we inhabit as still evolving beings. It is here that our religious heritage often betrays us. Here we try to make a sudden transfer of our intellectual certainty to another level of our being, as though the perception of an abstract rule were the same as knowledge of its application in bewilderingly complex circumstances. Here we imagine that beliefs, when supported by reason—when not "dogmatic" or "blind"—somehow stop being beliefs and are transmuted into knowledge. This, we sometimes discover, has the effect of preserving the emotional attitudes of blind belief while condemning the blindness with a fine philosophical enthusiasm.

The burden of this confusion, it seems evident, is not a personal one, but belongs to the Karma of our race and cycle of evolution. It is the Karma of Christianity, the religion which, for centuries, has accepted psychic substitutes for knowledge, words for deeds. We would like to be free of this confusion, but we can not—surely, not all at once. All that we can hope for is to free ourselves of its *burden*, its psychological oppressions. It seems likely that the "resignation" of which *The Bhagavad-Gita* speaks has to do with this confusion. To be philosophically resigned is to make peace—but not an abject surrender—with our uncertainties. With this accomplished, the burden may fall

away. The natural raw materials of human growth need never be burdensome; the burden exists only in our failure to recognize what those materials are and how they are constituted.

To make peace with our uncertainties will make easy the abandonment of all those posturings which the *skandhas* of religion cause us to think necessary to a moral and useful life. There is no need for us to "create an impression" of positive certainty concerning matters on which we have no sure feeling. If we have honest convictions, they will find their own way to the surface. And it is the honesty which counts. The world has been fed so long on imitation certainties and the bombast which hides insecurity that a little honesty bears its own vindication and lends unique persuasion to everything with which it is concerned. Such honesty, of course, can hardly mean a tedious inventory of what we have or have not "proved" to ourselves. It is rather a product of genuine impersonality, of having overcome the habit of wanting to "convert" anyone, or of attaching special virtues to Theosophy because *we* have favored it with our acceptance.

The project of self-reform in these directions often encompasses odd disclosures. For example, there is the impulse, when asked a question, to pause, run up the ladder of evolution to the top rung, read the "right answer" there, and then run down again, trying to preserve the ineffable vision in all its impressiveness. There is a sense in which we may have opportunity to do something like this, but it is never an awkward or self-conscious operation. An inward consultation is always in order, to avoid the ever-present personal bias, but the attitude called for is not the attitude which triumphs in reading off "answers." Human beings are *working minds*, and working minds are baffled by finished placards of truth. In such communications, the mood is practically everything. If the inquirer finds himself the target for a series of logically perfect finalities, he has to banish his uncertainties from his mind like evil spirits, or decide to go away. But the inquirer, if he is honest with himself, has learned to treasure his uncertainties. They are his avenues of authentic self-discovery. He is likely to be suspicious of Theosophical discourse which takes no account of the uncertainties carried about by every man. Theosophy, as a matter of fact, could be defined as wisdom concerning how to deal with human uncertainties, and care must be taken never to suppress this definition, while urging the claim that it has an answer for every question.

It takes very little review of personal experience to reflect that the man who inspires the most confidence is the man who claims and insists the least. Or it would be better to say, perhaps, that a man can say almost anything so long as he speaks with wholeness and without anxiety. A claim is not in what is said, essentially, but in how it is said. The stature of H. P. Blavatsky is plain enough from her Prefaces—as plain as in the body of her texts. She relies for persuasion on what is common between what she says in her books and the people who read them. *She* is not insisting upon anything, and this makes her great. And it is here, and only here, that we are called upon to “imitate” H. P. Blavatsky. Before anything else, her works are monuments to the dignity of human beings, to their capacity to understand and vindicate the laws of human evolution. Nowhere in her books can anyone point to a theological twist, a trick of revelation. Yet she is, on occasion, a writer of uninhibited genius with unparalleled talent for striking image and forceful expression.

It is this fundamental respect for man that Theosophy seeks to generate. But it is a respect, paradoxically, which expects nothing in particular instances. Students may band together, secure a meeting room, hold classes and give talks, but they have no guarantee that anything wonderful will happen. They are friendly without making a special fuss over people. They suppress in themselves the messianic impulse to go about “saving” others. In the fellowship of souls, there can be no saving of others. The impersonality of H. P. Blavatsky, the self-effacing example of William Q. Judge, and the emulation of their example by students of Theosophy—these are unspoken declarations of the capacity of every man to save himself. People sometimes speak of an “atmosphere” in a Theosophical meeting. The atmosphere, when it is authentic, is the atmosphere of the integrity of man.

A theosophical meeting is an invitation to the soul to arouse itself—an invitation offered through persons, but of that attitude of mind which the Founders of the Movement represent. Anyone can participate in that attitude—anyone at all. It has nothing to do with intellectuality. It has nothing to do with personality. It has everything to do with the feeling that our condition is a natural one, that philosophical education requires personal discovery, and that the philosophy which instructs us in the method of this kind of learning is wisdom without price.

## NOTES ON THE KEY

THE short sections in the *Key* on "sacrifice" and "charity" in "Practical Theosophy" provide, by implication, some subtle definitions of these words which may further aid the student in orienting the Theosophic philosophy in relation to both conventional religion and conventional materialism. First, however, these same sections serve as reminders that the relationship between Theosophy, Science and Religion has altered in many ways since the *Key* was written.

In 1875, verbal devotion to the principle of altruism was not the endlessly reiterated pulpit theme it is today, although the liberal faiths were then tending toward a more humanitarian interpretation of the crucifixion—one in which was found a symbolical meaning, a self-sacrificial *example*, implying that the motivations which inspired Jesus of Nazareth could and should inspire others also. The Theosophist did share a devotion to "altruism" with many Socialists and social reformers, the psychological introduction of Annie Besant to the Theosophical Movement being precisely upon this common ground of idealism. But the orthodox religions had barely begun to be apologetic about their ecstasies of preparation for purely personal soul-security in after life.

