

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## FOR TWENTY-ONE DAYS

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Follow the Path I show, the Masters that are behind—and do not follow me or my PATH.—H.P.B.

What I do believe in is (1) the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living *divine* men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men; (2) that it has reached us *unaltered*; (3) that the MASTERS are thoroughly versed in the science based on such un-interrupted teaching.—H.P.B.

BEFORE the next issue of this magazine is in the hands of the reader, the Theosophical world will have celebrated White Lotus Day. On Saturday the 8th of May falls the [eighty-first] anniversary of the passing of H. P. Blavatsky. Among our readers there are many who will prepare themselves during these twenty-one days to derive full spiritual benefit from this Sacred Day. To a steadily increasing number H.P.B. is the Guru—the Window through which the Golden Light of Wisdom enters their lives. She never claimed the position or the privilege of a Guru, never exercised a Teacher's prerogatives, and many co-workers whom she inspired, many learners whom she tutored, forgot their place to such an extent that they never awoke to the reality of the situation so as to repeat the words of Arjuna:

Having been ignorant of thy majesty, I took thee for a friend, and have called thee “O Krishna, O son of Yadu, O friend,” and blinded by my affection and presumption, I have at times treated thee without respect in sport, in recreation, in repose, in thy chair, and at thy meals, in private and in public; all this I beseech thee, O inconceivable Being, to forgive.

Fortunate are the students of the generations after her passing, like ourselves of today, inasmuch as they have not the temptations rising

from the presence of the earthly form of the Personage which that form hid. Today we can only know of that Buddha-like mind, of that Christ-like heart, through the Message she delivered in her written words. There is no better, surer way of appraising the golden worth of the Instructor than through the instruction she imparted. But just as a sample, just to give some idea of the methods in vogue when the foundations of the great work were being laid and the Temple of Theosophy was being erected, we print below two articles about the nature of the help she received from her Great Guru and others and the way she gave help to those who came to her to learn to serve Their Cause.

H.P.B. possessed great and wonderful powers. She was a conscious Magician possessing the Divine Art, and she performed innumerable phenomena, on the strength of which she could have founded a new religion, and by today her Image would have been garlanded and worshipped in many a temple in the four quarters of the globe. But her mission was not to add one more to the existing great religions of a priest-ridden world. It was to drive men to self-study and to destroy in them servility for persons. It was to energize men to free their minds from the bondage of creeds, to liberate their feelings and impersonalize their emotions — and above all to learn the age-old but forgotten truths whose echoes are in the hymns of the *Vedas*, the wisdom of the *Upanishads*, the ritual of the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, and such stray fragments as the Iranian *Gathas* and the Guatemalian *Popul Vuh*.

To her recorded Message, then, the student of Theosophy must turn. What will he discover? A body of knowledge which staggers the human brain but which, when mastered even to a small extent, enables her devotee to be a cosmopolitan, to rise above the distinctions of creeds; to be a lover of humanity and not only of one community or of one nation; to be a brother to every soul — humble enough to receive help and strong enough to render it. H.P.B.'s writings possess the power to stir our consciousness to its very depths; these writings work the miracle of holding before us the mirror in which our faults and foibles, our powers and potencies, are seen; they bring to us the energy to take ourselves in hand and become regenerate beings. There are innumerable *Mantrams* — sounds and words of power — in her writings; and also there are *Vibhutis* — excellences — which radiate peace to enjoy and inspiration to serve.

Many wonderful phenomena H.P.B. performed, but none can compare with the knowledge imparted in her books. Those phenomena have

raised great tempests: Doubters, and especially those who themselves never saw any, have cried, "Impossible; such things can't be"; and they do not know of, perhaps never heard about, the greatest phenomenon — her books. Unwise followers and especially those who witnessed the phenomena have cried, "Genuine; we have seen things with our own eyes"; but how many understood what they saw? Recently there has been much talk about "precipitated" letters of the Mahatmas and about the handwriting of this or that Adept. But does a letter become a genuine Mahatma communication because it is precipitated? Again, does a letter become a genuine Mahatma communication simply because its visible handwriting resembles that of an authentic Mahatma letter? We know of such letters precipitated at spiritistic séances; any particular handwriting can be and has been imitated. Claims have been made about some letters, received since the passing of W. Q. Judge, which *look* like the handwriting of H.P.B.'s Masters! Between seeing the handwriting on a precipitated letter and deciphering its script there is a difference. Each Mahatmic Letter has its *hidden* birthmark, *Lakshana*, which only the genuine members belonging to the House of Origin use and which only the Concerned know about. This alone tells the tale. But among the general public and among ordinary Theosophical students — what can determine whether a "precipitated letter" is genuine, coming from the source claimed for it, or fraudulent, a psychic forgery? Appearances deceive. Wisdom does not. Seeing is believing — nothing more; but knowing is being free from glamour, self-induced or otherwise. Also we have been told of several "messages received." But hearing with the ear attuned to her wisdom, there has never been any difficulty in detecting the hollow sound of grandiloquent words. The student of today must refuse to pay heed to the cries: "Lo, here is Master." "Lo, there is Christ," or "Look at this precipitated script," "Hear this astral message." Then what shall we do? Remember what a Master once wrote: "It adds no force to our metaphysical truths that our letters are dropped from space on to your lap or come under your pillow. If our philosophy is wrong a *wonder* will not set it right." Also H.P.B. has said that no message, no book, derives any authority because of the claims made for it, but solely because of intrinsic merit: "*All* Theosophical books must be accepted on their merits, and not according to any claim to authority which they may put forward."

During these twenty-one days let the student read with his heart the Divine Wisdom in any of her four books: In *Isis Unveiled* he will find

warnings against necromancy and also hints about White Magic and a revelation about the power and potencies hidden within himself. In *The Secret Doctrine* he will find the curtain lifted on the Drama of Evolution and before him on the stage in Seven Acts the majestic March of Creation will be enacted. In *The Key to Theosophy* he will find answers to his own questions and problems, presented in a lucid and practical manner, and, more, answers to questions which he will be asked by others. In *The Voice of the Silence* he will hear the chants of life which purify the mind and elevate the heart.

