

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE ENIGMA OF H.P.B.

Martyrdom is pleasant to look at and criticize, but harder to suffer. There never was a woman more unjustly abused than H.B.

—MAHATMA M.

Though 70 years have gone by since the passing of H.P.B. on May 8th, 1891, her appeal to the thoughtful portion of the world is still strong — in spite of her enemies and detractors. The reason for this appeal lies in no small measure in the synthetic nature of her Philosophy. There are no gaps in her Message, no flaws or inconsistencies, no sweeping, unsubstantiated statements. Her Teaching has withstood the searching analysis and the critical probing of some of the best minds of the last century and of ours, and the open-minded and dispassionate cannot but admit that it is above censure. Attacks on the Theosophical Movement that H.P.B. launched have generally if not always centred round personalities, including her own, rarely round her Teaching. Each one who contacts that Teaching inevitably judges it from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experience and consciousness, based on what he has already learnt; for the intuitive, those who have cultivated the faculty of reading not only between the lines but within the words, all parts of the Philosophy, when put into place, as in a jig-saw puzzle, go to make a perfect Whole. There is nothing left out.

Her mission it was to demonstrate the synthesis of religion, science and philosophy. Her Message was for all. To the religiously inclined she brought the tidings of freedom of thought and offered the light of knowledge to dispel the lurking doubts begotten of blind ignorance and blind opinion, and to reveal the pettiness of separative creeds and the grandeur of true Religion. To men of science she offered new vistas of knowledge and pointed out that matter was not divorced from spirit and that man, the microcosm, and God, the Macrocosm, were indissolubly linked. Just as she divested religion of superstition, so she denied to science the right to dogmatize. She told the arrogant scientists of the 19th century that greater knowledge than theirs had built mightier civilizations in ages gone by, of which they knew nought. And

to philosophers she showed that the ancient philosophies of Asia offered better solutions to man's problems, individual or collective, than modern Western ones could offer, and that philosophy was not merely a speculative and intellectual system of knowledge but also had its practical and ethical aspects. Practical ethics and ethical practice was her message to the philosophers of our era.

Many have speculated on the source of her knowledge and inspiration. What made her able to discourse illuminatingly and to write voluminous works on subjects which stagger the imagination by their vastness and profundity? The years prior to the launching of her Movement in 1875 contain the clue. She travelled all over the world for 20 long years, when modern means of rapid transport were unknown — not sightseeing, but acquiring knowledge. It was a veritable Pilgrimage in quest of knowledge of the World Invisible. They were years of preparation during which observations were made and material was gathered for the books she was to write. She saw both the dark and the light sides of Nature, with discernment noted the evils of black and the beneficence of White Magic, and learnt, sitting at the feet of Those she called Masters, how to serve the cause of human brotherhood by the right method of changing the Manas and the Buddhi of the race.

Given below are a few selected extracts from her writings, which convey some idea of the source of her Occult Knowledge:—

“When, years ago, we first travelled over the East, exploring the penetralia of its deserted sanctuaries, two saddening and ever-recurring questions oppressed our thoughts: *Where, WHO, WHAT is GOD? Who ever saw the IMMORTAL SPIRIT of man, so as to be able to assure himself of man's immortality?*

“It was while most anxious to solve these perplexing problems that we came into contact with certain men, endowed with such mysterious powers and such profound knowledge that we may truly designate them as the sages of the Orient. To their instructions we lent a ready ear. They showed us that by combining science with religion, the existence of God and the immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid. . . . In our studies, mysteries were shown to be no mysteries. Names and places that to the Western mind have only a significance derived from Eastern fable, were shown to be realities. Reverently we stepped in spirit within the temple of Isis; to lift aside the veil of ‘the one that is and was and shall be’ at Saïs; to look through the rent curtain of the Sanctum Sanctorum at Jerusalem; and even to interrogate within the crypts which once existed beneath the sacred edifice, the mysterious Bath-Kol. The *Filia Vocis* — the daughter of the divine voice — responded from the mercy-seat within the veil, and science, theology, every human hypothesis and conception born of imperfect knowledge, lost forever their authoritative character in our sight. The one living God had spoken through His oracle — man, and

we were satisfied. Such knowledge is priceless; and it has been hidden only from those who overlooked it, derided it, or denied its existence.” (*Isis Unveiled*, I. vi-vii)

“Many years of wandering among ‘heathen’ and ‘Christian’ magicians, occultists, mesmerizers and the *tutti quanti* of white and black art, ought to be sufficient, we think, to give us a certain right to feel competent to take a practical view of this doubted and very complicated question. We have associated with the fakirs, the holy men of India, and seen them when in intercourse with the *Pitris*. We have watched the proceedings and *modus operandi* of the howling and dancing dervishes; held friendly communications with the marabouts of European and Asiatic Turkey; and the serpent-charmers of Damascus and Benares have but few secrets that we have not had the fortune to study. Therefore, when scientists who have never had an opportunity of living among these oriental jugglers and can judge at the best but superficially, tell us that there is naught in their performances but mere tricks of prestidigitation, we cannot help feeling a profound regret for such hasty conclusions. That such pretentious claims should be made to a thorough analysis of the powers of nature, and at the same time such unpardonable neglect displayed of questions of purely physiological and psychological character, and astounding phenomena rejected without either examination or appeal, is an exhibition of inconsistency, strongly savouring of timidity, if not of moral obliquity.” (*Ibid.*, I. 42-43)

“What we have said in the introductory chapter and elsewhere, of mediums and the tendency of their mediumship, is not based upon conjecture, but upon actual experience and observation. There is scarcely one phase of mediumship, of either kind, that we have not seen exemplified during the past twenty-five years, in various countries. India, Thibet, Borneo, Siam, Egypt, Asia Minor, America (North and South), and other parts of the world, have each displayed to us its peculiar phase of mediumistic phenomena and magical power. Our varied experience has taught us two important truths, *viz.*: that for the exercise of the latter, personal purity and the exercise of a trained and indomitable will-power are indispensable; and that spiritualists can never assure themselves of the genuineness of mediumistic manifestations, unless they occur in the light and under such reasonable test conditions as would make an attempted fraud instantly noticed.” (*Ibid.*, I. 320)

“Tell me, dear one,” Madame Blavatsky asked her aunt, Madame Fadéef, in a letter written about 1875 or 1876, when she was writing *Isis Unveiled*, “do you take any interest in physiologico-psychological mysteries? Here is one for you which is well qualified to astonish any physiologist: in our Society there are a few exceedingly learned members — for instance, Professor Wilder, one of the first archæologists

and Orientalists in the United States, and all these people come to me to be taught, and swear that I know all kinds of Eastern languages and sciences, positive as well as abstract, much better than themselves. That's a fact! And it's as bad to run up against a fact as against a pitchfork. So then tell me: how could it have happened that I, whose learning was so awfully lame up to the age of forty, have suddenly become a phenomenon of learning in the eyes of people who are really learned? This fact is an impenetrable mystery of Nature. I — a psychological problem, an enigma for future generations, a Sphinx! Just fancy that I, who have never in my life studied anything and possess nothing but the most superficial smattering of general information; I, who never had the slightest idea about physics or chemistry or zoology, or anything else — have now suddenly become able to write whole dissertations about them. I enter into discussions with men of science, into disputes out of which I often emerge triumphant. . . . It's not a joke; I am perfectly serious; I am really frightened because I do not understand how it all happens. It is true that for nearly three years past I have been studying night and day, reading and thinking. But whatever I happen to read, it all seems familiar to me. . . . I find mistakes in the most learned articles, and in lectures by Tyndall, Herbert Spencer, Huxley, and others. If some archæologist happens to call on me, on taking leave he is certain to assure me that I have made clear to him the meaning of various monuments, and pointed out things to him of which he had never dreamed. All the symbols of antiquity, and their secret meaning, come into my head and stand there before my eyes as soon as the conversation touches on them." (*The Path*, December 1894)

And in a letter to her sister, Madame Vera Jelihovsky, she wrote:—

"Just about this time I have begun to feel a very strange duality. Several times a day I feel that besides me there is someone else, quite separable from me, present in my body. I never lose the consciousness of my own personality; what I feel is as if I were keeping silent and the other one — the lodger who is in me — were speaking with my tongue. For instance, I know that I have never been in the places which are described by my 'other me,' but this other one — the second me — does not lie when he tells about places and things unknown to me, because he has actually seen them and knows them well. I have given it up; let my fate conduct me at its own sweet will; and besides, what am I to do? It would be perfectly ridiculous if I were to deny the possession of knowledge avowed by my No. 2, giving occasion to the people around me to imagine that I keep them in the dark for modesty's sake. In the night, when I am alone in my bed, the whole life of my No. 2 passes before my eyes, and I do not see myself at all, but quite a different person — different in race and different in feelings. But what's the use of talking about it? It's enough to drive one mad. I try to throw myself into the part and to forget the strangeness of my situation. This is no mediumship, and by no means an impure power;

for that, it has too strong an ascendancy over us all, leading us into better ways. No devil would act like that. 'Spirits,' maybe? But if it comes to that, my ancient 'spooks' dare not approach me any more. It's enough for me to enter the room where a séance is being held to stop all kinds of phenomena at once, especially materializations. Ah no, this is altogether of a higher order! But phenomena of another sort take place more and more frequently under the direction of my No. 2." (*The Path*, December 1894)

In another letter to her sister she wrote:—

"Well, Vera, whether you believe me or not, something miraculous is happening to me. You cannot imagine in what a charmed world of pictures and visions I live. I am writing *Isis*; not writing, rather copying out and drawing that which She personally shows to me. Upon my word, sometimes it seems to me that the ancient Goddess of Beauty in person leads me through all the countries of past centuries which I have to describe. I sit with my eyes open and to all appearances see and hear everything real and actual around me, and yet at the same time I see and hear that which I write. I feel short of breath; I am afraid to make the slightest movement for fear the spell might be broken. Slowly century after century, image after image, float out of the distance and pass before me as if in a magic panorama; and meanwhile I put them together in my mind, fitting in epochs and dates, and know *for sure* that there can be *no mistake*. Races and nations, countries and cities, which have for long disappeared in the darkness of the prehistoric past, emerge and then vanish, giving place to others; and then I am told the consecutive dates. Hoary antiquity makes way for historical periods; myths are explained to me with events and people who have really existed, and every event which is at all remarkable, every newly-turned page of this many-coloured book of life, impresses itself on my brain with photographic exactitude. My own reckonings and calculations appear to me later on as separate coloured pieces of different shapes in the game which is called *casse-tête* (puzzles). I gather them together and try to match them one after the other, and at the end there always comes out a geometrical whole. . . . Most assuredly it is not I who do it all, but my Ego, the highest principle which lives in me. And even this with the help of my Guru and teacher who helps me in everything. If I happen to forget something I have just to address him, or another of the same kind, in my thought, and what I have forgotten rises once more before my eyes—sometimes whole tables of numbers passing before me, long inventories of events. They remember everything. They know everything. Without them, from whence could I gather my knowledge?" (*The Path*, January 1895)

W. Q. JUDGE ON H. P. BLAVATSKY

[The following first appeared in *The New York Times* of January 6th, 1889.—Eds.]