While it is difficult to estimate the extent to which the Theosophical Society served as a fulcrum for changing the verbal orientation of Christianity in the direction of humanitarianism, certain it is that "altruism" finally became the professed objective of both orthodox and liberal religious groups. In fact, the swinging arc of change carried so far that the words "self-sacrifice" and "altruism" have at times become almost odious by incantation, and by association with certain smugnesses of pretension. And, as "altruism" was taken up by the Churches, the Agnostics and materialists began, quite naturally, to have less and less use for the term. The modern psychologist or socialist who dislikes and suspects all claims to nobility on the ground of "self-sacrifice" is reacting quite understandably against the insincerity which often accompanies such protestations. And they have a point, perhaps: Is any pretense more reprehensible than that which lays claim to a quality which only the holiest Buddhas have earned the right

to define? How many more are content with that insidious double morality which allows them to pretend that they "live only to do good to others," while yet seeking everything for enhancement of their public reputation or self-esteem?

H.P.B.'s definition of self-sacrifice, however, is a unique one, again demonstrating how often the opposing partisans of religion and science are both equidistant from each other and from the Theosophical orientation. When H.P.B. writes that a willingness to give "to others *more* than to oneself is a higher standard than that of love and justice," she supplements this by the following remarks:

We say, however, that self-sacrifice has to be performed with discrimination; and such a self-abandonment, if made without justice, or blindly, regardless of subsequent results, may often prove not only made in vain, but harmful. One of the fundamental rules of Theosophy is, justice to oneself—viewed as a unit of collective humanity, not as a personal self-justice, not more but not less than to others; unless, indeed, by the sacrifice of the *one* self we can benefit the many.

Altruism, in other words, is in no sense to be considered *a* virtue, Theosophically speaking. The moment one claims it a virtue—a stage of advancement to which one can climb—he has unwittingly allowed a sublime *principle of motivation* to be materialized into an objective, and when we materialize profound aspirations or motivations these are immediately regarded as ends in themselves rather than as means to an end. Altruism is not, cannot, be considered an end in itself, but is rather, perhaps, that attitude of mind which allows us to *seek* to accomplish the greatest good one is capable of perceiving. There is no true virtue, for instance, in sacrificing one's own needs for the desires of another, providing that the needs are truly needs and the desires are but personal desires. Many are those who have been given too much in the way of wealth, attention and affection, etc., and have consequently suffered from receiving these "gifts given out of season."

H.P.B. points to the principle of altruism, but in such a way as to attempt to discourage all readers of *The Key to Theosophy* from ever stopping to think about whether they are sufficiently "altruistic." Altruism may be the quintessence of motivation, which even the least can practice in degree, yet remains a quality which pervades the entire nature of none but the greatest sages. "Altruism," writes H.P.B., "is an

integral part of self-development." In other words, capacity for self-sacrifice is the very power which can build freedom for the soul, since, unless one is freed from excessive concern with self, he has neither the strength nor the vision which distinguishes the "free" man from the man dependent. Then, too, none can learn to be "psychologist," even in the modern sense of the word, unless he can rid himself of self-preoccupation long enough to look into those mysteries of human relationship which need penetration.

Altruism, clearly, is not something "attained," it is *practiced*. It is not a state into which man enters, but a method of understanding all states and conditions:

We have to discriminate. A man has no right to starve himself *to death* that another man may have food, unless the life of that man is obviously more useful to the many than is his own life. But it is his duty to sacrifice his own comfort, and to work for others if they are unable to work for themselves. It is his duty to give all that which is wholly his own and can benefit no one but himself if he selfishly keeps it from others. Theosophy teaches self-abnegation, but does not teach rash and useless self-sacrifice, nor does it justify fanaticism.

The last sentence poses an intriguing problem. Why is it that the self-styled altruists *are* so often "fanatics?" Once again, it is by a wealth of firsthand, practical experience that modern psychologists establish the frequency of this correlation and develop a propensity for rolling their eyes heavenward if Theosophists or other "soul-believers" talk "self-sacrifice" and "altruism" as if these were beliefs one could somehow convert into possessions by professing them. Perhaps altruism is like the principle, Atma, itself, not to be considered as confined within any form; the man who pretends to have acquired some special hold on that principle needs indeed to develop a blind fanaticism in order to sustain the belief.

Another important qualification is suggested by the statement that "it is his [the Theosophist's] duty to sacrifice his own comfort, and *to work for others if they are unable to work for themselves.*" (Italics ours.) In terms of soul evolution, each one must learn to "work for himself," and will in time, yet there are many occasions and situations which leave men prostrated with one or another form of temporary helplessness. It is at these times that such men definitely need an affirmation of the brotherhood of man, since their own leanings to-

ward the higher life can find, during their helplessness, no focus for application. To withhold a helping hand from those who truly need it must be one of the deadliest sins, indeed. Those who need help, by being in that worst of all positions where they cannot help themselves, are also in a position where they cannot help others, and are thus temporarily unable to rekindle their own fires of brotherly motivation. It is doubtful, however, if one can often have the right to regard *himself* as being in this predicament—and, if actually in such case, would probably not be able to regard much of anything, one way or another. Speaking of the members of the Society in general, H.P.B. writes that, "No man has a right to say that he can do nothing for others, on any pretext whatever." Conversely, can one ever *say* that he can do nothing for himself?

The synthesizing point in philosophy for both "self-sacrifice" and "charity" is emphasis upon the *self-realization* of altruism. "Good works," in other words, will never be quite "good" enough if they are performed somewhat mechanically according to the dictates of doctrine or custom. Theosophists are enjoined by H.P.B. to transcend the mere ritualistic flow of kindly actions, and, as a corollary, to distrust the adequacy of benevolent institutions for ameliorating suffering:

Act individually and not collectively; follow the Northern Buddhist precepts: "Never put food into the mouth of the hungry by the hand of another"; "Never let the shadow of thy neighbour (*a third person*) come between thyself and the object of thy bounty"; "Never give the Sun time to dry a tear before thou hast wiped it." Again "Never give money to the needy, or food to the priest, who begs at thy door, *through thy servants*, lest thy money should diminish gratitude, and thy food turn to gall."

But how can this be applied practically?

The Theosophical ideas of charity mean *personal* exertion for others; *personal* sympathy, forethought and assistance in their troubles or needs.