Further, her writings enable the intelligent student to appraise the worth or the worthlessness of any particular philosophy or religion, to seize upon the golden nuggets of truth in the large dust-heap of corrupted faiths. They help us to evaluate all supernormal phenomena, and to distinguish between the fake and the faquir, between the medium and the sensitive, between the black necromancer and the white magician, between the ecstatic and the adept.

Go to the Message and the Teaching and soon will be found the Mind of the Messenger and the heart of the Teacher.

#### HOW H.P.B. WAS HELPED

[Extract from H.P.B.'s letter to her sister]

I am solely occupied, not with writing *Isis*, but with Isis herself. I live in a kind of permanent enchantment, a life of visions and sights, with open eyes, and no chance whatever to deceive my senses! I sit and watch the fair goddess constantly. And as she displays before me the secret meaning of her long-lost *secrets*, and the veil becoming with every hour thinner and more transparent, gradually falls off before my eyes, I hold my breath and can hardly trust to my senses! . . . For several years, in order not to forget what I have learned elsewhere, I have been made to have permanently before my eyes all that I need to see. Thus, night and day, the images of the past are ever marshalled before my inner eye. Slowly, and gliding silently like images in an enchanted panorama, centuries after centuries appear before me . . . and I am made to connect these epochs with certain historical events, and I *know* there can be no mistake. Races and nations, countries and cities, emerge during some former century, then fade out and disappear during some other one, the precise date of which I am then told. . . . Hoary antiquity gives room to historical periods; myths are explained by real events and personages who have really existed; and every important, and often

unimportant event, every revolution, a new leaf turned in the book of life of nations — with its incipient course and subsequent natural results — remains photographed in my mind as though impressed in indelible colours. . . . When I think and watch my thoughts, they appear to me as though they were like those little bits of wood of various shapes and colours, in the game known as the *casse tête*: I pick them up one by one, and try to make them fit each other, first taking one, then putting it aside until I find its match, and finally there always comes out in the end something geometrically correct. . . . *I certainly refuse pointblank to attribute it to my own knowledge or memory*, for I could never arrive alone at either such premises or conclusions. . . . I tell you seriously *I am helped*. And he who helps me is my GURU.

#### HOW H.P.B. HELPED

H.P.B.'s well-authenticated and reputed phenomena were not casually performed for entertaining people. They were deliberately done — each a piece of valuable instruction. Here is one recorded by Col. H. S. Olcott; he saw the phenomenon but did not learn from it, as the subsequent history of the Theosophical Movement fully reveals:

“She and I were in our literary workroom in New York one summer day after dinner. It was early twilight, and the gas had not been lighted. She sat over by the South front window, I stood on the rug before the mantelpiece, thinking. I heard her say, “Look and learn”; and glancing that way, saw a mist rising from her head and shoulders. Presently it defined itself into the likeness of one of the Mahatmas, the one who, later, gave me the historical turban, but the astral double of which he now wore on his mist-born head. Absorbed in watching the phenomenon, I stood silent and motionless. The shadowy shape only formed for itself the upper half of the torso, and then faded away and was gone; whether re-absorbed into H.P.B.'s body or not, I do not know. She sat statue-like for two or three minutes, after which she sighed, came to herself, and asked me if I had seen anything. When I asked her to explain the phenomenon she refused, saying that it was for me to develop my intuition so as to understand the phenomena of the world I lived in. All she could do was to help in showing me things and let me make what I could of them.”

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Here is another, also recorded by Colonel Olcott:

“I had brought home a while before two nice, soft pencils, just the

thing for our desk work, and had given one to H.P.B. and kept one myself. She had the very bad habit of borrowing penknives, pencils, rubber, and other articles of stationery and forgetting to return them: once put into her drawer or writing-desk, there they would stay, no matter how much of a protest you might make over it."

Colonel Olcott was asked by H.P.B. for another pencil. He writes:

"The thought flashed into my mind, 'If I once lend this nice pencil it will go into her drawer and I shall have none for my own use'. I did not say this, I only thought it."

Colonel Olcott received a "mildly sarcastic look." H.P.B. reached out to the pen-tray in front of the Colonel, laid her own pencil in it, handled it with her fingers for a moment—and lo! a dozen pencils of the identical make and quality! The Colonel writes that she said not a word, did not give him even a look, "but the blood rushed to my temples and I felt more humble than I ever did in my life. All the same, I scarcely think I deserved the rebuke, considering what a stationery-annexer H.P.B. was!"

What lesson did she try to impart? One in the art of materialization or of apportation? Or was it a lesson in the dangers of suspicion harboured in the mind and not openly expressed? Harmless suspicions like this one entertained by the Colonel in the 'seventies developed subtly in the 'eighties of the last century to his own soul detriment.

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From Mr. G. R. S. Mead, deservedly well known as a scholar, and who acted as H.P.B.'s private secretary, we have the following narrative:

"One of the greatest proofs to me of H.P.B.'s extraordinary gifts and ability, if proof were needed in the face of the manifest sincerity of her life-work, was the way in which she wrote her articles and books. I knew every book she had in her small library, and yet day after day she would produce quantities of MS. abounding in quotations, which were seldom inaccurate. I remember almost the last day she sat at her desk, going into her room to query two Greek words in a quotation and telling her they were inaccurate. Now though H.P.B. could in her early years speak modern Greek and had been taught ancient Greek by her grandmother, she had long forgotten it for all purposes of accuracy, and the correction of the words I objected to required precise scholarship. 'Where did you get it from, H.P.B.?' I asked. 'I'm sure I don't know, my dear,' was her somewhat discouraging rejoinder, 'I saw

it!' adding that she was certain that she was right, for now she remembered when she wrote the particular passage referred to. However, I persuaded her that there was some mistake, and finally she said, 'Well, of course you are a great Greek pundit, I know, but you're not going to sit upon me always. I'll try if I can see it again, and now get out,' meaning that she wanted to go on with her work, or at any rate had had enough of me. About two minutes afterwards, she called me in again and presented me with a scrap of paper on which she had written the two words quite correctly, saying, 'Well, I suppose you'll be a greater pundit than ever after this!'