“Madame Blavatsky,” said Mr. Judge, in a conversation since his return (from London), “is living with the Countess Wachtmeister — widow of a Swedish Count, who was Norwegian and Swedish Minister to the Court of St. James’ — in Holland Park, London, and is devoting herself to the most arduous labour in the cause of Theosophy. She scarcely ever leaves the house, and from 6.30 in the morning until the evening is constantly engaged in writing articles for her magazine *Lucifer*, or other Theosophical publications, replying to correspondents, and preparing the matter for the further forthcoming volumes of her gigantic work *The Secret Doctrine*. In the evening she has many visitors of all sorts — enquirers, critics, sceptics, curiosity-seekers, friends — and all are welcomed with such charming grace, friendliness and simplicity that everyone is made to feel at home with her. By ten o’clock generally all but intimate friends have retired, but they remain an hour or two later.

“Notwithstanding that Madame Blavatsky is beyond the vigour of middle age, and for nearly three weeks past has been living in spite of the leading London physicians, who gave her up long ago as hopelessly incurable of a deadly kidney disease that was liable to kill her at any moment, she never seems weary, but is the animated leader of conversation, speaking with equal ease in English, French, Italian and Russian, or dropping into Hindoostanee as occasion requires. Whether working or talking, she seems to be constantly rolling, lighting and smoking cigarettes of Turkish tobacco. As for her personal appearance, she hardly seems changed at all from what she was when in this country several years ago, except that she has grown somewhat stouter. The characteristics that are most apparent in her countenance are, in equal blending, energy and great kindness. Looking at her one can realize that she is just the sort of woman who would do what she did a dozen years ago when she was coming over here from France. She reached Havre with a first class ticket to New York, and only two or three dollars over, for she never carried much money. Just as she was going aboard the steamer, she saw a poor woman, accompanied by two little children, who was sitting on the pier, weeping bitterly.

“‘Why are you crying?’ she asked.

“The woman replied that her husband had sent to her from America money to enable her and the children to join him. She had expended it all in the purchase of steerage tickets for herself that turned out to be utterly valueless counterfeits. Where to find the swindler who had so heartlessly defrauded her she did not know, and she was quite penniless in a strange city. ‘Come with me,’ said Madame Blavatsky, who straightway went to the agent of the steamship company and induced him to exchange her first class ticket for steerage tickets for herself,

the poor woman and the children. Anybody who has ever crossed the ocean in the steerage among a crowd of emigrants will appreciate the magnitude of such a sacrifice to a woman of fine sensibilities, and there are few but Madame Blavatsky who would have been capable of it.

“As I said, she has been condemned to death for three years, but no fear is entertained of her dying before her mission is accomplished. Twice before when in India she was given up by the doctors, who on each occasion set a time limit of only a few days upon her existence, and her recoveries were looked upon as simply marvellous. At the time when she was worst, and seemed likely to die on the road, she set out for Northern India, and as it was generally understood that she was going to the Mahatmas for succour, several persons who had a strong desire to see those mysterious Adepts followed and watched her, but at Darjeeling she mysteriously disappeared. She had been carried there, and it was inconceivable how she could by herself have slipped away, but she was gone, and that was all anybody could say about it. In three days she returned apparently as well as she ever was. The most that anyone is told about how the transformation in her condition was effected, is given by her in *The Secret Doctrine*, when she says:—

Sound generates, or rather attracts together, the elements that produce an *ozone*, the fabrication of which is beyond chemistry, but within the limits of Alchemy. It may even *resurrect* a man or an animal whose astral “vital body” has not been irreparably separated from the physical body by the severance of the magnetic or odic chord. *As one saved thrice from death* by that power, the writer ought to be credited with knowing personally something about it.

“Madame Blavatsky now very seldom gives any manifestation of her occult powers except to intimate friends; but I had while over there several evidences that she can do things quite inexplicable by any laws of exact science. Two years ago I lost here in New York a paper that was of considerable interest to me.

“I do not think anybody but myself knew that I had it, and I certainly mentioned to no one that I had lost it. One evening a little over a fortnight ago, while I was sitting in Madame Blavatsky’s parlour with Mr. B. Keightley and several other persons, I happened to think of that paper. Madame got up, went into the next room, and, returning, almost immediately handed to me a sheet of paper. I opened it and found it an exact duplicate of the paper that I had lost two years before. It was actually a facsimile copy, as I recognized at once. I thanked her, and she said:

“‘Well, I saw it in your head that you wanted it.’”

“It was not a thing to astonish anyone acquainted with the laws of nature as comprehended by occultists, who understand clearly how consciousness of my thought was possible, how the reproduction of a thing once within my knowledge was necessarily facsimile, and how this reproduction could be effected by a simple act of volition on her

part, but it would puzzle materialists to explain it in accordance with the facts.

“One night when I talked very late with a gentleman at a house distant from Madame Blavatsky’s, he expressed a wish that I would, if I had an opportunity, get her views, without mentioning his name, upon a subject that was under discussion between us. The next day when I was talking with her the subject came up, and I began offering his suggestion, when she interrupted me, saying:

“‘You need not tell me that; I was there last night and heard you,’ and went on to repeat all that had been said. Of course it can be said that he had informed her with a view to deceiving me, but I am well assured that there was nothing of the sort and that under certain existing circumstances that would have been practically impossible. I know that she very often reads people’s thoughts and replies to them in words.

“The silvery bell sounds in the astral current that were heard over her head by so many persons in New York, still continue to follow her, and it is beyond question to those familiar with her life and work that she is in constant receipt of the most potent aid from the adepts, particularly her teacher, the — whose portrait hangs in her study and shows a dark and beautiful Indian face, full of sweetness, wisdom and majesty. Of course it does not seem possible that he in Tibet instantaneously responds either by a mental impression or a ‘precipitated’ note to a mental interrogatory put to her in London, but it happens to be a fact that he does so all the same.”

It is upon facts, the existence of which is based for us upon evidence which we have weighed and examined for deductions and final conclusions, at which we have arrived. These we preach but to those who really want to know them. As none, they say, are so blind as they who will not see, we abstain from offering our doctrines to such as find them offensive. But to the masses of impartial readers whose minds are not yet wedded to this or the other theory, we present our facts and tell them to see, hear, and judge for themselves; and, there have been some who did not find our theories merely a “speculation-spinning” based upon hypotheses and the crass sentimentalism of a *faith* — welcome, because of its implied promises of a life hereafter — but theories resting upon the logical and stern deduction from facts, which constitute in themselves a *knowledge*.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

A TRIBUTE TO H. P. BLAVATSKY

[Reprinted below is an editorial which appeared in *The New York Tribune* of May 10th, 1891, and which *The Path* of June 1891 described as "true, fair, prophetic," adding: "It gives H.P.B.'s sentiments and main doctrine, and it outlines the effect bound to be produced upon the world by her work."—EDS.]

Few women in our time have been more persistently misrepresented, slandered, and defamed than Madame Blavatsky, but though malice and ignorance did their worst upon her there are abundant indications that her life-work will vindicate itself, that it will endure, and that it will operate for good. She was the founder of the Theosophical Society, an organization now fully and firmly established, which has branches in many countries, East and West, and which is devoted to studies and practices the innocence and the elevating character of which are becoming more generally recognized continually. The life of Madame Blavatsky was a remarkable one, but this is not the place or time to speak of its vicissitudes. It must suffice to say that for nearly twenty years she had devoted herself to the dissemination of doctrines the fundamental principles of which are of the loftiest ethical character. However Utopian may appear to some minds an attempt in the nineteenth century to break down the barriers of race, nationality, caste, and class prejudice, and to inculcate that spirit of brotherly love which the greatest of all Teachers enjoined in the first century, the nobility of the aim can only be impeached by those who repudiate Christianity. Madame Blavatsky held that the regeneration of mankind must be based upon the development of altruism. In this she was at one with the greatest thinkers, not alone of the present day, but of all time; and at one, it is becoming more and more apparent, with the strongest spiritual tendencies of the age. This alone would entitle her teachings to the candid and serious consideration of all who respect the influences that make for righteousness.

In another direction, though in close association with the cult of universal fraternity, she did important work. No one in the present generation, it may be said, has done more toward re-opening the long-sealed treasures of Eastern thought, wisdom and philosophy. No one certainly has done so much toward elucidating that profound wisdom-religion wrought out by the ever-cogitating Orient, and bringing into the light those ancient literary works whose scope and depth have so astonished the Western world, brought up in the insular belief that the East had produced only crudities and puerilities in the domain of speculative thought. Her own knowledge of Oriental philosophy and esotericism was comprehensive. No candid mind can doubt this after reading her two principal works. Her steps often led, indeed, where only a few initiates could follow, but the tone and tendency of all her writings were healthful, bracing, and stimulating. The lesson which was constantly impressed by her was assuredly that which the world most

needs, and has always needed, namely the necessity of subduing self and of working for others. Doubtless such a doctrine is distasteful to the ego-worshippers, and perhaps it has little chance of anything like general acceptance, to say nothing of general application. But the man or woman who deliberately renounces all personal aims and ambitions in order to forward such beliefs is certainly entitled to respect, even from such as feel least capable of obeying the call to a higher life.

The work of Madame Blavatsky has already borne fruit, and is destined, apparently, to produce still more marked and salutary effects in the future. Careful observers of the time long since discerned that the tone of current thought in many directions was being affected by it. A broader humanity, a more liberal speculation, a disposition to investigate ancient philosophies from a higher point of view, have no indirect association with the teachings referred to. Thus Madame Blavatsky has made her mark upon the time, and thus, too, her works will follow her. She herself has finished the course, and after a strenuous life she rests. But her personal influence is not necessary to the continuance of the great work to which she put her hand. That will go on with the impulse it has received, and some day, if not at once, the loftiness and purity of her aims, the wisdom and scope of her teachings, will be recognized more fully, and her memory will be accorded the honour to which it is justly entitled.

Although *in* the world, to be not *of* it. . . . Any reader, who has intuition enough to be a practical student of occultism, will at once see that to work up to perfection is the highest ideal that a man can have before him. That is not the work of a day nor of a few years. "The Adept *becomes*; he is NOT MADE" — is a teaching which the student must first realize. The aspirant works up to his goal through a series of lives. . . . The "*iron will*" to become *perfect* must be *incessantly* operating, without a single moment's relaxation. . . . He should cultivate only such thoughts as would not be incompatible with the highest ideal he has to work up to. By perfection, which should be his highest ideal, I mean that *divine* manhood which the Occult Philosophy contemplates the seventh race of the seventh Round will attain to. This, as every tyro knows, depends largely upon a cultivation of the feeling of Universal Love, and hence an earnest desire to do some practical philanthropic work is the first requisite. . . . To be identified with THE ALL, we must live in and feel through it. How can this be done without the realization of the feeling of Universal Love? Of course Adeptship is not within the easy reach of all. On the other hand, occultism does not fix any unpleasant place or locality for those who do not accept its dogmas. It only recognizes higher and higher evolution according to the chain of causation working under the impulse of Nature's immutable law.

—DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR

SELF-RULE

What is self-rule? Why is it essential for true spiritual living? Why, in the second chapter of the *Gita*, do we have a long description of the "self-governed Sage," and why are there, in so many other sacred writings, references to such a man as being greater than the conqueror of cities? Why is the idea that man must be able to control what is loosely called "himself" emphasized in all religions, all education, all community living?

To answer these questions we shall have to analyze the subject and ask ourselves further questions: What is the Self? What is to be ruled? How is it to be ruled? What is the agent by whose help it can be ruled? And, finally, what is most important, why self-rule at all?

The last question can be answered by saying that evolution forces us to the point when self-rule becomes necessary. Just as plants have evolved the power of sensation and animals the power of instinct, so for man evolution is by self-rule. As the Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* tells us, man's development is through "self-induced and self-devised efforts" in contradistinction to the lower kingdoms which developed by natural impulse. Man alone among all the kingdoms of Nature can choose self-consciously to obey the stupendous force of evolution or to disobey it. Should he disobey, or refuse to co-operate, he falls out of the line and has to wait for another period of manifestation where, in time, he will learn that his only hope is full co-operation with that force. As Emerson has pointed out, "Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdom which cannot help itself." Pain and sorrow are evolution's aids to man to help him choose the right path.

The answer to the first question, "What is the Self?" is — the very highest that we know of in ourselves. The Self here is not to be understood as the One Self of all but as that aspect of the awareness, the embodied Ego, which abides in man during any one life and which can be strengthened and aided by the parent Ego. As the highest that we know speaks to us first as the voice of conscience, our first step is to listen to that voice. As we have been so often told, this voice can tell us what we should *not* do because it is the result of experiences garnered in the past. Few of us obey this voice at all times, and if any success is to be gained in the task of self-rule we must start here. But we know that we are often not sure as to what is the *right* action, and to learn this we must turn to what is called the "still, small voice" which speaks "where there is none to speak." This is a turning upwards to some source within ourselves which is higher than conscience, for it is the Voice of the Ego which is brooding over us and which is connected with the personality by that thin bridge of *Antaskarana*. We not only have to listen *to* this Voice but first we need to listen *for* that Voice. Therefore we are always taught to "search," to "seek" — that is the first step.

To enable us to make this idea a practical reality, Theosophy comes to our aid with its teaching of the dual aspect of man — the animal-man and the divine man. Both are rooted in the one great Spirit which is at the same time overshadowing man. It is the great Universal Life, Law, Bliss. The Self, therefore, is both the highest that we know and that higher that we have to seek and listen for and to; the former reveals to us what we have learnt and the latter what we are now, in this incarnation, capable of learning. Were we not ready for this stage we would not even be thinking of the problem! This is a great consolation and gives us courage.

The answer to the second question, "What is to be ruled?" is — everything less than the highest: the desires which form the basis of mental planning, the sensations which come through the sense-organs, the passions that arise almost automatically in us through outer contacts *via* the sensations or desires or thoughts recalling former sensations, desires or thoughts. Do we not find ourselves constantly irritated by thoughts that we do not want to have, sensations that disturb, passions that are uncontrollable and for the exhibition of which we feel sorry and ashamed after they have expended themselves?

The third question as to how these lower, unwanted elements in our make-up are to be controlled brings us to the agent that will do the controlling. That agent is the god within, the "I," irrespective of the body it suffers in, the feelings and passions it is absorbed by, or the thoughts that cloud it. If we like we can call this the sense of "awareness" showing through the feelings, passions, thoughts, for awareness is the faculty of the "I." It is because of this faculty that the "I" can become aware of what is low and base as well as of what is high and ennobling, according to whether it is pulled downward by Kama or by the animal-man or allowed to turn upward toward Spirit, toward the Divine Man. It is through this individual "I" that the power of Spirit, namely WILL, can function. According to the stage of evolution of the being, this power functions as instinct and then as desire, for desire is the "mover of the will." Hence it is desire that makes for degradation or for upliftment. It is only by means of desire, the right kind of desire, that the animal-man can be ruled by the Divine, or by the god within.

It therefore becomes necessary that we try to understand the right relation between the animal-man and the god within, as *Through the Gates of Gold* tells us. "The god, given his right place, will . . . inspire and guide" the animal, "educate and develop it," and the animal, given its right place, will find its pleasure increased a thousandfold. Once in its proper place, the animal becomes the servant of the god and the union between the two makes the animal more than animal because of the god within, and the god more than god because of the animal he has subdued. The animal is elevated and becomes "unimaginable in its great powers of service and of strength" when it is made the instrument of the god within. The god becomes able to serve through the instrument while without it he is helpless on the material plane.

How, then, shall we rule ourselves? Theosophy stands, among other things, for the inalienable right of private judgment and maintains that man must rely on his own powers, consider himself his own saviour and realize that he is responsible for all his actions. These points help us a great deal.

Man must make his own judgments. That is his right. He has the power of choice, but for the exercise of that power there must be different things or ideas to choose between. These things and ideas he must ponder over, and he must study all he can to learn which is the best. He must make up his own mind and not accept the conclusions of others unless he has studied and agrees with them. In the *Gita*, Krishna does not tell Arjuna what to do even though the latter asks his preceptor in the early chapters to choose for him "one method" of action. After having explained various systems of knowledge, Krishna says in the last chapter that he has given Arjuna all the necessary knowledge, and he adds, "Ponder it fully in thy mind; act as seemeth best unto thee." If, after full study, we form a judgment and act on it we shall learn by the effects whether or not it was a correct judgment, and thus alone do we grow. Even if we realize later that what we have done is wrong, in time our very nature will make us do from necessity that which in our folly we would not do, as Krishna points out.

Man must rely on his own powers, for only thus will they grow. If we leave our work to others our own powers cannot grow, and these powers are the powers of Nature functioning in and through us. In *Isis Unveiled* we are told that the "one common vital principle" of Nature is "controllable by the perfected human will." (II. 590)

It naturally follows that we must accept the idea that we alone can save ourselves. It is our self-effort that will count, but that does not mean that we cannot turn towards the god in us so that its power can be felt more fully by us and give us strength.

It also follows that, as our own saviours, we must accept the idea that we are accountable for our actions, including our feelings and thoughts. This should never mean that we can act without due care and then say, "I will accept the responsibility for the action," for we do not know what the results of wrong actions will be.

What will be the result of following along the lines pointed out above?

Recognition of the right of private judgment will bring us strength. Reliance on our own powers will breed courage. Consideration of ourselves as our own saviours will bring us power. Remembering Emerson's statement that "Valour consists in the power of self-recovery," we can see that acceptance of the idea that we are accountable for our actions will develop valour in us, for we accept even the worst and begin to right the wrong we have done instead of becoming full of despair, which is a negative attitude.

Look at the reverse side of these virtues. Lack of strength comes from failure to make up our minds and from always acting as others decide. What conviction can we have in another's plans for us? And

conviction breeds strength. What can make us fearful and cowardly so easily as thinking and acting without any feeling that we *can* do this or that? If we do not believe that we are our own saviours, we become powerless, appealing, cringing victims, those that "Nature spews out of her mouth." If we do not accept responsibility for our actions we shall never try to right them but shall run away, full of despair.

Having thus thought over this problem with the mind, we need to turn to the heart side of the question. Krishna refers to "mental devotion, which is knowledge"; devotion is only possible for one whose mind is fixed immovably in contemplation. It is therefore from the mountain top which is reached by contemplation that we must think of self-rule. Krishna says that a man who has his senses and organs in control possesses spiritual knowledge and remains "in devotion at rest in me, his true self." For such a man must keep his heart-thought on the Highest, not only as he knows It in himself but also as It is outside himself—the throbbing heart of the Universe, the Power Divine which moves to good, which is Bliss, the radiant power of the Great Ones as also the power of life in the tiniest grain of sand. He must begin to see himself as a temporary unit in the whole until he can mirror the whole in himself. He must see this world as dark and the vast spiritual realms as the realms of Light, and constantly refresh his mental vision and his heart-beats by looking deep within and without and listening to the call of Love, Beauty and Strength, whether through the sound of Shiva's drum or the magic of Krishna's flute, or through the cry of an infant and the glory of youth and the beauty and peace of old age.

Self-rule is peace; other-rule brings war. But that peace is vital and living, vibrant with spirit in action, will, and glorious with the whole wealth of the Divine Heart.

Of the self-ruled one it is written:—

Hark! . . . from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, ALL NATURE'S wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

JOY UNTO YE, O MEN OF MYALBA.

A PILGRIM HATH RETURNED BACK "FROM THE OTHER SHORE."

A NEW ARHAN IS BORN.

PEACE TO ALL BEINGS.

What we *say* has value only in relation to what we *do*, and . . . what we *do* has value only in relation to what we *are*.

—SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

All that we are is the result of what we have thought: all that we are is founded on our thoughts and formed of our thoughts.

—*The Dhammapada*

Mr. Judge wrote that "every thought leaves a seed in the mind or manas of the thinker, no matter how fugitive the thought was. The whole sum of such small seeds will go to make up a larger seed for thought, and thus constitute a man of this, that, or the other general character . . . as we think, so we act and will act, and as we act and think so will we suffer or rejoice, and the whole world with us."

Even thoughts that are fugitive so far as concerns the thinker are not so otherwise, but persist, he tells us, as seeds for good or evil in the whole race.

H.P.B. says that a thought "is far more potential in creating evil results than a deed," and therefore a threat, *i.e.*, the thought or intention, is more severely punished Karmically than an action, *e.g.*, an assault.

One of the Masters wrote: ". . . thoughts are things — have tenacity, coherence, and life . . . they are real entities." And Mr. Judge states it as a law that "every thought combines instantly with one of the elemental forces of nature, becoming to that extent an entity which will endure in accordance with the strength of the thought as it leaves the brain."

Since at the moment of death the whole life will be reflected in our memory, is it not evident that in every thought may lie the possibility of a discord or a harmony for life's conclusion?

Thought is often said to be the real plane of action. The activities of the minds of today will precipitate the activities of the bodies of tomorrow. We are told by Mr. Judge that "no act is performed without a thought at its root either at the time of performance or as leading to it." This is not contradicted by the statement that "desire is the basis of action." Every act proceeds from the mind and no one could keep alive a desire for an object or for a consummation of which he ceased to think.

Even a Buddha or a Jesus had first to make a vow, which is a desire, in some life, that he would save the world or some part of it, and to persevere with the desire alive in his heart through countless lives.