We cannot, on this basis, contrive to make a Theosophical dogma out of "goodness." The quality of Sattva represents but the impressions made upon the human instrument by the thoughts and actions of the enlightened soul, and if the soul becomes content with this Sattvic vehicle, enlightenment may fade to the rosy glow of kindly emotionalism, suffused in which the capacity for good judgment often lapses into quiescence.

## YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

• **T**HE modern child seems to have lost his natural interest in reading (except for trash) and therefore is missing the values to be gained from a good book. Why is this, and what can be done to stimulate constructive reading?

• What must always be kept in mind is that each child has unlimited potentiality of constructive imagination—the ability to read the good books. We all grant the necessity and values of a good book, but should we not also consider that children are not mentally equipped to know that certain books are better for them than others?

There are, perhaps, several reasons why interest in “constructive reading” seems to be replaced by an intense desire for excitement through comics and the like. An example is set by the child’s elders, who turn to sensually adventurous fiction, most popular and readily available.

• Another reason for lack of thought-provoking reading is the near disappearance of the old-time “family reading circle by the fire.” Families used to make their own entertainment—at home, among themselves. The book which father would pull out at night was often a regular closing of the day’s impressions, and these readings played a deep and meaningful part in the child’s life. Problems which arose might even be referred to in the terms of the book being read. The child was thus encouraged by the family to find value and food for thought in some of the classics. Now, the closeness of a family in that sense is almost nil, partly because of the density of population and the so-called “benefits” of civilization. The vast offerings of popular entertainment, many of which are directed to the child, has to a large extent crowded out *what might have been* a desire for constructive reading. There seems to be no need for it in his life, and there is so little requiring him to use his initiative. The “adventurous spirit” is partially satisfied by today’s popular science-fiction stories. Life is so complicated that a child is hurled into the confusion and easily swept along by the intriguing glitter of the modern pace of living.

In order to help a child to become an individual instead of a mere consequence of his age, we should emphasize attitudes prevalent in

great civilizations which produced self-reliant, interesting children. The lines of study, however, must be shown as an integral part of living and of child nature. If reading material is suggested to the child, it should be both useful and challenging to the powers of his mind and imagination; he needs to constantly broaden his outlook and gradually begin to discern for himself true, basic values which he may later distinguish from those which are unsteady and superficial. In this way will his natural interest in "good books" take hold.

*Is it possible to use "the indirect method of geometric proof" to prove rhetorically the existence of universal law?*

If the alternative to Universal Law, which is Chaos, may be cancelled out in favor of law, it becomes necessary to cancel out the idea of a Supreme Being who could irrationally govern the Cosmos.

The indirect method of geometric proof states that a postulate is either correct or incorrect, and that if we can prove that the postulate is not incorrect, it follows that the postulate is correct. We can start, then, with the assumption that we have either a universe of law or a universe of chaos. If it is proved that this is a universe of law, we then face two possibilities—a universe governed by a personal god, or a universe governed by absolute law, devoid of personality.

In *The Friendly Philosopher*, Robert Crosbie states that "we have to assume that this is a universe of law or a universe of chaos." This must be a universe of law, he says, "because everything we use and understand we see to be under law; and where something befalls us, the cause of which we cannot discern, we none the less assume a cause and try to find it." However, to carry out the geometric proof a little further, we must also bring the personal-god conception into consideration.

Of course, if we limit ourselves to the laws of matter, several questions arise: What is behind the laws of matter? Why any "laws" at all? Also, why would it not follow that there are moral or metaphysical laws as well as physical? We could answer the first question by the assumption of a personal deity, but, among other things, the personal-god idea proves to have detrimental effects. That is, if we rely on an outside power instead of upon ourselves, nothing real in the sense of individual, self-reliant accomplishment could be expected to take place, and, without expectations, how could anything happen? Therefore, while we *could* postulate a "deity," it would be better to

conceive deity as impersonal and incapable of being connected with either man's personal merits or his punishment. If we were to postulate that Law is Deity, however, this would mean that all phenomena and all action are governed by an *absolute* principle.

- If an attempt were made to prove the existence of metaphysical laws, it would be improbable that any exact proof could be gained, the reason being that, at the present time, there is not available a clear
- philosophical connection between the physical and the metaphysical realms. A metaphysical or moral law is not "objective," but a process
- subjectively *realized as law*.

• *How do we go about detecting and eliminating prejudice within ourselves?*

We should perhaps be wary of allowing ourselves to believe that questions of this nature can be solved by the application of neat little formulas and rules.

Ultimately, discovering and rooting out prejudices is an individual matter, and the effort is doomed to failure unless there is present a strong determination and sincere desire to rid oneself of prejudice.

The individual who is liberal-minded enough to ask the question: "How can I detect prejudice within myself?" is usually already partly liberated from the most obvious prejudices. Yet he still must be concerned with the finer points of prejudice, and realize that, just as the sum total of the parts make up the whole, so may some hidden little points of bias lead him astray; so also do these finer points make for the generalized prejudgments which are just as dangerous as many of the more obvious ones he condemns.

These are many and complex. We live in an atmosphere which is permeated with biased views and dogmatic assertions. So much so that a person very frequently is unaware that he is judging an issue with anything but the strictest impartiality. One can only suggest that in this respect we examine those *tendencies* and *attitudes* of mind which lead to prejudice.

"Immediate classification" is, perhaps, a good example of one of these tendencies, found in everyday life. Few situations can be said to be "just like" another, without some kind of qualification. No word can be said to adequately describe another person. Classification implies limitation, and to limit another person is to deny that person's

potentiality in both thought and action, which all men have. Our very verbal expressions build attitudes and lead us sometimes to suffer from delusion. Also, the tendency to make generalizations which are entirely unwarranted and to judge an entire group by one or two individuals representing it seems to be a basic error of the prejudiced mind.

Much is written these days on the "scientific method." However much abused this term is, the ideal it conveys of exploring impartially every avenue of approach to a problem, and of verification by experiment where possible, is one we could well hope to achieve in everyday life.

The dictionary defines prejudice as either a "bias" or a "prejudgment." Ultimately, it will be admitted, "judgments" have to be made for the immediate necessities of life. But if we are going to judge anything, an analysis should be made of all its component parts.