"The above is one instance out of many, but it will little profit to narrate them, for they mean nothing to anyone but the eye-witness, and the public is quite content with its own infallibility of judgement and prefers to remain myopic."

Was this teaching the scholar about the uses to which the Astral Light can be put, or was it a lesson in humility — a quality which the youthful scholar lacked?

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OUR AGE is pre-eminently a *scientific* one, in the sense that the authority which men demand in reference to the deepest problems of life must rest on experience and reason, and not on tradition. *Theosophy* claims to rest on this basis, and in proof thereof we find that every fresh discovery in literature and science tends to confirm the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine* . . . .

We are not discouraged because Theosophy does not appear, in comparison with some other movements, to have effected much on the mere outward physical plane. Our work is essentially a leavening one, and will show itself later on in the thought and religion of the next century. No one should despise the day of small things. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."

—*The Vahan*, December 1, 1890

## WHY I DO NOT RETURN TO INDIA

[This remarkable letter addressed to the Indian theosophists was written by H. P. Blavatsky in 1890, five years after she left India. It shows, as nothing else could, the tragic situation of the Theosophical Movement in India after 1885. The Indian members of the then Theosophical Society claimed to be followers of a movement of which H.P.B. had been, and still was, the living inspiration, yet feared and failed to support her whole-heartedly in her hour of need, when she was attacked by the enemies of Theosophy. The attempt of the members to compromise, with "*half-measures*," amounted virtually to a betrayal of H.P.B. and all that she stood for. The seeds of disunity, ingratitude and doubt — doubt not only in the *bona fides* of H.P.B. but also in the very existence of the Masters — sown then resulted later in the various crises of the Theosophical Movement. H.P.B.'s letter has a message for the student of Theosophy of the present generation and is worthy of thoughtful study. It was printed in *The Theosophist* for January 1922 under the above title and was reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT* for January 1954.—EDS.]

### TO MY BROTHERS OF ARYAVARTA:

In April, 1890, five years elapsed since I left India.

Great kindness has been shown to me by many of my Hindu brethren at various times since I left; especially this year (1890), when, ill almost to death, I have received from several Indian Branches letters of sympathy, and assurances that they have not forgotten her to whom India and the Hindus have been most of her life far dearer than her own Country.

It is, therefore, my duty to explain why I do not return to India and my attitude with regard to the new leaf turned in the history of the T.S. by my being formally placed at the head of the Theosophical Movement in Europe. For it is not solely on account of bad health that I do not return to India. Those who have saved me from death at Adyar, and twice since then, could easily keep me alive there as They do me here. There is a far more serious reason. A line of conduct has been traced for me here, and I have found among the English and Americans what I have so far vainly sought for in India.

In Europe and America, during the last three years, I have met with hundreds of men and women who have the courage to avow their conviction of the real existence of the Masters, and who are working for

Theosophy on *Their* lines and under *Their* guidance, given through my humble self.

In India, on the other hand, ever since my departure, the true spirit of devotion to the Masters and the courage to avow it has steadily dwindled away. At Adyar itself, increasing strife and conflict has raged between personalities; uncalled for and utterly undeserved animosity — almost hatred — has been shown towards me by several members of the staff. There seems to have been something strange and uncanny going on at Adyar, during these last years. No sooner does a European, most Theosophically inclined, most devoted to the Cause, and the personal friend of myself or the President, set his foot in Headquarters, than he becomes forthwith a personal enemy to one or other of us, and what is worse, ends by injuring and deserting the Cause.

Let it be understood at once that I accuse no one. Knowing what I do of the activity of the forces of Kali Yuga, at work to impede and ruin the Theosophical Movement, I do not regard those who have become, one after the other, my enemies — and that without any fault of my own — as I might regard them, were it otherwise.

One of the chief factors in the reawakening of Aryavarta which has been part of the work of the Theosophical Society, was the ideal of Masters. But owing to want of judgment, discretion and discrimination, and the liberties taken with *Their* names and *Personalities*, great misconception arose concerning Them. I was under the most solemn oath and pledge never to reveal the whole truth to anyone, excepting to those who, like Damodar, had been finally selected and called by Them. All that I was then permitted to reveal was, that there existed somewhere such great men; that some of Them were Hindus; that They were learned as none others in all the ancient wisdom of Gupta Vidya, and had acquired all the Siddhis, not as these are represented in tradition and the “blinds” of ancient writings, but as they are in fact and nature; and also that I was a Chela of one of Them. However, in the fancy of some Hindus, the most wild and ridiculous fancies soon grew up concerning Them. They were referred to as “Mahatmas” and still some too-enthusiastic friends belittled Them with their strange fancy-pictures; our opponents, describing a Mahatma as a full Jivanmukta, urged that, as such, He was debarred from holding any communications whatever with persons living in the world. They also maintained that as this is the Kali Yuga, it was impossible that there could be any Mahatmas at all in our age.

These early misconceptions notwithstanding, the idea of the Masters, and belief in Them, has already brought its good fruit in India. Their chief desire was to preserve the true religious and philosophical spirit of ancient India; to defend the Ancient Wisdom contained in its Darshanas and Upanishads against the systematic assaults of the missionaries; and finally to reawaken the dormant ethical and patriotic spirit in those youths in whom it had almost disappeared owing to college education. Much of this has been achieved by and through the Theosophical Society, in spite of all its mistakes and imperfections.