Manas and Kama in this cycle are so closely linked in the average man as not to be easily distinguished from each other, but individual progress on the spiritual path demands their separation, and rising above all desires of a selfish, personal nature. But the thought also needs to be impersonalized. Fancy and imagination are potent and beget results on the visible plane of deeds. Moods are the children of personal and kamic thinking and the mothers of methods of mischief.

Great and responsible is the effect of our thinking upon others. This may well have been in Mr. Judge's mind when he warned: "Let no one be so injudicious as to raise needless alarms and thus attract disaster."

We are told in *The Secret Doctrine* that thinkers who brood mischief can produce calamities which must react upon the makers of the evil causes.

The dreaded power of the "evil eye" is ascribed by H.P.B. to the possessing of an "enormous plastic power of imagination working involuntarily, and thus turned unconsciously to bad uses," producing "a current impregnated with the potentiality of every kind of misfortune or accident," which is ready to spring into activity at the first opportunity. One with the evil eye, she writes, "need not be even imaginative, or have evil intentions or wishes. He may be simply a person who is naturally fond of witnessing or reading about sensational scenes." Nor need he even have these in mind when his eye falls upon his future unintended victim. The currents "have been produced and exist in his visual ray ready to spring into activity the instant they find suitable soil."

There is a far heavier moral responsibility attaching to the harbouring of positive ill will. Madame Blavatsky warns solemnly in *The Key to Theosophy*:—

... woe unto those Occultists and Theosophists, who, instead of crushing out the desires of the lower personal *ego* or physical man, and saying, addressing their *Higher Spiritual Ego* immersed in Atma-Buddhic light, "Thy will be done, not mine," etc., send up waves of will-power for selfish or unholy purposes! For this is black magic, abomination, and spiritual sorcery.

"It is the motive, *and the motive alone*, which makes any exercise of power become black, malignant, or white, beneficent Magic." If there is the slightest tinge of selfishness remaining in the operator, we are told, it is impossible to employ *spiritual* forces.

Jasper Niemand reminds us that a thought sent out associates itself, on its departure from the mind, with an elemental, and

is attracted wherever there is a similar vibration. . . . Thus the man of virtue, by admitting a material or sensual thought into his mind, even though he expel it, sends it forth to swell the evil impulses of the man of vice from whom he imagines himself separated by a wide gulf, and to whom he may have just given a fresh impulse to sin.

It is a solemn thought that it is not only our associates or even our contemporaries that may be affected by the quality of our thinking. Especially if one allows himself to become obsessed by an *idée fixe*, an idea so intense as to make of him a monomaniac, such an idea may spread its unhealthy magnetic influence long after his death, just as a bit of clothing worn or touched by a victim of a contagious disease may

impart it to another after his decease. In *The Theosophist* of January 1882, H.P.B. wrote:—

Once generated and sent out, that thought will live upon its own energy. It has become independent of the brain and mind which gave it birth. So long as its concentrated energy remains undissipated, it can act as a potential influence when brought into contact with the living brain and nervous system of a person susceptibly predisposed. The unhealthy action thus provoked may lead the sensitive into a temporary insanity of self-delusion that quite clouds the sense of his own individuality.

In an unsigned article, "A Case of Obsession" (reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT of September 1960 from *The Theosophist* of May 1880), it was postulated that in the process of thought a physical disturbance is set up in the Ether, a moral taint being just as transmissible as a physical one. The lesson was drawn that the influence of bad companions implied "a degrading personal magnetism, more subtle than the impressions conveyed to the eye or the ear by the sights and sounds of a vicious company." These sense impressions could be repelled by resolute refusal to see or hear what was bad, but the degrading personal magnetism was said to enwrap the sensitive and penetrate his very being, if he but stopped "where the moral poison was floating in the air" — which ought to be a sufficient warning also against the morbid atmosphere of the séance room.

A man may be obsessed by an idea, and it is said to be through "that peculiar influence, that powerful current of magnetism which emanates from ideas as well as from physical bodies," that people are at first irresistibly or unwittingly drawn within the "dark circle" of "superstition and prejudice . . . far different from what we commonly term *antipathy* or *sympathy*." Even from sincere but erroneous beliefs held in common by many people proceed unfortunate invisible results. To drive away the foreign influences, living entities and powerful agents attracted by superstitions such as "faith in the Gods and God," would require a greater exercise of power than the Masters Themselves find necessary or profitable.

It is the lower aspect of the mind that deals with the world of sense. The spiritual mind, the upper portion or aspect of the impersonal Manas, takes no cognizance of the senses in physical man. Madame Blavatsky calls the mental perception of the reports of the senses, "the sixth sense," a function of the Personal Ego.

Fortunately, subtle energies, fine forces, have a highly increased rate of power over grosser ones. Madame Blavatsky gives it as "a law of occult dynamics" that "a given amount of energy expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence." As Jasper Niemand put it: "The force of thoughts is to be measured by the square or quadrupled power of their spirituality." If crimes

sometimes become epidemic, on the other hand, an individual sensitive, as H.P.B. wrote in "Are Chelas Mediums?"

may by certain invisible influences be made to accomplish acts which are not at all consistent with his character such as previously known. He may be a great liar and for once by some unseen influences be induced to speak the truth; he may be ordinarily very much afraid and yet on some great occasion and on the spur of the moment commit an act of heroism; he may be a street-robber and vagabond and suddenly do an act of generosity, etc.

What is the nature of these "invisible influences" for good?

The Masters may not, under Their wise and intransgressible laws, subject to Themselves "another and a weaker will — that of free-born man." But, though They never order, They do influence individuals, acting on the subject's physical and psychic nature, while leaving his will free. Nevertheless,

unless a person has been brought into psychic relationship with the Masters, and is assisted by virtue of his full faith in, and devotion to, his Teachers, the latter, whenever transmitting their thoughts to one with whom these conditions are not fulfilled, experience great difficulties in penetrating into the cloudy chaos of that person's sphere.

They are, however, constantly peopling Their current in space with potentialities for good, in which we ought to try to emulate Them. Each earnest aspirant is called upon to contribute to the general good all that he can of ennobling thought. So are new influences and ennobling conceptions of life spread, apart from which mere physical philanthropy is valueless. Whether spread by thought or by the spoken or written word, great spiritual truths, gradually assimilated by mankind, "will alone revolutionize the face of civilization, and ultimately result in a far more effective panacea for evil, than the mere tinkering of superficial misery."

The Buddha is quoted in the *Majjhima Nikaya* as saying:—

When men speak evil of ye, thus must ye train yourselves: "Our heart shall be unwavering, no evil word will we send forth, but compassionate of others' welfare will we abide, of kindly heart without resentment: and that man who thus speaks will we suffuse with thoughts accompanied by love, and so abide: and, making that our standpoint, we will suffuse the whole world with loving thoughts, far-reaching, wide-spreading, boundless, free from hate, free from ill-will, and so abide." Thus, brethren, must ye train yourselves.

It is a sacred privilege and duty of all who have glimpsed, though from afar, the beacon of wisdom and compassion tended by the Masters, to kindle in themselves the "Tathagata light" that, shining "however dimly, and lost among the host," can help point out the way to those who tread their path in darkness.

THE RELIGION OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The birth centenary of Rabindranath Tagore (May 6th, 1861 — August 7th, 1941), which is being celebrated this year all through the world, has once again focused the attention of the public on the multifarious work of this many-sided genius, who was at once a poet and prose-writer, a philosopher, a humanitarian, an educational reformer, a pioneer in rural-welfare efforts and a political thinker of wide sympathy and understanding. His creative genius in these many spheres, together with his singular purity of life, contributed in no small measure to raising India in the estimation of the world, and his influence has been one of the primary factors in bridging the gulf between the East and the West and in welding together in harmony and concord the peoples of the world. This was aptly recognized in 1913 when the Nobel Prize for literature went for the first and only time out of the orbit of Western culture and was awarded to the Indian poet.

Rabindranath belonged to a family the most gifted in Bengal in the realms of religion, philosophy, literature, music, painting and the histrionic art. Difficult as it would be to give an exhaustive account of his achievements in many fields, even those in the department of literature which he has adorned would make a pretty long list. It has been said of him:—

He has tried all phases of literature — couplets, stanzas, short poems, longer pieces, short stories, longer stories, fables, novels and prose romances, dramas, farces, comedies and tragedies, songs, operas, *kirtans*, *palas*, and, last but not least, lyric poems. He has succeeded in every phase of literature he has touched, but he has succeeded in the last phase of literature beyond measure. His essays are illuminating, his sarcasms biting, his satires piercing. His estimate of old poets is deeply appreciative, and his grammatical and lexicographical speculations go further inward than those of most of us.

His poetry and prose embody his philosophy, bearing witness as they do to spiritual values and the unity of life. In an age when reason was considered the highest light given to man, Rabindranath pointed to the vision of the mystics as the greater light. When men were scrambling for earthly gains, he held before them vaster horizons, higher and nobler ways of living and being, and maintained the sacred sense of human solidarity, the living consciousness of the Divine, one and indivisible. Rabindranath saw through the falsehood and ugliness of a merely mundane life and placed in front of everything else the ancient and eternal verities of love and self-sacrifice, harmony and reciprocity, sweetness and light. Spiritual reality was the central theme of his poetic creation.

His love for and interest in the affairs of the whole of humanity are revealed in all his writings. He maintained that his home was in all lands, his country in all countries, his close kindred in all homes. In

his patriotism there was no narrowness, no hatred or contempt of the foreigner. He believed that India had a message and a mission, but he never denied that other countries, too, may have their own special messages and missions. His politics and his spiritual ministrations merged in each other. To him the chains of inertness, cowardice and ignorance, of selfishness and pleasure-seeking, of superstition and lifeless custom, of the authority of priestcraft and the letter of scripture, constituted our bondage no less than the yoke of foreign rule in the country, which was largely a consequence and a symptom. He insisted not only upon the absence of external restraints but also upon inner freedom born of self-sacrifice, enlightenment, self-purification and self-control. This point of view had largely moulded his conception of the Indian political problem and the best method of tackling it.

Among the many precious gifts that Rabindranath has left behind must be mentioned the educational experiment at Santiniketan, "the Abode of Peace." He sought to preserve the spirit of the ancient forest retreats of the Teachers of India in his ideal of Visva-bharati, the international university, with its simplicity, its avoidance of softness and luxury, its insistence on purity and chastity, its close touch with Nature, and the free play that it gives to all normal activities of body and soul. There is in this open-air institution at Santiniketan no cringing to forms, however hoary with antiquity. One of Rabindranath's aims in founding it was to revive the ancient culture of India and to establish a higher unity between India's traditions and Western culture. His mental outlook was universal and he made it possible, for any who may so desire, to pursue the study of comparative religion at Santiniketan.