It is a depressing phenomenon that many people will blindly cling to their own time- or group-honoured beliefs and carry prejudice to its extreme by refusing even to consider any ideas which run counter to them. This is the worst form of prejudice, for it stops the growth of the mind—which will gradually wither away unless fed on new ideas. Here, as in so many questions of this sort, man's conception of what he himself is holds the key to the problem. It is a sort of "paranoiac logic" that, if one considers himself to *be* his ideas and beliefs, or his feelings and sentiments, he will defend fanatically what he consciously or unconsciously considers to be himself.

It is interesting to observe that malicious remarks directed against particular groups or individuals often originate in the protective haven of another group—made up of people who would not speak thus as individuals, but whose integrity is subjugated to a neurotic delight in this verbal carnage. It is the obligation of every one who calls himself a Theosophist to denounce this practice and to fight prejudice wherever he finds it—whether in himself or in others.

In the light of the Theosophic teaching that the soul is the real man, how ridiculous it is for us to taint and disfigure our discrimination with our petty likes and dislikes!

It would seem, then, in the final analysis, that prejudice is largely a manifestation of *selfish* protectiveness, and must be destroyed, not merely by a change of mind, but by a widening of soul vision.

## WHEN WISDOM ENTERS

When wisdom enters error is destroyed and the self and Self begin to live together. The doors of the senses are closed up. The feet of Karma are broken and mental melancholy is removed. Duality dwindles to famine rations. Equanimity is plentiful through the prowess of the knowledge of Self. Pride runs away. Illusion is destroyed. No other feeling remains except consciousness of Self. The coils of worldly existence are broken up. All mistaken performance is purified, and one embraces the all-pervading Brahman.

*Dnyaneshwari, XIII*

**E**XPERIENCE makes it abundantly clear that when we become dependent on anything external for mental support, we are on the wrong track. By relying too much on books, on meetings, on other individuals, we can allow them to actually weaken our reliance on the Self. For we have, each, finally, to stand on our own strength, rely on our own will. How, then, can we balance receptivity and will, since the nearest any spiritual aid or moral degradation can come to us is in its modification of our reactions? We feel this way or that about a situation—the situation itself having no objective existence. A lecture may be repeated week after week, year after year, and there may be one, a hundred, a thousand, or no one at all who is benefited. The *Gita*, the *Koran*, the *Gathas*, the Bible—none has any inherent virtue hidden in its physical pages. All that is exterior to our consciousness is neither beneficial and good, nor detrimental and bad save in terms of its power to awaken in us reaction. If we become dependent on injections of purely intellectual or doctrinal “vitamins” through the instrumentality of any third person, then are we victims of the greatest of all illusions: the belief that we, as egos, are changed by them. “Salvation” would be too easy were it so cheaply bought.

The most that any of us can hope to do is to so improve our instruments of perception that our reactions may be more balanced. If it is our egotism which deludes us; if it is our senses which lie to us; then the sooner we recognize the false conception of that egoity and the deceptive voice of our senses, the sooner shall we learn to use both only to receive impressions from without. In this way shall we win our spiritual freedom, whose reflection in our physical, emotional and men-

tal independence will stand as irrefutable testimony to the victory. In the realms of Spirit it is not possible to "bluff." The marks of the spiritually great man need no acclaim. On the contrary, he who has gained Dnyana shuns praise. According to *Dnyaneshwari*, "Reputation of any kind is a burden. When anyone describes his merits or establishes that he is worthy of respect or otherwise praises his worth, he is frightened like a deer who meets a tiger, like a swimmer being caught in the whirlpool in the middle of the river."

Each of us must come through our own unaided effort to the perception of what is meant by *maya* from the metaphysical point of view. No teacher can foretell what will work the miracle of opening the Spiritual Eye of another. That which throws a flash of revealing light on the problems of one, may come as a darkening cloud to the heart of his brother pupil. And when we strain after spiritual understanding, we may close those very channels through which the Spirit shines; further, the shattering of the illusion of objective life comes as a shocking blow to those who are not well prepared, and may upset their balance.

Ours is the task to fit ourselves to receive and become reflectors of the Light which shines eternally and is hidden from us only because of our own lack of ability to combine constancy with creative striving. If we would view the Sun, we must quit our darkened houses and go where the Sun shines—and yet renounce nothing hurriedly. If the vision be vouchsafed us, it will come as a gift of the gods—from within, or from above. It will come secretly—unsought, unheralded, unperceived perhaps by any but ourselves—and yet, *prepared* for by works of mutual aid.

One of our perennial frustrations, however, consists in the inability to share completely with another the gifts the gods confer on us. Even between lovers there is a barrier to communication. Thought may be intuitively exchanged on the plane of mind, and by the process of spiritual osmosis an unmentioned and incommunicable understanding may result, but still we live alone. A gathering, be it of two or two hundred, is a meeting of souls only in proportion as the mental energies and spiritual aspirations of those involved make it such.

Reality is in our consciousness, not in the thing we "see." This abstraction of ourselves as Observers should come to our aid in times of great physical or mental strain. To some it does. Says Flammarion,

the great French astronomer:

We see the sun rise above the horizon; it is beneath us. We touch what we think is a solid body; there is no such thing (as a solid body). We hear harmonious sounds; but the air has only brought us silently undulations that are silent themselves. We admire the effects of light and of the colours that bring vividly before our eyes the splendid scenes of Nature; but, in fact, there is no light, there are no colours. It is the movement of opaque ether striking on our optic nerve which gives us the impression of light and colour. We burn our foot in the fire; it is not the foot that pains us; it is in our brain only that the feeling of being burned resides. We speak of heat and cold; there is neither heat nor cold in the universe, only motion. Thus, our senses mislead us as to the reality of objects around us.

Robert Crosbie points out that our minds are really but our evaluation of the life about us; as the Soul works through its vehicle, looking out through the eyes of sense and contacting the world through organs of perception, our energies are either used or wasted. Our life, then, becomes our reaction to stimuli which in themselves are more or less fixed quantities. The sky remains unaffected by rain-clouds that race by, hiding for the moment the face of the sun. And so must we look on Time, into which we, as empiricists, have imagined days and years, our lives and deaths. Transcendentally, there is but Duration. What is the Future, what the Past? A very little thought, and they evaporate into thin air and leave but an ever-expanding Present. It is Eternity Now.