Had it not been for Theosophy, would India have had her Tukaram Tatya doing now the priceless work he does, and which no one in India ever thought of doing before him? Without the Theosophical Society, would India have ever thought of wrenching from the hands of the learned but unspiritual Orientalists the duty of reviving, translating and editing the Sacred Books of the East, of popularizing and selling them at a far cheaper rate, and at the same time in a far more correct form than had ever been done at Oxford? Would our respected and devoted brother Tukaram Tatya himself have ever thought of doing so, had he not joined the Theosophical Society? Would your political Congress itself have ever been a possibility, without the Theosophical Society? Most important of all, one at least among you has fully benefited by it; and if the Society had never given to India but that one future Adept (Damodar) who has now the prospect of becoming one day a Mahatma, Kali Yuga notwithstanding, that alone would be proof that it was not founded at New York and transplanted to India in vain. Finally, if anyone among the three hundred millions of India can demonstrate, proof in hand, that Theosophy, the T.S., or even my humble self, have been the means of doing the slightest harm, either to the country or any Hindu, that the Founders have been guilty of teaching pernicious doctrines, or offering bad advice — then, and then only, can it be imputed to me as a crime that I have brought forward the ideal of the Masters and founded the Theosophical Society.

Aye, my good and never-to-be-forgotten Hindu Brothers, the name alone of the holy Masters, which was at one time invoked with prayers for Their blessings, from one end of India to the other — Their name alone has wrought a mighty change for the better in your land. It is not to Colonel Olcott or to myself that you owe anything, but verily to these names, which, but a few years ago, had become a household word in your mouths.

Thus it was that, so long as I remained at Adyar, things went on smoothly enough, because one or other of the Masters was almost constantly present among us, and their spirit ever protected the Theosophical Society from real harm. But in 1884, Colonel Olcott and myself left for a visit to Europe, and while we were away the Padri-Coulomb "thunderbolt" descended. I returned in November, and was taken most dangerously ill. It was during that time and Colonel Olcott's absence in Burma, that the seeds of all future strifes, and — let me say at once — disintegration of the Theosophical Society, were planted by our enemies. What with the Patterson-Coulomb-Hodgson conspiracy, and the faint-heartedness of the chief Theosophists, that the Society did not then and there collapse should be sufficient proof of how it was protected. Shaken in their belief, the faint-hearted began to ask: "Why, if the Masters are genuine Mahatmas, have They allowed such things to take place, or why have They not used Their powers to destroy this plot or that conspiracy, or even this or that man and woman?" Yet it had been explained numberless times that no Adept of the Right Path will interfere with the just workings of Karma. Not even the greatest of Yogis can divert the progress of Karma or arrest the natural results of actions for more than a short period, and even in that case, these results will only reassert themselves later with even tenfold force, for such is the occult law of Karma and the Nidanas.

Nor again will even the greatest of phenomena aid real spiritual progress. We have each of us to win our Moksha or Nirvana by our own merit, not because a Guru or Deva will help to conceal our shortcomings. There is no merit in having been created an immaculate Deva or in being a God; but there is the eternal bliss of Moksha looming forth for the man who becomes *as a God* and Deity by his own personal exertions. It is the mission of Karma to punish the guilty, and not the duty of any Master. But those who act up to Their teachings and live the life of which They are the best exemplars, will never be abandoned by *Them* and will always find Their beneficent help whenever needed — whether obviously or invisibly. This is of course addressed to those who have not yet quite lost their faith in Masters; those who have never believed, or have ceased to believe in Them, are welcome to their own opinions. No one, except themselves perhaps some day, will be the losers thereby.

As for myself, who can charge me with having acted like an impostor? With having, for instance, taken one single pie from any living soul? With having ever asked for money, or even with having accepted

it, notwithstanding that I was repeatedly offered large sums? Those who, in spite of this, have chosen to think otherwise, will have to explain what my traducers of even the Padri class and Psychical Research Society have been unable to explain to this day, *viz.*, the motive for such fraud. They will have to explain why, instead of taking and making money, I gave away to the Society every penny I earned by writing for the papers; why at the same time I nearly killed myself with overwork and incessant labour year after year, until my health gave way, so that but for my Master's repeated help, I should have died long ago from the effects of such voluntary hard labour. For the absurd Russian spy theory, if it still finds credit in some idiotic heads, has long ago disappeared, at any rate from the official brains of the Anglo-Indians.

If, I say, at that critical moment, the members of the Society, and especially its leaders at Adyar, Hindu and European, had stood together as one man, firm in their conviction of the reality and power of the Masters, Theosophy would have come out more triumphantly than ever, and none of their fears would have ever been realized, however cunning the legal traps set for me, and whatever mistakes and errors of judgment I, their humble representative, might have made in the executive conduct of the matter.

But the loyalty and courage of the Adyar Authorities, and of the few Europeans who had trusted in the Masters, were not equal to the trial when it came. In spite of my protests, I was hurried away from Headquarters. Ill as I was, almost dying in truth, as the physicians said, yet I protested, and would have battled for Theosophy in India to my last breath, had I found loyal support. But some feared legal entanglements, some the Government, while my best friends believed in the doctors' threats that I must die if I remained in India. So I was sent to Europe to regain my strength, with a promise of speedy return to my beloved Aryavarta.