Rabindranath is best known as a poet and many are not aware of his contribution in the realm of religious and mystical thought. Though he disclaimed the role of a religious teacher, the religious philosophy of the Sages of ancient India deeply coloured the fabric of his thought and found expression in his life and work. The following extracts from his writings bear out his profound religious consciousness and his active sympathy with humanity:—

"I have been asked to let you know something about my own view of religion. One of the reasons why I always feel reluctant to speak about this is that I have not come to my own religion through the portals of passive acceptance of a particular creed owing to some accident of birth. I was born to a family who were pioneers in the revival in our country of a great religion, based upon the utterance of Indian sages in the Upanishads. But, owing to my idiosyncrasy of temperament, it was impossible for me to accept any religious teaching on the only ground that people in my surroundings believed it to be true. I could not persuade myself to imagine that I had a religion simply because everybody whom I might trust believed in its value."

"Mere information about facts, mere discovery of power, belongs to

the outside and not to the inner soul of things. Gladness is the one criterion of truth, and we know when we have touched Truth by the music it gives, by the joy of greeting it sends forth to the truth in us. That is the true foundation of all religions. It is not as ether waves that we receive light; the morning does not wait for some scientist for its introduction to us. In the same way we touch the infinite reality immediately within us only when we perceive the pure truth of love or goodness, not through the explanations of theologians, not through the erudite discussion of ethical doctrines.

“My religion is a poet’s religion. All that I feel about it is from vision and not from knowledge. Frankly, I acknowledge that I cannot satisfactorily answer any questions about evil, or about what happens after death. Nevertheless, I am sure that there have come moments in my own experience when my soul has touched the infinite and has become intensely conscious of it through the illumination of joy. It has been said in our Upanishads that our mind and our words come away baffled from the Supreme Truth, but he who knows truth through the immediate joy of his own soul is saved from all doubts and fears.

“In the night we stumble over things and become acutely conscious of their individual separateness. But the day reveals the greater unity which embraces them. The man whose inner vision is bathed in an illumination of his consciousness at once realizes the spiritual unity reigning supreme over all differences. His mind no longer awkwardly stumbles over individual facts of separateness in the human world, accepting them as final. He realizes that peace is in the inner harmony which dwells in truth and not in any outer adjustments. He knows that beauty carries an eternal assurance of our spiritual relationship to reality, which waits for its perfection in the response of our love.”

“The ultimate truth in man is not in his intellect or in his material wealth; it is in his imagination of sympathy, in his illumination of heart, in his activities of self-sacrifice, in his capacity for extending love far and wide across all barriers of caste and colour, in his realizing this world not as a storehouse of mechanical power but as a habitation of man’s soul with its eternal music of beauty and its inner light of a divine presence.”

“The divine principle of unity has ever been that of an inner inter-relationship. This is revealed in some of its earliest stages in the evolution of multicellular life on this planet. The most perfect inward expression has been attained by man in his own body. But what is most important of all is the fact that man has also attained its realization in a more subtle body outside his physical system. He misses himself when isolated; he finds his own larger and truer self in his wide human relationship. His multicellular body is born and it dies; his multi-personal humanity is immortal. In this ideal of unity he realizes the eternal in his life and the boundless in his love. The unity becomes

not a mere subjective idea, but an energizing truth. Whatever name may be given to it, and whatever form it symbolizes, the consciousness of this unity is spiritual, and our effort to be true to it is our religion. It ever waits to be revealed in our history in a more and more perfect illumination.

“The development of intelligence and physical power is equally necessary in animals and men for their purposes of living; but what is unique in man is the development of his consciousness which gradually deepens and widens the realization of his immortal being, the perfect, the eternal. It inspires those creations of his that reveal the divinity in him — which is his humanity — in the varied manifestations of truth, goodness and beauty, in the freedom of activity which is not for his use but for his ultimate expression. The individual man must exist for Man the great, and must express him in disinterested works, in science and philosophy, in literature and arts, in service and worship. This is his religion, which is working in the heart of all his religions in various names and forms. He knows and uses this world where it is endless and thus attains greatness, but he realizes his own truth where it is perfect and thus finds his fulfilment.”

“In the Sanskrit language, religion goes by the name *dharma*, which in the derivative meaning implies the principle of relationship that holds us firm, and in its technical sense means the virtue of a thing, the essential quality of it; for instance, heat is the essential quality of fire, though in certain of its stages it may be absent.

“Religion consists in the endeavour of men to cultivate and express those qualities which are inherent in the nature of Man the Eternal, and to have faith in him. If these qualities were absolutely natural in individuals, religion could have no purpose. We begin our history with all the original promptings of our brute nature which helps us to fulfil those vital needs of ours that are immediate. But deeper within us there is a current of tendencies which runs in many ways in a contrary direction, the life current of universal humanity. Religion has its function in reconciling the contradiction, by subordinating the brute nature to what we consider as the truth of Man. This is helped when our faith in the Eternal Man, whom we call by different names and imagine in different images, is made strong. The contradiction between the two natures in us is so great that men have willingly sacrificed their vital needs and courted death in order to express their *dharma*, which represents the truth of the Supreme Man.”

HOW TO STUDY

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The study of Theosophy ought not to be a matter of luxury and convenience, but an uttermost necessity. Unless we feel that study is as necessary to our constitution as physical food is essential to the well-being of the body, we shall not go at the purpose of study with enthusiasm, zeal, and persistence—a threefold energy which carries with it success.

In the first place, then, to feel the absolute necessity for study; secondly, to have a clear idea as to what is to be gained by study. People often, especially in matters of philosophy or with Theosophy, take to it because they want something to believe in. Fundamentally, this attitude goes counter to the whole viewpoint of Theosophy which has nothing to offer us in the shape of belief. Theosophy has to be studied for the purpose of gaining knowledge which can ultimately be experienced. It is *knowledge* which we need to seek, and we should therefore bring to its pursuit the attitude of the genuine inquirer and student who does not want to establish out of his study that which he himself has already preconceived.

Often, people take up a book and say, I want to read this so that I may prove that reincarnation is true; or, on the other hand, I shall read this book to find out that reincarnation is a false doctrine. Both these views are to be avoided. Let us not go to a book to see our own opinions expressed or our own dislikes articulated. If we want to find out about a particular book, a particular philosophy, a particular system of thought *as it is*, let us in studying it put our dislikes and our likes on the subject aside. Nor should an inquirer be afraid to approach a subject with frankness as well as reservation—a frankness to see and to “give the chance” to the author in order to get his viewpoint. Whether we shall agree or disagree with his viewpoint later on, is another matter. But let us also be reserved: let us not take the attitude of accepting or believing before a proposition has been understood; that is fatal. It is not a crime or a sin to come to a book in a questioning attitude, or even with doubt, for if we are honest in our search for truth, as we question the author, we shall get back of sentences, which may not be clear, to the author’s mind. Constructive doubt is a very potent thing, because it enables the student to fight for the emergence of truth as he understands it. Far better doubt than become, as Browning put it, “finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.”

Now, there is a tendency in many Theosophical students to consider themselves finished exponents of the philosophy because they are able to repeat what they have read; yet, they have not thoroughly grasped the meaning of what they express. So, we need to ask ourselves, when we take up *The Ocean of Theosophy*, *The Secret Doctrine*, or *Wisdom Unveiled*, are we studying the language—the words—or, are

we trying to grasp the ideas? If it is the ideas we are trying to grasp, we need to pursue two distinct lines: first, to read carefully so that we are able to repeat the ideas, not in the language of the author, but in our own language, in so straightforward and simple a manner that an ordinary intelligent mind can understand what we have been saying. If we have grasped, we get the power of expressing the idea ourselves. The faculty of clear explanation comes with understanding. Secondly, one cannot be said to have grasped a philosophical idea unless he has seen all that has been said against it — its weaknesses and faults. If one can answer to himself in his own thoughts all the objections that are or possibly can be raised against an idea, then it is clear the idea has been grasped. Supposing, by a process of reasoning, you come to accept the law of reincarnation, and then somebody puts to you certain views against the law which you are not able to counter? Your understanding is not complete; your grasp is not full.

Modern science with its evolving theories can say, knowledge is not complete; we are not in a position to answer everything; we shall presently find out as our experimentation goes farther. With Theosophy, this is not so. Theosophical propositions are established propositions, and the evidences of Theosophy inherent in Theosophical teachings, those teachings being composed of facts observed and experienced as first-hand realizations. Theosophical knowledge is not a matter of conjecture, or of deduction and inference merely, as is the case with scientific knowledge, but being a matter of experience and realization, has completeness. In studying Theosophy, then, we ought to live and *practise* it so that any particular doctrine which we are studying may be illuminated and displayed through our understanding. Thus also we shall avoid repeating in verbal form without either intellectual recognition, or spiritual realization in some measure, whether small or great.

Now, Theosophy as a system of thought is an arranged system, highly methodical both in fundamentals and principles, as in details. Often, one is tempted to take up some interesting detail, and, not knowing the actual place and position of that detail in the large scheme of things, not understand it; he misunderstands it, and having misunderstood one detail, all the details connected with that detail are misunderstood. What we need to do, therefore, is to get at the seed ideas. You will find that in *The Secret Doctrine*, in the *Key*, in the *Ocean* — in all the writings of true Theosophists, in fact — there are seed ideas, which we must learn to pick out and understand — seed ideas from which other ideas spring forth to take their proper place in the tree of knowledge.

Take the seed ideas of any book and see if they are co-ordinated in a whole. Secondly, see if the plant that sprouts from the seed idea is true to the type of seed. It is true, of course, that some plants grow straight and in a very regular way; others, large trees, not from the point of view of form so methodical, yet, as with the banyan-tree, show the completeness and harmony of their structure when fully studied.

The "Contents" of a book and the Index are often keys to the seed ideas. In the old books, like the Upanishads, where "Contents" and Index are non-existent, one has to go through, perhaps in a peculiar kind of madness, till he finds for himself the method existing in them; but the seed ideas are there. Our work, suited to present constitutions in this intellectual race, is simplified by the great teachers, because they have indicated the seed ideas. The "Contents" of the *Ocean*, for instance, indicate something of the nature of the seed ideas; not that every line of the "Contents" makes a seed idea, but they will be found in certain lines. The seed ideas may not be in the shape of one thought in a chapter; perhaps in one chapter you will find four, and in another chapter none, because the second chapter may be taking you around the unfoldment of those seed ideas in another chapter.

To get, therefore, at the IDEAS is our task; not the language, not the words, because by mere repetition of words we shall suffer as they have suffered in India, where they thought that they understood the *Gita* and the Upanishads if they were able to repeat them. Eighteen or one hundred and eight repetitions of a particular verse will bring a particular virtue only by repeating it through the process of *Life!* Study classes or individual study will be fruitful and successful in proportion as that which has been grasped in the shape of ideas is practised in life. People often say that it is impossible to practise what they study, and it *is* impossible if the subject studied is ordinary science or ordinary philosophy, because they are incomplete as sciences. Indeed, beware of applying many theories of modern psychology! But it is a different matter when you are in contact with an established, verified and experienced system of thought. The value of Theosophy is that its truths are the result of first-hand knowledge and experience of individuals like ourselves, who have made the effort and have indicated how others can make a similar effort and can produce similar results. Hence the importance of the effort to live it. In fact, if we cannot relate our intellectual study to our everyday environment, to our own Karma, we can never be sure that we have understood it. The experiencing of an idea is the indicator of both intellectual recognition and spiritual realization, in some measure; and such is the objective of all study of Theosophy.