The world annoys us with its imaginary ups and downs, its easts and wests; its inhabitants discharging about us blessings or curses according to what they momentarily feel. But when we go out into the forest and see what is meant by the conservation of Nature—how no life, regardless of its appearance, but has its beneficent aspect, constructive, growing, and purposeful—we may realize how limited have been our judgments, how false our sense of values. We begin, perhaps, to sense a facet of the Unconditioned—and we return humbled, content to live alone as learners, apart from that confusion which the world calls society. Taking the position of the Real, the Self, all annoyance slips away—or should—when we see that we are allowing ourselves to be acted on by *circumstances* more ephemeral and evanescent than our personalities. With the singer of the Upanishad we cry:

From the unreal lead me to the Real!  
From darkness lead me to Light!  
From death lead me to Immortality!

And yet we are human and have our responsibilities. Our theories, unless made practical, may prove our undoing, since they may lead us to isolate ourselves from the world which we would help—if we could. That, of course, is the task of "Krishna" as the Higher Self, who has promised that in times of unrighteousness and psychic turmoil he would descend from his mountain-top with a counsel of Action.

There is a story told at the village *kirtan* in rural India which never fails to capture the rapt attention of the crowd. It seems that one of Krishna's devotees had reason to complain to the Lord for the lack of consideration of a boon for which he had prayed. "I have ever been most punctilious to perform all thy *pujas*. Last night, at the great Festival of Krishna Jayanti, I lay prostrate among the foremost of your devotees before thy image, nor did I fail to intone the mantras when I offered up my sacrificial gift."

"Yes," replied Lord Krishna, "it is true your body lay prostrate among the foremost of my devotees before my image. I saw it there as I passed. But you I could not see. Following the reflection in your brain, I found you in the bazaar bargaining for a pair of golden sandals."

Today Krishna looks down into our valleys where the sea of Civilization surges. Over the dense fogs which fill the valley he views the rising Sun, of which those in the valley have heard but which they cannot see. At times, fringes of that fog rise in the morning's heat, to the terrace where Krishna resides. They are dispersed by the waving of his hand. He lives above, in the company of that LIFE which to many of the valley folk would spell but Death.

The War of the Mahabharata is on; it is being re-enacted before our eyes today. We are engulfed by the conflicting armies. More than at any time is this a day of reckoning. Yet the very blackness of the present bears witness of the intensity of the Light that shines behind. It takes the light of the Sun to give us the complete darkness of a winter's night, and the photographer, knowing this, turns on his brightest lamps to stress the shadows. It is the best of times; it is the worst of times—and we tremble in our opportunity to make them either.

# ON THE LOOKOUT

## FREEDOM FROM RELIGION

Though Theosophists may regret the "return to religion" of many men of intellectual prowess during these days of insecurity, the causes of this trend are easy enough to discern, even though their enumeration is not a pleasant task for one whose faith lies in the promise of a finally self-directed evolution of soul. But what about the currents of inspiration which run in the *opposite* direction—currents which, historically represented as the Theosophical Movement, lead men to relinquish the dubious security of dogmatic faiths? This is a subject not only worth studying, but also heartwarming for the Theosophist to pursue. For one thing, the history of the Movement specifically demonstrates that "never was time" when both individuals and groups were not transcending some set of dogmas or another, and, at the present juncture, the mere fact that prominent individuals may turn back to the faith of their ancestors or the indoctrination of their youth does not stem the tide of awakening for others.

## TWO KINDS OF PROGRESS

The evolution away from conventional religion seems characteristically to reflect two sorts of inspiration; one is supplied by the "progressive awakening" of intellectual temper for the human race as a whole, the prime historical example of which is the emancipation from medieval mind-sets during the Renaissance. The Renaissance, as psychologist Harry Overstreet has put it, witnessed "man the adolescent emerging out of the long dependence of infancy and childhood. But it was not yet man the mature adult."

The second line of inspiration comes from those exceptional individuals who stand at the forefront of mental evolution in their time, having reached what Dr. Overstreet calls "maturity." Such men, the self-reliant thinkers, "with an inspiration of their own to solve the universal problems," must be considered as adding sinews to the Theosophical Movement, and they have existed in all ages and cultures.

## REVIEW OF MONASTIC LIFE

Theosophists will be particularly interested at this time in a book entitled *I Was a Monk*, the autobiography of a former member of the Catholic Passionist Order (Knopf, New York, 1951), since this volume reveals the author's discovery of a serene, self-sufficient strength which makes reliance upon dogmas and hopes of special salvation alike seem childish. John Tettemer, the author, who came finally to live apart from the church as simply a respected counselor to his many friends, had a sympathy broad enough to include religious and irreligious persons alike. And with the passing of each year spent away from the Order, he found himself both happier and stronger. One of his friends and "disciples," contributing a brief "in memoriam" to the foreword of *I Was a Monk*, sums up his final impressions of Tettemer's transition:

He had become a man who was content to live with the questions. Did he, then, lose his faith? Or did he gain a wider vision?

When he was dying, he was asked if he wanted a priest. "Good heavens, no!" was his hearty reply. It was no blasphemy against the priest or the Church, but only his honest protest against the easy absolution. He would make his own peace with God.

## THE OUTGROWING OF RELIGION

Tettemer's own words offer some excellent theosophical advice to the present followers of creeds and sects, for though one of the most remarkable things about this man's writing is the living spirit of compassion towards believers of every faith, which breathes through his words, Tettemer called no creedal faith his own. His plea is a plea for awakening, and he advises the religious devotee as follows:

Let him hold lightly these doctrines and creeds in which he wraps his faith, for as surely as he continues to grow, just so surely will he have to discard them for others more suited to his maturer understanding of life.

Happy will he be if the time comes when he realizes the futility and fundamental falseness of all expressions and formulations of his faith, knowing them for what they are: efforts of the mind to express the inexpressible, to formulate the formless. Then will he be in sympathy with all faiths, but a believer in none. Then will he be content to live his life serenely without explaining it, knowing that it is good and far surpasses in beauty and hope and love anything that

the most extravagant creed ever pictured.