Well, I left, and immediately intrigues and rumours began. Even at Naples, I already learnt that I was reported to be meditating to start in Europe "a rival Society" and bust up Adyar (!!). At this I laughed. Then it was rumoured that I had been *abandoned* by the Masters, been disloyal to Them, done this or the other. None of it had the slightest truth or foundation in fact. Then I was accused of being, at best, a hallucinated *medium*, who had mistaken "spooks" for living Masters; while others declared that the real H. P. Blavatsky was dead — had died through the injudicious use of *Kundalini* — and that the form had been

forthwith seized upon by a Dugpa Chela, who was the present H.P.B. Some again held me to be a witch, a sorceress, who for purposes of her own played the part of a philanthropist and lover of India, while in reality bent upon the destruction of all those who had the misfortune to be *psychologized* by me. In fact, the powers of psychology attributed to me by my enemies, whenever a fact or a "phenomenon" could not be explained away, are so great that they alone would have made of me a most remarkable Adept—independently of any Masters or Mahatmas. In short, up to 1886, when the S.P.R. Report was published and this soap-bubble burst over our heads, it was one long series of false charges, every mail bringing something new. I will name no one; nor does it matter who said a thing and who repeated it. One thing is certain: with the exception of Colonel Olcott, everyone seemed to banish the Masters from their thoughts and Their spirit from Adyar. Every imaginable incongruity was connected with these holy names, and I alone was held responsible for every disagreeable event that took place, every mistake made. In a letter received from Damodar in 1886, he notified me that the Masters' influence was becoming with every day weaker at Adyar; that They were daily represented as less than "second-rate Yogis," totally denied by some, while even those who believed in, and had remained loyal to Them, feared even to pronounce Their names. Finally, he urged me very strongly to return, saying that of course the Masters would see that my health should not suffer from it. I wrote to that effect to Colonel Olcott, imploring him to let me return, and promising that I would live at Pondicherry, if needed, should my presence not be desirable at Adyar. To this I received the ridiculous answer that no sooner should I return, than I should be sent to the Andaman Islands as a Russian spy, which of course Colonel Olcott subsequently found out to be absolutely untrue. The readiness with which such a futile pretext for keeping me from Adyar was seized upon, shows in clear colours the ingratitude of those to whom I had given my life and health. Nay more, urged on, as I understood, by the Executive Council, under the entirely absurd pretext that, in case of my death, my heirs might claim a share in the Adyar property, the President sent me a legal paper to sign, by which I formally renounced any right to the Headquarters or even to live there without the Council's permission. This, although I had spent several thousand rupees of my own private money, and had devoted my share of the profits of *The Theosophist* to the purchase of the house and its furniture. Nevertheless I signed the renunciation without one word of protest. I saw I was not wanted, and

remained in Europe in spite of my ardent desire to return to India. How could I do otherwise than feel that all my labours had been rewarded with ingratitude, when my most urgent wishes to return were met with flimsy excuses and answers inspired by those who were hostile to me?

The result of this is too apparent. You know too well the state of affairs in India for me to dwell longer upon details. In a word, since my departure, not only has the activity of the movement there gradually slackened, but those for whom I had the deepest affections, regarding them as a mother would her own sons, have turned against me. While in the West, no sooner had I accepted the invitation to come to London, than I found people — the S.P.R. Report and wild suspicions and hypotheses rampant in every direction notwithstanding — to believe in the truth of the great Cause I have struggled for, and in my own *bona fides*.

Acting under the Master's orders, I began a new movement in the West on the original lines; I founded *Lucifer*, and the Lodge which bears my name. Recognizing the splendid work done at Adyar by Colonel Olcott and others to carry out the second of the three Objects of the T.S., *viz.*, to promote the study of Oriental literature, I was determined to carry out here the two others. All know with what success this has been attended. Twice Colonel Olcott was asked to come over, and then I learned that I was once more wanted in India — at any rate by some. But the invitation came too late; neither would my doctor permit it, nor can I, if I would be true to my life-pledge and vows, now live at the Headquarters from which the Masters and Their spirit are virtually banished. The presence of Their portraits will not help; They are a dead letter. The truth is that I can never return to India in any other capacity than as Their faithful agent. And as, unless They appear among the Council *in propria persona* (which They will certainly never do now), no advice of mine on occult lines seems likely to be accepted, as the fact of my relations with the Masters is doubted, even totally denied by some; and I myself having no right to the Headquarters, what reason is there, therefore, for me to live at Adyar?

The fact is this: In my position, half-measures are worse than none. People have either to believe entirely in me, or to *honestly* disbelieve. No one, no Theosophist, is compelled to believe, but it is worse than useless for people to ask me to help them, if they do not believe in me. Here in Europe and America are many who have never flinched in their

devotion to Theosophy; consequently the spread of Theosophy and of the T.S., in the West, during the last three years, has been extraordinary. The chief reason for this is that I was enabled and encouraged by the devotion of an ever-increasing number of members to the Cause and to Those who guide it, to establish an Esoteric Section, in which I can teach something of what I have learned to those who have confidence in me, and who prove this confidence by their disinterested work for Theosophy and the T.S. For the future, then, it is my intention to devote my life and energy to the E.S., and to the teaching of those whose confidence I retain. It is useless that I should use the little time I have before me to justify myself before those who do not feel sure about the real existence of the Masters, only because, misunderstanding me, it therefore suits them to suspect me.

And let me say at once, to avoid misconception, that my only reason for accepting the exoteric direction of European affairs, was to save those who really have Theosophy at heart and work for it and the Society, from being hampered by those who not only do not care for Theosophy, as laid out by the Masters, but are entirely working against both, endeavouring to undermine and counteract the influence of the good work done, both by open denial of the existence of the Masters, by declared and bitter hostility to myself, and also by joining forces with the most desperate enemies of our Society.

Half-measures, I repeat, are no longer possible. Either I have stated the truth as I know it about the Masters and teach what I have been taught by Them, or I have invented both Them and the Esoteric Philosophy. There are those among the Esotericists of the inner group who say that if I have done the latter, then I must myself be a "Master." However it may be, there is no alternative to this dilemma.

The only claim, therefore, which India could ever have upon me would be strong only in proportion to the activity of the Fellows there for Theosophy and their loyalty to the Masters. You should not need my presence among you to convince you of the truth of Theosophy, any more than your American brothers need it. A conviction that wanes when any particular personality is absent is no conviction at all. Know, moreover, that any further proof and teaching I can give only to the Esoteric Section, and this for the following reason: its members are the only ones whom I have the right to expel for open disloyalty to their pledge (*not to me*, H.P.B., but to their *Higher Self* and the *Mahatmic aspect of the Masters*), a privilege I cannot exercise with the F.T.S.'s

at large, yet one which is the only means of cutting off a diseased limb from the healthy body of the Tree, and thus save it from infection. I can care only for those who cannot be swayed by every breath of calumny, and every sneer, suspicion, or criticism, whoever it may emanate from.