While the whole process is the same for both individual and collective study, there is an additional facility that comes to us in group study. It is a visible and well-known fact that, studying together, we have more minds and more people who go to various books and bring passages, views, ideas and thoughts on the subject under consideration, so that each idea gets all the enrichment about us. But there is further an invisible assistance that comes. One of the purposes of Theosophy is to influence and affect the collective mind of the race. On account of the conditions inherent in evolution, mind wars against individual mind, and the warring minds of individuals belonging to a race hinder and hamper unfoldment along the spiritual lines of the mind of the race. So, when we take up Theosophy as a collective study in class or

group, we are not combating the warring element, but doing a real work in constructing, forging together, bringing into a harmonious whole, however small it may be, a part of that race-mind. We are trying to build up a mind composed of subtler matter than that used by the ordinary individual as he lives in the warring world of combatants; we are using, so to speak, a thinner layer of mind consciousness which is at the same time more permanent, more durable, a more metaphysical aspect of mind-stuff. Pushing from within, without, we move the combating warring elements of the race-mind, if not to any considerable extent, at least to a small material extent. In fact, the obstacles of time and space vanish as we use this inner layer of the mind which the study of Theosophy brings into operation.

Every real Theosophical book contains not only information and instruction and inspiration for us, but has within its covers the power of unfolding the faculty in us of obtaining further knowledge, information and inspiration. When you read a page of *The Secret Doctrine*, you not only gain the information and the inspiration that the page gives, but you gain at the same time an added faculty for acquiring more; and again, if we pursue our studying against obstacles, we find the faculty is born in us which enables us to overcome those obstacles. The law of Karma holds in studying: Karma brings us no obstacle, without giving us at the same time the capacity to overcome it; so, if a Theosophical book presents obstacles and difficulties, let us not give up the study of it. We can overcome the obstacles.

Thus collectively, we are able to build up something in the nature of a living principle of study. By the fire of life, study not only becomes vital and interesting, but it becomes living, and living forces and fires manifest themselves in many ways in daily life, enabling us to make an adequate response to all men and women whatever their station in life. It is often said that Theosophy is for all, and sometimes it is said that Theosophy is a difficult thing, meant only for those whose capacity is equal to great mental propositions. Both statements are true. But on those of us endowed with the mental energy to grasp, to understand and to live its great propositions devolves the responsibility of making those teachings real and palpable to all who come in our contact. Let us preach reincarnation in all the affairs of daily life by a *continuous attitude*; let the fact of our knowledge of reincarnation come out in all the things that we do. To those who do not know about reincarnation, or believe not in it, our attitude is novel, and therefore brings in their minds question and inquiry, which we are able to respond to. Gradually, the truths of Theosophy permeate and are absorbed from those who have previously studied and known them. Century by century these great ideas permeate the hard atmosphere and impress the minds of those ready to respond to them. The main object of Theosophical study is to popularize its great truths, and to Theosophize all the walks of life.

“ THE TWO ASPECTS OF SCIENCE ”

The above was the title of the Presidential Address delivered by Sir George Thomson at a meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Cardiff on August 31st, 1960. It contained many points of interest.

The two aspects of science which Sir George discussed were its contribution to man's control over Nature and its endeavour to understand the nature of things, which he considered equally important. In its endeavour to understand things, it pursued an aim in common with religion and philosophy, but its approach was the opposite. From a curiosity about details, often trivial, such as the attraction of a lump of loadstone for iron, it passed to general concepts which unified men's thoughts over a large area of facts. Religion and philosophy, on the other hand, tried to gain knowledge of the whole, the former “by an awareness of the deity, intuitive or revealed”; the latter “by building with words a system of thought which can account for fundamentals.”

Sir George admitted the many-sided greatness of the human race, some evidences of it being the ability to compose music, to interpret music, to write a great novel or paint a great picture and, higher still, moral greatness; but he claimed that the ability to reach some understanding of Nature in the way of science was worthy of high honour also, and was a factor which, perhaps more than any other, distinguished man from the animals.

The degree of success that has attended the scientific approach to an understanding of Nature is rather astonishing, as Sir George pointed out. The pursuit of the trivial and the queer has given us not only a knowledge of these but also an insight into the unity of Nature, the vastness of the heavens, the elusive mysteries of matter, space and time, the sweep of evolution; and this is something which neither religion nor philosophy has always achieved. It is a degree of success that we, who think of Theosophy as a synthesis of science, religion and philosophy, should note and ponder. Nevertheless, unless one is either blinded by it or is completely unreflecting, how can one avoid the conclusion that there must be something wrong somewhere? If we can prevent ourselves from being destroyed by the fruits of science it will be either to good fortune or to the efforts of the few possessing moral greatness and vision that we shall owe our salvation and not to science. Science, religion, philosophy, each imposes its own discipline on our hearts and our minds; but there is a more exacting discipline which “regards Nature as one complete whole,” and he who adheres to that discipline “may from the standpoint of Nature's wholeness and completeness follow the process of segregation and differentiation to the minutest atom conditioned in space and time; or, from the phenomenal display of the atom, he may reach forward and upward till the atom becomes an integral part of cosmos, involved in the universal harmony of creation . . . systematically and habitually, and hence philosophically.” (*Vide U.L.T. Pamphlet*

No. 3, pp. 9-10)

Sir George discussed at some length the decisive part played by concepts in the growth of our understanding of Nature. They are not, he said, merely the product of the human mind but bear some mysterious relationship to reality. They are more in the nature of discoveries than inventions.

It is not easy to convey in a few words the role of concepts in science, but the following illustration may help a little. Study of the simple phenomenon of magnetism has suggested a concept which is often used: that of lines of force running from a magnet to a piece of iron which it might be attracting. These lines are given certain properties, such as being under tension, like a stretched string of elastic which will pull together two objects attached to its separate ends. This concept is not merely an invention but is suggested by experience, and without it, or some equivalent one, it would be very difficult to formulate certain laws of magnetism or to make certain calculations of, say, the magnetic requirements of an electric motor. It is easy, however — and this applies to all of us — to confuse mental concepts with reality.

At this point we invite the reader to consider together pages 45, 272 and 329 of *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, and page 39 of the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*. The following is an attempt to give the gist of these.

We may conceive of a world of phenomena, a world of noumena and the unknowable Parabrahm. The first is the world of Maya, of appearance; a world which shows the external work of form; a world in which we can know only the mental states which an object excites in the perceiving Ego and not the object itself. The second is the world of reality, of things in themselves. The relationship of this world to the phenomenal is faintly shadowed forth by the atoms of gold hidden in the crystal of quartz. Invisible to the naked eye, known by the miner but not by the ordinary mortal, they give to the latter whatever value it possesses. By divorcing our all-perceiving Ego (the Higher Ego) from the thralldom of the senses, by transcending the distinction between subject and object, by enriching ourselves with the lore of the generations of initiates who have gone before, we shall pass through the barrier between us and the world of Unity or Reality, and comprehend all that is knowable. But beyond will lie the unspeakable mystery of Parabrahm before which the highest Dhyan Chohan must bow in silence. Knowledge of the Real is not something to be conveyed by words and we must never forget the distinction between nature and science, between reality and philosophical symbolism.

The truth-seeking scientist and the truth-seeking student of Theosophy are colleagues. Both stand on the same side of the barrier, catching fleeting glimpses of what lies beyond. The concepts of the electron, of mass, of temperature, etc., mentioned by Sir George are not Nature although they bear a relationship to Nature and give us some understanding of her ways. Equally the geometrical symbols of the circle, the

point, the triangle, etc., are not reality although they bear a relationship to reality and help our minds to penetrate it. Nevertheless is there not a difference? Admittedly the concept of the electron unifies our thoughts over a vast area of facts. Does it unify them over the whole area? What relevance has it to the torment of human self-consciousness poised between the ghastly pit of race hatred and the concentration camps and the light and the warmth and the breadth of the free-ranging human mind with its glories of achievement? The concept of the conscious and the unconscious unifies the thoughts of many psychologists over a large field of human behaviour. Is there the slightest connection between it and that of the electron? The immediate answer is that we are approaching and can only approach the goal of a few basic concepts which will unify our thoughts over the entire field of Nature. Theosophy rests upon the proposition that there are those who have penetrated the barrier and returned bringing with them a universal symbology by means of which we can achieve this unifying work.

We offer what we hope is a simple and valid example of this difference. The symbol of the triangle is applicable universally; a figure cannot be formed with less than three sides. The trinity of spirit, matter and *johat* helps us to understand the cosmos. It is also applicable to, say, marriage. Much modern literature rivets the attention of man upon woman, of woman upon man, ignoring the third factor of children and the home, or treating them as accidents. Without that third factor, without the turning of the two inward and outward to create something, true marriage is not achieved. The standard scientific method of dealing with this situation would be to establish by a sociological survey and statistical analysis that, for example, the divorce rate tends to be higher among childless couples, and then to establish some general concepts in terms of which this fact could be explained, concepts which would not necessarily have any relevance elsewhere. In Theosophy, this truth of marriage derives from something universal, although for the individual its final validity must be experienced in consciousness. In this it differs fundamentally from philosophy also. In philosophy, conclusions are obtained through a purely mental process and there is no verification in consciousness, *i.e.*, no necessity of "living it out." A philosopher may have profound thoughts about space and time but may lose his temper if his wife tidies his desk or grumbles that he is late for lunch.

In the closing part of his address, Sir George Thomson considered some of the ways in which science had influenced and was still influencing our modes of thought. He made particular mention of the Quantum Theory which had produced a revolution in physics comparable with that produced in biology by Darwin. It presents the laws of physics not as statements of what *must* happen but of what *might* happen. This makes a considerable difference to the way in which physicists regard the world, a difference which has yet to percolate through to the average educated man.

One passage in the address may be of special interest to many students and we quote it at some length:—

It is one of the strangest facts of Nature that she is so fond of whole numbers. The mere existence of large classes of individuals identical in each class such as electrons, protons, atoms of fluorine, molecules of ethyl alcohol and many more is surprising enough. One might expect a continuous gradation of sizes, weights and charges. But it is not so. On the smallest scale only certain types of particles exist. The most complicated things, atoms, are built of integral numbers of electrons, protons and neutrons. The numbers are fundamental and characteristic. An atom of carbon is a pattern based on the number six, there are six electrons, six protons and six, seven, or eight neutrons according to which of the three kinds of carbon atom it happens to be. . . . We are getting back to one of the earliest scientific ideas. Pythagoras taught that whole numbers are supreme.