Conformity, orthodoxy, is the idol of small men, and we are all small. My departure, then, is not from this or that particular creed or church—for all are the outcome of the deep-rooted urge in us all—but is rather a parting of the ways with the limitations of our human minds and our reliance upon them in our dealings with our fellow men.

### LEAVE EVERYTHING—AND NOTHING—BEHIND

I cannot regret one moment of these peaceful later years, living as a simple layman of no church—or should I better say of all churches?—finding life, the quest for truth, the seeking for God more inspiring, if possible, than ever before. I do not feel I have lost one jot of the substance of the experiences through which my soul passed in the earlier half of my life. They are as real to me now as ever they were, just as meaningful.

What I have lost is, I feel, of no importance or consequence; the mere shell, the intellectual background or framework, which I know now was not the real foundation of my life as a monk, but rather a scaffolding that could be removed without damaging the main structure. The scaffolding belonged to the illusory stage of life, seeming essential while the need lasted, but forgotten when it was over.

### THE OCCULT NOT DIABOLIC

Students who have familiarized themselves with Theosophical history, and especially with the reasons underlying the 1875 invitation extended by H. P. Blavatsky to Spiritualists to join Theosophical groups, will be interested to know that a study of psychic phenomena had something to do with convincing John Tettemer (then "Father Ildefonso") that a whole world of unseen knowledge remained to be discovered by penetration of the laws there operable—knowledge which *might* be a far cry from the oversimplified Catholic explanation of psychism. Tettemer's brief mention of Spiritualism indicates what an excellent worker in the original Theosophical Society he might have been, for his attitude was certainly that of a searcher for truth "wherever it may be found":

In the case of unusual phenomena produced in spiritualistic séances and by a number of other occult events, however, I came to the conclusion, after a fairly thorough consideration of the evidence, that diabolical agencies had nothing to do with them and that, on the contrary, they were the result of natural laws of which we knew little

or nothing. I became convinced on the basis of study that some at least of these phenomena were genuine and not mere tricks.

### THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

In other ways, too, Tettermer shows how natural a Theosophist he became; that is, one progressively better able to understand his inner promptings for a "higher life," which had first led the way to his connection with the Passionist Order, and then away from it. His compulsions toward asceticism arose from a conviction rather than from an emotional fanaticism. He speaks of "the impulse that made me as a boy desire to lead the purely contemplative life, wherein I should have, —not mere short hours, but days, years, in which to unite myself ever more strongly to the eternal, finding the center of my being, was quite evidently no passing dream, but indicated a fundamental aspect of my nature." This understanding was undoubtedly the root of sympathy and respect which he held for both his fellow Passionists and those who joined the various other Brotherhoods within the Catholic Hierarchy.

### THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE

Why did Tettermer leave the Passionists? There was no single reason, but rather a whole series of karmic precipitations—yet not one of these a grievance, real or fancied, against his brothers. Exalted positions within the Order awaited him, for he was much respected. No "harsh words" were spoken to him or by him—which might indicate that such a parting leaves no *skandhas* for renewed connection with similar experiences in future lives, as must so often be the case for those who leave any group of men—however mistaken or even depraved the group may be—in violence.

Tettermer explains that two things contributed to his decision to leave the Passionists. First, a serious illness forced him to recuperate in a Swiss retreat. He could neither read nor continue any of the duties of the Order, and, left alone with himself, he entered into a purer and more uninterrupted contemplation than he had ever been able to manage in the monastery. Finally, he left because of a prompting of his conscience. His *desires*, molded by long habitude, actually moved in another direction, for the Order, and the Church, he wrote, constituted "the only home I had known for many years":

My conscience forced the decision upon me. I had no entanglements, of the heart or otherwise, and went alone from a happy environment into an empty and rather cold world, of which I had no experience and in which I could hope for little success as a layman, without connections. My one surviving brother, Father Joe, wrote me that sooner would he meet my corpse at the dock in New York than ever shake hands with me if I left my order.

No, personal reasons were not my motive.

### • THE ROOT DANGER OF CATHOLICISM

The "denunciations" of Tettemer's conscience are clear and penetrating, but directed against limiting ideas, not persons. He saw a basic danger in Catholic orientation, and in all authoritarian positions:

Let men, if they must, explain to their minds, according to whatever philosophy they hold, the nature of God and the nature of Jesus, and interpret, as they have the wisdom and purity of heart to interpret, the meaning of his life and his words. This is a perfectly natural process and need not be resisted. The evil and sacrilege came from confusing this *interpretation* with the *original revelation* itself and treating both as *equally sacred*; and, on the purely personal level, from me, setting up my interpretation as the only true and orthodox one and imposing it, by the rack if necessary, on others.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL DYNAMICS OF CHURCH HISTORY

The manner in which "heresies" were put down must have bothered Tettemer considerably, but it was not until years later that he saw the whole story in clear perspective:

It was during these teaching years in Rome that Pius X began his crusade against modernism in the Church, and orthodoxy was at a premium. This new superheresy was entirely different from the modernist movement in the Protestant churches in America, as opposed to the fundamentalists. It was more akin to the advanced position of the Protestant churches in Germany, where so many of the leading lights were out-and-out rationalists. It had its origin, in my opinion, in the infiltration of German philosophy in Italian universities, especially of Hegel, who was very popular in Italy. This subjective philosophy found its way into the Catholic schools and seminaries, and soon a new theology was being taught, which served perfectly to bring Catholic doctrine into line with modern thought, but unfortunately did away with the supernaturalism of tradition. The professors were making a distinction between the Christ of history, who was like any other man, and the Christ of

faith, who could be the Son of God or anything else that subjective faith cared to make him. Naturally, the dogmas of the infallibility of the Church, the eternal torments of hell, and the many others that seemed repugnant to human reason were treated in the same way as that of the divinity of Christ, and the new faith was soon unrecognizable as having any resemblance to the old.