Thenceforth let it be clearly understood that the rest of my life is devoted only to those who believe in the Masters, and are willing to work for Theosophy as They understand it, and for the T.S. on the lines upon which They originally established it.

If, then, my Hindu brothers really and earnestly desire to bring about the regeneration of India, if they wish to ever bring back the days when the Masters, in the ages of India's ancient glory, came freely among them, guiding and teaching the people, then let them cast aside all fear and hesitation, and turn a new leaf in the history of the Theosophical Movement. Let them bravely rally round the President-Founder, whether I am in India or not, as around those few true Theosophists who have remained loyal throughout, and bid defiance to all calumniators and ambitious malcontents — both without and within the Theosophical Society.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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IN every country and in every age there were and there will be people, pure of heart, who, conquering their earthly thoughts and the passions of the flesh, raise their spiritual faculties to such a pitch that the mysteries of being and the laws governing Nature and hidden from the uninitiated are revealed to them. Let blind men persecute them; let them be burned and hunted from "societies acknowledged by law"; let them be called Magi, Wise Men, Raj Yogis or saints — they have lived and they still live everywhere, recognized or unrecognized. For these people who have illumined themselves during their lifetime, there are no obstacles, there are no bodily ties. They do not know either distance or time. They are alive and active in the body as well as out of it. They *are*, wherever their thought and their will carries them. They are not tied down by anything, either by a place, or by their temporary mortal covering.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## THE HIGHER INDIFFERENCE

THE MATERIALIST puts value on worldly possessions and gives them precedence over such imponderables as truth, sacrifice and austerity. His feelings and inclinations, his emotions and urges get modulated by his attachments to matter and material things. His care for these produces a hunger and from this arise attachments which become obsessions. These attractions captivate his senses which thus get fixed on certain objectives and fail to respond to the higher emotions. His mind becomes selective of only that type of knowledge which can be used to feed the dominating appetites. Thus oriented, he is indifferent to philosophy or the cosmic ultimates. He is in a rut and enjoys being in it.

The orthodox religionist is of a type different from the materialist. His beliefs force him to bend knees to images of wood, stone or clay. He may worship the elementals and the ghosts of dead men. He is firmly fixed in the belief that gods and angels if propitiated through bell, book and candle can give him the enjoyment of his desires, or if aroused to anger can wreck his life. He is not over-afraid of sinning, for he firmly believes that forgiveness is a commodity which can be purchased through church and priest, prayer and propitiation, animal sacrifices, rites and ceremonies. He is not indifferent to material things. On the contrary, he has faith that if the gods are propitious, their help linked to his own ingenuity can perform wonders. He is fixed in his views as rigidly as is the materialist. He is wary of any knowledge that may upset his notions and therefore assumes an uneasy antagonism to other religions and philosophies. It is no doubt true that similar notions about god and the celestial hosts have led men and women to renounce the world and to adopt high standards of morality and self-abnegating service. All honour to them for the self-sacrificing work they do. However, they too get fixed to a limited ideology which restricts their outlook. They become indifferent to material things, but get caught up in that which still is less than the eternal. They refuse to lift their eyes to the distant horizon which is limitless. They are not indifferent to names and labels. They may be classed and identified as those who worship the gods and must therefore go to them. They are bound ultimately to get lost in hosts, powers and principalities, and getting absorbed in these, they cut short their journey from the eternal to the eternal.

He who fixes his gaze on the limitless sees in manifestation the play only of soul and spirit. The body with its senses and organs, the brain

with its intellections are but the tools which nature provides to enable the Soul to establish contact with matter in its grosser and denser forms. The man who thus views his life's sojourn on earth modulates his actions and behaviour in accordance. The tools must for ever remain subservient to his will so that he can choose any that he may consider appropriate and find them in good fettle for instant and effective use. The various sheaths and bodies that clothe the soul of man, unless trained and controlled, resemble wild horses that resent being bridled and stampede at the slightest imposition of authority.

Man has his body of flesh and its inner model, within which course the life energy and desires. With these, he enters the human arena to gain experience of earthly conditions and to enter upon a course of training in the skilful handling of these instruments. Can he by some method acquire such expertise as shall enable him by the use of these very instruments to penetrate the outer shell of things and so reach their essence? Can he look beyond the diversified and separative forms to that which constitutes the core and centre of an all-pervasive unity? This is what the soul seeks. This is what the soul desires. Why then is it that large masses of men act like wild horses and rejoice in freedom from all curbs such as the irksome imposition of spur and bridle? The answer is to be found in man's forgetfulness of his mission upon earth. In fact, through the indolence and perversion of ages, man has forgotten his lineage to such an extent as to require an Oracle to remind him of this by the now famous words: "Man, know thyself."

Indifference is an attitude. It is spontaneous, or should be so. For, a laboured indifference merely draws greater attention to the things to be shunned. Set a bottle of liquor before several people and watch their reactions. The senses of sight and smell carry messages on the instant to each organ of the man. In the case of the teetotaller, the organs tell the brain centres that they are not concerned. The reaction being negative, the mind remains placid and is not lashed into activity by seething desires. The bottle is looked upon as any other receptacle for holding liquids. Indifference manifests itself. In the case of the drunkard, the reactions become interesting. The telegraph which emanates from the senses sends out a general message that a liquor bottle has been located through sight and smell. This information reaches to the organ that has stored within itself the memories of previous bouts and the carefree happiness they seem to bring. This creates a concern. The wave of urge mounts and, like any other fever, produces a heat in the organ-

ism. It saturates the mind so much that the latter suddenly becomes one-pointed. The desire, now sufficiently aroused, colours *prana* (the vital energy) that courses through the outer and inner bodies. The atoms of the various sheaths that make up the man start oscillating on the wavelengths which pertain to gross and debasing materiality. The man is lost to the higher influences — at least during his periods of insane cravings, if not longer — and indulging in his desire, drowns his cravings in the oblivion that follows inebriety. Indifference thus becomes a trait of character and shifts according to the changes in the man's inclinations.