Sir George concluded by pointing out that man, so utterly insignificant compared with the universe he is trying to understand, has yet succeeded in grasping principles which govern the most varied phenomena from the blue of the sky to the fall of the apple. This prompts us to ask: "Is it an *accident* of growth that man has a mind which can spread out in shoreless space or contract within the pain of a toothache?"

We have too many men of science, too few men of God. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. . . . The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living.

—OMAR N. BRADLEY

THE THIRD TRUTH

The Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* embraces all aspects of Life. Therefore it can be described in as many ways as it is possible to view Life Itself. Life is Divine, Sacred and Wonderful. There is not a speck of matter in the Cosmos in which divinity does not abide. Every form of life has a meaning, a message for us, because it is a reflection on earth of something existing in the archetypal world. There are myriads of stars in the firmament, which light up our world of matter, and still their brightness diminishes not. Each point of life is a reflection of the light that shines above.

The Path to life eternal, everlasting joy and all-embracing love started with the pilgrimage of the Soul ages ago at the dawn of manifestation. The divine, undetached sparks from the One Flame had to pass through all the forms of the phenomenal world, to be then reunited with the one unconditioned ALL whence they first emerged. This is called the Cycle of Necessity; therefore there cannot be any exception to the law of evolution. The Universe exists for the sake of the Soul, and the course of evolution is the drama of the Soul. The master of forms, shapes, colours and sounds is Man himself, but he does not know it. To learn to see the Cosmos itself mirrored in himself and in every speck of matter becomes his complex, compelling *dharma*. All human beings are born with a yearning to know, to understand, so that they may love. Man's self-reflecting consciousness has to devise ways and means so that his vision of life becomes more and more soul-satisfying. This demands constant readjustment, but to help us there is Life itself, which is, after all, the Great Guru.

No man can lay down to another what that other's duties should be, as the very purpose of the long journey is the finding out of one's own duty to those below, those one's equals and those above. As there is a definite scheme in the Universe, each unit bears a harmonious relationship not only to the whole but also to all other units. In other words, every entity in the Cosmos is unique, and this uniqueness must be fostered and preserved. Nature shows us this when in her mighty power of creation she gives a different shape to every blade of grass. In the lower kingdoms, the harmonious relationship between different forms of life is naturally brought about by Law. Man as a self-conscious being has the power of choice. It is this power which makes of him a human being. It is a spiritual power by the exercise of which he can rise to divinity. Man has to shape his own life in accordance with the Great Scheme of the Universe and, in doing so, seek out the pattern by which his present life has to unfold. Thus only can he fulfil his real destiny and bring joy to those with whom it has been his privilege to be born. This may be the Path trodden by Those who belong to the Great Fraternity, though to the unheeding Their paths may seem to lie far apart. Life is One. So teaches the Third Truth.

EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

We have to learn to see the good and the lovely side of beings and things. Nothing can be perfect in this world and we have to build our own complete perfection out of a variety of perfections mixed up with gross imperfections. Of course we must look not only in those we love but everywhere for the good and the beautiful. The *Raja-Yoga* chapter of the *Gita* (the 9th) opens with "Unto thee who findeth no fault. . . . This is imperative for the esoteric life. Who bothers about your traits which you call undesirable? — and you yourself should not. Just forgive about your weaknesses! And who is there who does not feel a hypocrite at times? Our ideals are high, our realizations poor, comparatively speaking. We have to keep on striving and our ideals also ascend higher each time. That is the order of progress. You, like all others, have two natures, but you certainly are not Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Let us be thankful for dismay and some despondency. They are signs that the True is near which we are aspiring to reach. We may throw down our bow and arrows — the Philosophy and its many applications; but we will not, we must not, abandon them. We may, often do bend like reeds, but we must never break.

Weaknesses leave no void in their departure, nor do we feel frustrated when they depart! Here is a line of thought that needs to be pursued.

Why do we slip into wrongdoing? Well, is not the story explained in the closing portion of the third chapter of the *Gita*? The foundation of our personal nature (not always evil) is that *Rajas* which colours the very will to live. Inclinations of the personal soul are a motion of separateness. *Sattva* unites, and for that force or motion we are labouring. Rhythm is also motion, but jerks are gone, waywardness is gone, discords are synthesized into chords. We are able to work longer and later thus and at long last fatigue must disappear. Is not that the way the Masters work? The crash of kingdoms occurs, but the real Kings go on surviving with a smile, rebuilding, rebuilding.

What you say about the lower nature is true: animalism becomes an animal. Blood circulates in the living body, congeals in the corpse. Correspondentially, in the animal man conscience is not awake and errors and blunders circulate; but when the discipline of self-examination in the light of the philosophy of the True is practised, our foibles and frailties congeal and solidify and we, so to speak, are able to objectivize them. This is related to the phenomenon of the Dweller on the Threshold. Mental errors and mind sins are a terror, and they are the neophyte's real enemy. H.P.B.'s statement in the *Transactions* is terrifying if we take this point of view. (Please see p. 142.) Both the

metaphysical and the psychological aspects are important. Now apply this to your own discovery about your own battlefield of mind and you have taken a new step in the Inward Life.

Of course the lower nature is insidious; machination is its second name. Mortification of the mental nature is the starting point. Mind is the base of the personal nature. Mental asceticism needs knowledge and study for "the gentle breezes of soul wisdom" to brush away the dust and the dirt. Physical exercises involving food, breathing, etc., are a snare and a delusion as causes; as natural effects they have their value.

Numerous are the exercises given for separating, even for a few moments, our mind from *Kama-Tanha* and turning it to higher *Manas-Tanha* — the will to live higher ideas. We have to *think* and translate our thought into silent speech. A Being of triple Light is the Self — the Inner Guru, the Real Father, the Elder Brother. It creates, sustains and renovates. It is the True, the Good, the Beautiful. Ever a Triad: metaphysically, Atma-Buddhi-Manas — three in One and One in three. He or It is the comforter, the asylum and the friend. Along these lines you can make a start. One more fact: The *S.D.* teaches that the Spirit is one and impartite; that Matter-Prakriti is divisible. The One Purusha in the first vehicle of Prakriti is the One Eternal Monad, the Logos, the Ineffable Word, Ishvara. From Ishvara, the Eternal Monad, by the process of emanation (see *Glossary*) all Monads come forth. Strenuous concentration on that Inner Ruler is not possible at present. We must begin with gentle brooding in a relaxed posture.

It is the mission of Theosophy to arouse the Ego and make him note the defects of his personality. Have you considered the role of Narada, the "Mischief-Maker"? Also, please note, the Kingdom of Heaven is to be taken by violence. One should never even speculate about abandoning the fight. "Hold grimly on," says Judge; and also, "Press forward." The peace of the desert is a fiction. Excessive heat, sand-storms, etc., are there and *tamas* is prolific. We in cities are *rajasic*, but are now and again attacked by *tamas*. *Sattva's* peace and repose we yearn for and are getting — more indirectly in *Sushupti* and a little less indirectly in our effort at meditation and the unfoldment of calm and tranquillity. Love for humanity does not suffice; it forces us to pose the question — Why is humanity suffering? Those who are not troubled by that question are not true lovers of their fellow men. Memory-Meditation is necessary for finding the safe spot for the Soul. Without that, real service cannot be rendered. Masters are Servants because They are compassionate and wise.

The causes, or rather the one cause, which led to the development of the inferiority complex in you of which you write are not difficult

to understand. Our Eastern psychology teaches the great doctrine of self-reliance and spiritual interdependence and the rejection of all that makes the animal self depend upon its peculiar friends and companions, also animal in nature, which tend to lower our own estimate of ourselves. Theosophy teaches that it is better to know ourselves in our inner nature as we really are and not regard ourselves as a bundle of complexes, which is the mode for the understanding of the human personality which Eastern psychology gives us. It is imperative that you get a clear-cut philosophical concept of what man is in his entire make-up and in his dual nature of the higher and the lower, or, to use technical terms, as a spiritual individuality and a lower personality made up of his animal nature. The psychology offered by Theosophy for the understanding of man's make-up has two sides, metaphysical and moral. You will have to get at this if you want to help yourself in the right way. I would suggest that you read carefully the fourth chapter of *The Ocean of Theosophy* and the section of *The Key to Theosophy* which deals with the human principles, draw your own conclusions as to man's make-up and then apply that knowledge to your own make-up. Unless you have cleared the ground of this inferiority complex and its causes, you will find that, under the law of cyclic return of impressions, from time to time you will have this inferiority complex creeping on you and disabling you from prosecuting your life-study and life-work.

The Master's love is bountiful; its light shines upon thy face and shall make all the crooked ways straight for thee.

Let Karma judge thee and also plead thy cause against the unrighteous.

Their abuse is but of the visible personality; they cannot touch thee, invisible, unconquerable.

If you shall stand unmoved while reviled for truth's sake, your strength will increase.

Karmic consequences seem sometimes slow, but they are sure.

By patience and virtue add hourly and daily to the strength of your character, which is all that you will carry into your next life.

Do not argue with a boaster or try to convince the positive.

Allay irritation with compassion, and anxiety with patience.

Harmony among diverse elements is due to equilibrium and not to removal of diversity.

Right equilibrium does not arise from a dead level of equality: there is always someone who is greatest.

—Aphorisms from *The Path*

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The discovery of hordes of new galaxies by astronomers manning the world's most powerful telescopes, and the acceptance of the idea that the universe is a continuous creation, seem to bear out *The Secret Doctrine's* assertion, made way back in 1888, regarding "the Eternity of the Universe *in toto* as a boundless plane; periodically 'the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing'...."

According to *The New York Times* of January 29th, the National Geographic Society-Palomar Observatory Sky Atlas, the biggest mapping of the universe ever achieved, expanded known space 25 times. In the atlas, astronomers have found tens of thousands of new galaxies and the National Geographic Society reports that they still have material to study for years to come.

Last October, a space camera mounted in the nose of an Atlas Intercontinental Ballistic Missile photographed stars from 700 miles above the earth's star-dimming atmosphere, and preparations are said to be going on for the launching of a balloon-borne 36-inch telescope into the stratosphere. Only about 6,000 stars are bright enough and near enough to be seen on the earth without an aid to vision. Telescopes, however, have revealed more than a hundred billion stars in the earth's galaxy, the Milky Way, and nearly a billion galaxies have so far been found. Compared to some stars, our sun is a midget. Epsilon Aurigæ, for example, has a diameter 2,000 times greater than that of the sun.

For centuries man thought that stars were ageless, but modern astronomers believe that they may be of widely differing ages and are not so stable as they seem. Some are subject to catastrophic explosions. A star is believed to be formed "from cosmic gas and dust, with gravitational attraction playing a role. As gravitational pressure builds up within the star, nuclear reactions begin. Hydrogen may be converted into helium." Stars may eventually burn themselves out and become invisible to men on earth.