### TIDAL WAVES EVEN HERE

The extraordinary feature of this movement was the great rapidity with which it spread, especially through Italy and France. It was like a mushroom growth, seeming to appear overnight. Prelates and professors were found everywhere boldly professing and defending it. No doctrine had ever arisen in the Church so entirely subversive of all the ancient teachings. Yet it was being taught in the seminaries and religious colleges as though it were the most innocent of theories.

Rome awakened in time to the existence in its midst of this full-grown monster of all heresies, and the remedy applied was drastic and swift. Pius X solemnly published a syllabus condemning as heretical the leading propositions of the movement, but he was not content with doing only this. He started a purge of the teaching institutions of the Church, equal in thoroughness to any Russian house-cleaning. Professors were dismissed on the least suspicion of being tainted by the new virus. Prelates, writers, and teachers, if they refused to retract their theories and to sign a new profession of faith drawn up against this new heresy, were summarily excommunicated, regardless of past services. Loisy, the French scholar, and Father Tyrrell, the learned English Jesuit, were among those who fell under the displeasure and ban of the Church.

### ROMAN F B I

To apply the remedy to the whole Church, to make it lasting, and to ferret out to the last man these new enemies of orthodoxy, the Pope imposed on every bishop throughout the world the obligation of appointing in his diocese secret spies, whose names were not to be disclosed, and who were to report anyone known to be infected with the fatal disease or who should develop symptoms of it in the future.

The collapse of the movement was more sudden than its meteoric rise. A few of the leaders proved obstinate and would not retract. They were expelled from the fold forthwith, so that they would no longer be able to infect the flock.

What will of course be of greatest interest to Theosophists is Tettemer's implicit testimony that the "further incarnation of *manas*"

bulges so spontaneously against even Roman bastions. While this will inspire some inveterate authoritarians within the Church to become even more resourceful in their reactionary policies, it will also, undoubtedly, allow others to finally free themselves from ignorance and superstition, even as did John Tetteimer.

### "WHAT SHALL WE TELL OUR CHILDREN?"

- *Harper's* for August contains an article of this title which aptly complements Tetteimer's observations, and Theosophists will be pleased to see that it is the leading feature of the issue. The writer, Priscilla Robertson, explains clearly, though politely, why she does not think that children will benefit from a belief in God nor from conventional religious forms.

I [she writes] am one of the comparatively few people in this country who were brought up without a belief in God. The word "religion" is used so loosely now by psychologists and liberal churchmen to mean practically any spiritual value that I hesitate to say I was raised irreligiously. What was missing from my indoctrination was the idea of "the power in the universe, *not ourselves*, that makes for righteousness." I was brought up to think that righteousness is humanly determined and that it is our job, unaided, to make for ourselves a better life on this planet.

There is nothing unusual in this belief; what is unusual is to belong to the second generation that holds it. For that reason I should like to offer my own testimony that this form of education can give deep emotional security, particularly since it is adaptable to a changing world.

### MISSING SOMETHING?

I do not feel that I "missed" anything, and I should not want my children to miss equivalent frankness or equivalent faith. The notion that I have missed something, or am depriving my children of something, comes up in most discussions of the subject of religious training. My religious friends, of course, think what I missed was a vision of heaven, or the ability to trust an all-seeing father, or simply the fellowship of church life. My freethinking friends put it differently. Most of them were brought up by devout parents, and now they ask me, "I don't believe in it myself, but isn't it easier to bring up children by telling them to trust in God?" Often they add, "I've started to go to church again just for the sake of the kids." A few of them give themselves away when they further tell me that what I am withholding from my children is the chance to rebel during

their adolescence—an opportunity which seems to me admirable only in a badly constructed society.

I do not agree that our situation is so bleak. There is as much love and warmth in the universe as there ever was, and if you have been taught to look for it among mankind, that is where you will expect to find it. You look for what order and beauty you can find in the physical universe, or what ugliness and disorder, without feeling betrayed. As for ecstasy the very uncovering of illusions is ecstatic—the happiness of simple contact between the outer world and your own mind.

But the fear of empty space is not the worst fear. How about empty souls? Where is their ecstasy?

### CAREFUL AGNOSTICISM

Mrs. Robertson seems to have avoided successfully the bigotry of Atheism and forged, instead, a moral basis of action for herself and her children which is philosophically dynamic, and free of dogmatism:

My children? I have brought mine up not by forcing on them the statement that there is no God but simply by not telling them there is one. Whenever I have to explain anything, I try to do it in terms as close to the living situation as possible. I want them to love their friends and be kind, not because it would please Jesus, but because it is (nearly always) the right way to treat people, in terms of the other person's feelings and their own.

All these signs seem clear indication of an advance toward that millennium described by H.P.B., the "time when there will linger no sectarian beliefs."

Returning for a moment to Dr. Overstreet, and another of his descriptions of the intellectual significance of the Renaissance, we may reflect upon how slow and yet how inevitable this sort of progress becomes with further incarnations of Manas:

### PROGRESSIVE AWAKENINGS—INTERRUPTED

The Reformation, as the religious phase of the Renaissance, invited man to become just independent enough to take the step from one orthodoxy into another. It emphatically did not invite him to become genuinely mature in his spiritual independence. Here again we note the adolescent character of the period. The adolescent who breaks away from parental authority is by no means ready to make his own choices and decisions. He is, on the contrary, one of the most rigid conformists that we know anything about. He takes the

one independent step that carries him out of the family value-system only to adopt the rigidly intolerant value-system of his own age group. Later, if he is to become mature, he must take the confident additional steps that lead to independence of judgment.

- The current advance in power of the authoritarian religions, we think, will be only temporary, although authoritarianism itself must return a thousand or a million times, like all the other spectres that still haunt the human being not yet become free, not yet in complete command of himself.

#### • CHEMISTRY VS. NATURE?

Lookout for August, 1949, brought to the attention of readers several salient facts concerning widespread use of chemical substitutes for natural ingredients in preparation of foodstuffs. This practice has grown with great rapidity since World War II—over 500 such chemicals having been developed in this period. Also worthy of consideration are the possible harmful effects on crops and animals arising from use of chemical fertilizers, sprays, and insecticides. Investigations during the past few years have led to advocacy of positive measures to protect the nutritive quality of foods from the indiscriminate substitution of chemicals.