When man emplaces himself in the True, his aspirations and longings are those of the Soul. He cares not for the things which the soul does not need. He is thus indifferent to several things which the man of worldly desires craves for and fights over. Possessions which cannot cross with him across the gulf of death have little or no attraction for him. To him, any thing or object which arouses desires for exclusive rights and therefore creates antagonism with other men is useless and even undesirable. Why then should he care for it? The thing may be his today. Tomorrow it may have gone to anybody else. He therefore hungers for such possessions as can belong to the pure soul only and thus be the property of all pure souls equally. But just because he has lost the craving for material things, it does not follow that he uses them not, or that he becomes indifferent to their potentiality for good. He remains active in waking existence, but he touches not the things that harbingers death. He toils and he spins for obtaining that which can neither be filched nor obtained through violence or deceit. Love, charity, courage and the other subjects of his quest are neither his to give nor his to take. They can be his only if he plants their seedlings in the soil of his nature and attends to their growth. He therefore does not crave for the roses that bloom in another's garden. In fact, if he can so contrive, his joy would lie in the direction of the other's enrichment in preference to his own. Since he knows the true value of material things, he takes them in his stride, uses them for the discharge of his duties and leaves them in the same manner as artisans do, who leave their tools when their work is done. He tailors his possessions to the needs of his Soul.

Men are wont to call that person a renouncer who in their eyes leaves untouched the possessions which they themselves crave. They are unable to see behind the renouncing, the indifference, the care, anxiety and urge for things that alone can satisfy the aspirations of soul and

spirit. To the outside world, an austere self-abnegation is something which the man imposes on himself by force. The fact of the matter is that when the soul awakes, this same self-abnegation but portrays the mode of life which becomes natural to the man. However, before the eyes of the man open upon the inner worlds of light, he remains torn between the lower desires and the higher aspirations. At times he is indifferent to the one and he basks in the warmth of a close proximity with the divine. At other times, his indifference is to the behests of soul and spirit, and then like the hog he finds his enjoyment by wallowing in the mire.

When temptations beset the aspirant and he finds that all his pasts calmour for those very things to which the Soul would be indifferent, he has to find some way by which the old desires may be stilled and indifference to things of the Soul eradicated. Here, the old adage "resist without resisting" is the best suited to give relief. To achieve even a modicum of success, the student has first to awaken in himself a constant and consistent awareness that he is Soul. This awareness, by assiduity in devotion, becomes a part of his character and memory. He must so go on working for continuous years and thus arrive at a condition when the memory of himself being Soul springs up spontaneously on the instant that he is beset by worldly considerations.

It then remains for him during times of stress to withdraw within the closet, shut the door, and seek communion with the nameless lord within. In that company and close union he is safe. He does not fight evil. He bypasses it so that it touches him not. The Buddha under the *bodhi* tree sat in serene contemplation, unmoved by and indifferent to the scenes and sounds of temptation marshalled before him by Mara and his furious hosts. He did not use force to drive them away. They spent themselves in the act of temptation.

The higher indifference comes to the man who has learnt to discriminate and to separate in his own life those things which are perishable from those which are imperishable. The *Paramitas*, the virtues transcendental of *The Voice of the Silence*, the imperishable qualities that are set out in the opening verses of the Sixteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, are the characteristic marks of the man in whom the soul has started its cycle of blooming. Revered be they who can recognize soul-action and respect it.

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# WORDS OF LIGHT

## THE POOL OF CONSCIOUSNESS

### 3. IN THE CALM DEPTH

IN the calm depth thou seest the height, though thou canst not attain to its summit.

Not from thyself but from Me shall light come to thee.  
Fasten, therefore, thy gaze on Me, though thou seest Me not.

Meditate on that which showeth Me most clearly, which revealeth the truth of Me most fully.

Thou hast thine eye, and the power of vision in it. I am that which thou seest.

Rest not in images; rest in contemplation.  
Contemplation cometh only by the still pool of prayer.

How dost thou think of Me?  
As Preserver; Giver of all Light; Eternal Truth; Source of all Being.

Look east, look west, thou shalt see Me only. Thou art My votary.  
Meditation? — the opening of the heart.

When all effort ceaseth I will guide thee and bring thee to Myself.  
Thou lookest not upon the sun, but thou lookest upon all things by its light.

Look upon Me in My works.

Seek not to wander through the avenues of thought.  
Dwell rather in the garden of quiet contemplation.

Meditation is but the upwelling of sweetness that cometh from knowledge of the ONE.

By gazing often upon thy Master the eye of thy spirit shall come to rest in Him.

Shalt thou lack water, thou who hast found the fountainhead?

Yield thyself to Me by long dwelling upon truth, and when thou art established in Me by most clear contemplation, lo, thou shalt look upon Me everywhere.

Look into the pool.

What dost thou see there? Reflections.

But how dost thou see them? By the light.

Therefore is the light the ONE REAL.

Thou art ever with Me, or how could'st thou know Me?

Thou hast come forth from Me, not I from thee.

The heart must be ever open or how can the light shine through?

Trust Me; I will liberate thee. Rest thou in Me.

Make thyself glad in Me.

In gladness is the meed of refreshing.

As wine coloureth water, so the knowledge of Me changeth the soul.

Name Me as Lord:

Consider My attributes:

Honour Me as light, since that it is which seemeth to thee best.

Offer Me thyself, pledging thy being to My service,

Then abide thou in stillness, and lo, My word shall waken in thy heart.

Seek Me in prayer, contemplation and stillness.

Seek Me not in action of the mind.