Speaking of the origin of a galaxy such as the Milky Way, H.P.B. says in *The Secret Doctrine* that

cosmic matter... radiant and cool, becomes at the first reawakening of cosmic motion, scattered through Space; appearing, when seen from the Earth, in clusters and lumps, like curds in thin milk. These are the seeds of the future worlds, the "Star-stuff." (I. 69)

And, in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, answering the question, "Is it to be supposed that the Milky Way is composed of matter in a state of differentiation other than that with which we are acquainted?" H.P.B. says:—

I thoroughly believe so. It is the storehouse of the materials from which the stars, planets and other celestial bodies are produced. Matter

in this state does not exist on earth; but that which is already differentiated and found on earth is also found on other planets and *vice-versa*. But, as I understand, before reaching the planets from its condition in the Milky Way, matter has first to pass through many stages of differentiation. The matter, for instance, within the Solar system is in an entirely different state from that which is outside or beyond the system. (pp. 113-14)

Some of the world's leading astronomers participated in a symposium in New York City on "Life on Other Worlds" (*The New York Herald Tribune*, March 5th). It was generally agreed that statistics overwhelmingly indicated the existence of many millions of planets capable of supporting life, in solar systems throughout the vastness of the universe. No doubt the possibility exists that forms of life on them may exist in many stages of evolution, some of them being inferior to ours and others far in advance of us.

Dr. Harlow Shapley, one of the world's leading astronomers, stated that man is a super-egoist to think that he alone is master of the universe. He is not even supreme on earth, he said, as was shown by the 1918 influenza epidemic, in which a submicroscopic organism slew 20,000,000 men. It is being felt that "compared with other life, our understanding of nature may appear relatively as primitive as the cave-man's."

Professor Arnold Toynbee, the historian, gave some down-to-earth warnings. Western Europe's exploration and exploitation of the New World, he pointed out, was one in which

the natives were conquered, massacred, raided and robbed. Western man used the New World for evil purposes. He exported war and slavery, the two most villainous institutions of the Old World. It is fortunate that no intelligent life on other planets is close enough to do that to us.

The Western world, Professor Toynbee said,

has been lax in exploring the spiritual realms. . . . The moving spirits of the Judaic and Indian religions and philosophies have taken the lead and it will probably be they, if anyone, who will help mankind save itself from itself.

We have made sensational progress in mastering non-human nature but have been comically — and therefore also tragically — unsuccessful in mastering our own human nature.

This situation is a threat to the survival of the human race.

Therefore, the new worlds with whose life it is now most urgent for us to make contact are the spiritual worlds within ourselves, not the physical worlds in outer space.

The *Monthly Letter* issued by the Royal Bank of Canada, Montreal, and printed in the January *Mother Earth* (London) discusses the burning question of "The Relationship of Man and Nature." As is pointed out, scientists and laymen are beginning to realize that man and the rest of Nature are united and indivisible and that our ideas of subduing Nature and bending its forces to our will need to be discarded.

Only when we recognize that the study of all living things is a profoundly necessary part of human thought do we reach the moment of truth. Then we realize that we are part of a complex stretching back to the beginning of time and reaching out on every hand to the boundaries of the universe. Every one of us is an actor in a great drama in which each plays his part as both cause and effect.

The forces set in motion by every act of every animal and bacterium, by every inch added to the growth of plant or tree, affect the lives of other creatures. The principles which govern these interrelationships are embraced in the science called ecology, a word coming from the Greek for "home" or "estate." Ecology is the study of how the household of nature is kept in order. . . .

There are at least three good reasons for surveying the present state of affairs and learning about our natural environment: (1) our advancing technology uses up resources in increasing quantity; (2) our increasing population puts annually greater pressure upon our living space; (3) our continued existence depends upon our keeping our natural environment productive of the essentials of life.

Over and above the slow changes by natural causes such as climate, the earth has suffered measureless destruction of animals and plants by the uncalculating actions of both savage and civilized men. It was destruction of their environment that caused salmon to disappear from Lake Ontario, and the bison to die off our Western plains, and the passenger pigeon to vanish from North America. Forests have been burnt up, soil has been washed away, deserts have been produced, and rivers have been polluted. "We have," said Professor A. F. Coventry to the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club, "for a long time been breaking the little laws, and the big laws are beginning to catch up with us."

Nature has its laws designed to maintain balance. If the number of any living species tends to increase out of proportion, some force will arise to control it. There is an equilibrium in undisturbed nature between food and feeder, hunter and prey, so that the resources of the earth are never idle. Some animals or plants may seem to dominate the rest, but they do so only so long as the general balance exists.

These laws cannot be disregarded without disaster. Nature — which is our word for the total of the conditions and principles which influence the existence of living things — will not accept ignorance of her laws as an excuse for breaking them.

Man thinks of himself as being the highest form of life and therefore has a responsibility towards the other forms of life; but the latter

almost invariably go into decline whenever man takes possession of a piece of earth. Because of the danger attending ignorance, we need much more knowledge about Nature than we have yet gathered. Even well-meant efforts may bring disaster. Biologists are aware of the need to preserve Nature's balance and of the ways in which this can be done, but only enlightened public opinion can make the application of these procedures effective.

A group of ardent believers in non-violence in the U.K. have started a centre at Garthnewydd, South Wales, where experiments are being carried on in non-violent training. The first issue of the *N.V.* [Non-violence] *Notes* issued by the group "to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas primarily on matters related to non-violent training and action, and to report on the development of the non-violence centre," states that, while on the one hand many are obsessed with the threat of atomic destruction, on the other hand a world morality is emerging inasmuch as powerful nations have never before been so sensitive to world opinion and so hesitant to trample down weaker countries in the advancement of their own selfish purposes.

Even more important is the increasing appreciation of the use of non-violent action as a revolutionary tactic which carries in it the very qualities of compassion, courage and brotherhood we hope for in a peaceful social order.

The methods used by Gandhi have spread, in just a decade, to many parts of the globe. Anti-apartheid *Africans* have used them in South Africa. *American Negroes* have used them with remarkable success in all parts of the U.S.A., often side by side with white non-violent demonstrators. Some *African independence leaders* advocate non-violence and have encouraged their followers to use it. In *France* there is a growing non-violent movement against the Algerian war, and in the *U.S.A.* and the *U.K.* are non-violent civil disobedience movements against atomic armaments.

The expanding acceptance of non-violent action can be a first step on the long road to a peaceful social order. If we are willing to work patiently with each other where we are, growing together and upwards little by little, we can evolve the kind of organic human-centred society needed to eliminate war.

With this in mind a group of people from the Garthnewydd Community house propose to establish a *non-violent training and study centre*. Though we all realize our personal limitations and how much we have to grow, we believe we can render a valuable service by creating a place where people may come who wish to improve their ability to use non-violence. Together with those who come for training we believe we can grow, each being at one time resource leader, at another fellow trainee. . . .

Probably few people realize that training in non-violence is fairly widespread, though sporadic. The first non-violent training in recent times was organized by Gandhi in South Africa to prepare the Indians living there for the civil disobedience campaigns which followed. Since his initial efforts his basic concepts and methods have spread to many places although relatively few people have embraced them.

The Times of India of February 19th reported the case of a girl of four and a half years in Ceylon, who claimed to remember having been a boy named Turin Tillekeratne in a preceding life. Gnanatilaka, the daughter of B. D. B. Appuhamy and Dingiramma of Hadunawa, a small hamlet in Kotmale, is said to have been born 14 months after Turin died on November 9th, 1954, at the age of thirteen years. "As soon as she began to talk, she indicated awareness of her past life. Astounded, the people around her decided to probe the matter further. Several prominent persons were interested." The child described her former home, family, relations and friends, and those mentioned were interrogated and corroborated her accounts of past happenings. The phenomenon was the subject of an hour's broadcast over Radio Ceylon, with tape recordings of the girl's testimony and the corroboration of her statements by her former family and friends.

It is not an isolated instance. Comparable cases have been recorded from time to time in India. H. Fielding Hall, in his book, *The Soul of a People*, described others in Burma late in the last century.

Can such a case as this be claimed as a positive proof of reincarnation? Quick rebirth does sometimes take place. It is the rule in the case of children dying before the Ego has become united with its body and the personality, and this union is said to take place generally around the age of seven. But H.P.B. has said that "save in the case of young children, and of individuals whose lives were violently cut off by some accident," which we are not told was the fate of Turin, "no Spiritual Entity can reincarnate before a period of many centuries has elapsed." (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 303)

In her article, "Views of the Theosophists" (*A Modern Panarion*, pp. 132-140), she wrote: "A dead child is a failure of nature — he must live again; and the same Psuche re-enters the physical plane through another birth," but it is evidently the young child which she refers to, for she writes of "a child who has never lived other than an animal life; who never discerned right from wrong; who never cared whether he lived or died — since he could not understand either of life or death," and asks how he could become individually immortal.

Theosophy suggests other possible explanations of such a case as this reported from Ceylon, in which a past existence seems to be remembered vividly. That somewhere there is a consistent record of the life of the dead boy is evident from the Theosophical teaching of the

Astral Light, the storehouse of all the earth's memories, or the tablet of the unseen universe. Is the small girl a natural sensitive reading the record of another's life in the Astral Light and identifying herself imaginatively with it?

Mr. Judge wrote in his article on "Hypnotism," published in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT of October 1940: "The varied personalities assumed by some subjects brings up the doctrine of a former life on earth for all men. The division between soul and astral man releases the latter from some of the limitations of brain memory so that the inner memory may act, and we then have a case of a person re-enacting some part of his former life or lives." But no hypnotism seems to have been involved in the case of little Gnanatilaka.

In a recent B.B.C. Brains Trust programme there was a significant discussion on the question of experiments on human beings in concentration camps and on animals in the name of medical research. One member of the Brains Trust was the eminent scientist Dr. Jacob Bronowski, and his comments, reported in the *Animals' Defender and Anti-Vivisection News* (London) of February 1961, are of particular interest:—

Why do we object to experiments of a certain kind whether on human beings or on animals? We object to them because they debase the man who does them so that he does not remain capable of making an objective judgment. Some of the people from whom I got a sense of science were men of enormous humanity — they were men in whom the knowledge of nature was a sense of love, a sense of devotion, a sense of dedication. You cannot cut up human beings and think that you are investigating anything at all because you are becoming just a machine carrying out experiments. No great scientific discovery has ever been made by a machine — it has been made by a man who has been immersed in the miracle of nature.

Challenged by another member of the team that a cure for a disease like cancer might come by such means and that "in the case of animals one would tolerate it," Dr. Bronowski retorted:—

I don't tolerate it. I object to cutting up human beings for exactly the same reason that I object to cutting up animals and, in the last analysis, to cutting up beetles and, if you like, to cutting up tapeworms and cheese maggots; because, in the end, that way of treating the sacredness of life is essentially inhuman, is desecrating the sense of life — the sense of unity with all living things. . . .