#### THE HEALTH OF THE NATION

In June of 1950, Congress passed a resolution (H.R. 323) creating a committee to investigate the use of chemicals, compounds and synthetics in the production, processing, preparation, and packaging of food products; and to investigate, also, the possible effects of pesticides, insecticides and artificial fertilizers on crops. Lookout for July, 1951, reported the findings of scientists and doctors in relation to the deleterious effects on animal organisms from ageneizing (bleaching) white flour. But "H.R. 323" was not confined merely to investigation of bleaching agents; those who presented the resolution pointed to the over-all increase in health problems throughout the nation and suggested that the growing use of chemical substitutes for natural ingredients may be partly responsible. The following, taken from the Congressional Record for June 20, 1950, bluntly concludes the matter.

This investigation has to do with the health of the individual. We find evidence that certain chemicals used continuously do have a toxic

effect on human beings, but just how much is a question. . . . There is no more important measure before us from the standpoint of protecting the health of our people than this one designed to get to the bottom of these problems by comprehensive, careful, scientific studies. . . . This is an important matter which strikes across all party lines and affects every individual citizen, man, woman and child, in this country.

### NO MORE "ERSATZ"

Need for standardizing the ingredients in bread has been recognized as a direct result of the investigations undertaken and reported, which included hearings before the Food and Drug Administration. *Science News Letter* for May 24, 1952, reports that, starting with August 13, "our bread, unless we bake it at home, will be standardized legally for the first time in our nation's history." This report continues:

If you buy a loaf of whole wheat bread after that date, it must be made from 100 per cent whole wheat flour. Otherwise it cannot be sold as whole wheat bread and must have on its label a list of its ingredients.

Raisin bread, after that date, must contain not less than 50 parts by weight of raisins to each 100 parts of flour.

Milk bread must be made with whole milk as the sole moistening ingredient or with an equivalent amount of other milk products. For each 100 parts of flour there must be at least 8.2 per cent by weight of milk solids.

Rye, pumpernickel, cracked wheat and other varieties of bread for which standards have not been set must have a complete list of ingredients on the label.

### FORESIGHT INSTEAD OF HINDSIGHT

Heretofore the practice has been to allow manufacturers to use various new chemicals without conclusive testing as to their toxic effects. Congress was told in 1950:

The Food and Drug Administration informs us that only where the toxicity is evident, where it will have an immediate effect upon the test animals, can they determine with any degree of accuracy just what effect it might have on human beings.

Mr. Delaney, of New York, commented:

We find, however, that continued use over a long period of time does have an effect or may have an effect. . . . The principal problem

encompassed in these resolutions is the use in food of chemicals, *insufficiently tested* to determine their toxicity, to effect some real or fancied improvement or to protect food during production or storage against attack by pests.

The danger of such practices can be understood when it is realized that the nature and toxicity of many chemical substitutes cannot be determined *immediately*. Most manufacturers, it is claimed, conscientiously refrain from using ingredients about the safety of which any doubt remains, but some use chemicals before sufficient facts are available to establish the safety factor. In line with the new standardizing rulings, *Science News Letter* further reports:

Polyoxyethylene compounds, so-called softeners, are not permitted under the standards because their use could deceive consumers as to the age of the bread, and their safety as bread ingredients has not been adequately tested, in the opinion of Federal Security Administrator Oscar Ewing.

Mono- and diglycerides, from natural fats and oils, are permitted in shortening on the grounds of safety and non-deception.

Provisions on both these classes of chemicals may be changed if further evidence shows they should be.

#### UNEXPECTED RESULTS—VERY FINAL

As an example of possible effects from sprays, etc., in connection with crops and livestock, Rep. Dondero related that during the hearings on this Bill, a farmer in his district had cut some grass, which had been sprayed with certain chemicals, from property that was to be used as a building site. He took it home, fed it to the cattle—and killed the entire herd. Rep. Smith from Virginia expressed grave concern over spraying with DDT for the purpose of eliminating Japanese beetles, since it might also kill bees, and, as he said, "If we destroy the bees we might destroy human life."

#### "ALERT ON INSECTICIDES"

Of more recent origin is an item appearing under this title in *Science News Letter* for July 26, 1952, which states: "The nation's doctors are being alerted, through the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (July 19), to the danger of accidental poisoning from one of the new insecticides, toxaphene." Deaths of three children are thought to have resulted from drinking a solution of the insecticide or chewing

the amber-colored, wax-like material while playing. Two families involving seven persons were poisoned from eating collards and chard which had been sprayed with the insecticide. Washing the greens (which was done) did not help because this particular chemical is not soluble in water.

#### DENTISTS ALSO HAVE CONSCIENCES

In direct relation to these criticisms of the "chemical craze" are the efforts now being made by Dental Association members to encourage the establishment of a wholesome diet for youngsters as a preventive of tooth decay. A pamphlet issued by the Council on Dental Health of the Southern California State Dental Association proposes that white flour and white sugar be eliminated *entirely* from children's diets, and whole grains and natural sugars be substituted. If the suggestions of the dentists were adopted, dentists might soon have slack employment, but they are apparently willing to take this risk. Since such helpful suggestions cannot make for increased income for dentists, might it not be that this indicates a genuine awakening of "social consciousness" among the professionals, and a greater awareness of interdependence and responsibility? It would seem that any such effort toward more natural living is in accord with theosophical interests and purposes. Artificiality in any form or at any level is inherently a "trap," even though its effects are not subject to *immediate* discovery.

#### NATURE AS A WHOLE

While it is sometimes thought that rapid growth of population necessitates greater production of "synthetics," it does not seem logical or practical to weaken or subvert any dietary staples. The Law of Karma, as expressed in the Theosophical philosophy, establishes the idea that there are no imbalances in nature other than those caused by selfishness in some form—and selfishness, however expressed, blinds one to the basic realities of any situation. We are probably still "blind" in regard to the basic truths concerning nature-as-a-whole, perhaps because our minds and intuitive faculties have become dulled by "artificial" ideas and ideals. Abstract though some may think philosophy to be, it appears that only through the door of philosophy are we able to get to the *roots* of any problem, and until we do reach the roots we will hop from one expedient to another.