As the leaf falleth into the pool, so enterest thou into My being.

Doth not the earth perform her native tasks daily? Yet ever she awaiteth  
the sun who is her Lord.

Without him she is nothing. Her receiving is her act of devotion.

His warmth is her life, his radiance her power of creation.

Even so is it with thee, who turnest thine eyes ever towards the ONE,  
though thy hands be yet entangled with the many-coloured threads  
of thy *maya*.

As corn springeth up in the darkness, so the knowledge of Me riseth  
in thy heart.

Now knowest thou what meditation is: an entry into the land which  
thou shalt yet possess; a re-making of thy mind according to the  
pattern shown thee in the mount.

(To be continued)

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## ON GIVING ADVICE

MASTER, I mean well, I long to help my fellow men, I give advice which is beneficial. Why do I so often find that I arouse a kind of antagonism in those I long to help?

Friend, what do you mean by advice? Why do you think you have it in you to give it? Have you asked yourself, Will my advice suit the nature of the one I wish to help? Seriously ask yourself these questions, spend time and deep thought on them, and find the true answers. I cannot give you the answers; you must find them for yourself. One's motive is so often hidden from oneself, and doubly so from the searching gaze of another.

But, O Master, I have done this searching and I can find no reason for the arising in others of unpleasant feelings when I try to help them. Please give me your advice.

Friend, for long I have known of this difficulty of yours and have watched and even dropped you some hints. But only now have you *asked* me for my advice on this problem. To give advice when *asked* is one thing; to give it unasked is quite another. The reaction in the first case will be in terms *not* of the advice but of the power of the one advised to see the truth of the advice. At least the person advised will look into the advice and not feel any resentment towards the adviser. Of course to give the right advice is another aspect of this problem. In the case of advice given *unasked*, is not one interfering with the freedom of another? Is not one giving something that is not wanted? Think of the education of the young. Does not the child grow through his mistakes? Does he not learn by trial and error? Only when real danger lies in his path, and likewise in the path of any fellow man, are we justified in offering advice, and in this case it is not so much *advice* which is given but warning of danger.

But the greater difficulty lies in deciding what advice to give, for it must be in terms of the needs of the other, and to know his needs you must know his environment, his trend of thinking, etc., for only then can your help bear fruit. Therefore, are we not told to learn to find out, before helping, just what is the next step which has to be taken by the one in whom we are interested?

Let me give you an example: Someone has a scheme on hand. It has been well thought out, advice from certain people has been sought and

given. Can you not see how irritating it is for that person to be told, "You had better do this, and that, and that," by one who has not cared to find out what has already been done? It is by listening and waiting that a person becomes a true helper. When you have listened well and have found what is needed, you will be in a position to give advice.

Is it then more necessary to listen than to speak, O Master?

Indeed, my Friend, it is. Speech is the first thing we have to learn to control, for when we speak we cannot hear anything but the sound of our own voice. And that breeds, very subtly, conceit. Always ask yourself, when you meet anyone and talk with him, "Do I know more than he does, or can he teach me something?" Watch your inner reaction to this. It will be a salutary lesson for all of us.

What does it mean to listen? One may well know a thing as it shows in his own environment, but, if he listens, he will see it in another environment. And thereby he will learn that environment often makes it appear in a different light. Habits, customs, manners, etc., vary from place to place and from time to time, and what is right in one place and at one time and for one person may not be so at another place or time or for another person.

Now to turn to the one who is being advised. Who likes, today, to be told, "You should do this and that"? By what right does one say it to another? If one says, "If you do this or do not do that, such-and-such will happen," is one sure? The natural reaction of most people to this kind of advice is to disregard it as it does not suit their own environment of thought on the subject, and also to feel resentment at someone encroaching on their prerogative of free action! Added to which you have stopped their flow of words to you, and they, perhaps, do not like to *listen* any more than you do!

"Listen to the song of life. . . . Learn from it the lesson of harmony." Therefore, first listen and then let your words be harmonious. For example, instead of "You should do this," or, "Have you done that?" why not say, "Of course you must already have done this, or that"? In that way you do not destroy the confidence of the other but you make him part of your own thought.

Master, I begin to see there is more to speech and to listening and to the wish to help than I dreamt of! But if I do as you say, shall I not become unsocial, selfish, too inward-turned?

No, my Friend. You will become a real friend to all, for they will know you will listen to their worries and not interfere. They will begin to know that they can pour out their troubles to you and you will listen, weigh and give the result of your experience. They will ask you for help. But do not forget it is your work to find out just what is their next step. A child needs a simple answer to a problem, not the sort of answer you would give a grown-up. By this I mean that if a child asks what the moon is, it must be answered in terms of its present knowledge and not in terms of metaphysics! The great Masters have given out the knowledge that humanity today is capable of using.

Friend, do you know why you always wish to help? Why you are anxious to give advice on things which you know?

Master, I think I have answered my question. How subtle pride and conceit are! How subtle is the wish to shine! How separative indeed is the feeling that urges us to give advice to another! How unifying is the humble attitude of listening, the realization that one has to think well before knowing the right advice to give! How wonderful the heart feeling that arises when we make the effort to blend ourselves with another's woes!

Union, not separation; feeling ourself one with others, not the superior attitude of knowledge possessed — these things help the growth of true sympathy. To abnegate one's ideas while trying to understand another's, while the heart is centred on true helping, breeds in the end "Compassion absolute." It is also true impersonality. Would that we all could arrive at that!

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Good ends can be achieved only by the employment of appropriate means. The end cannot justify the means. The means employed determine the nature of the ends produced. Men aspire to do good and yet so frequently achieve evil, because their means are bad. It is in the light of our conceptions of right and wrong that we can make real progress in private, political and economic life.

—ALDOUS HUXLEY

# LETTERS TO A LODGE

## III

[Reprinted from *The Irish Theosophist* for January 1895.  
—EDS.]

COMRADES:

You ask me for a fuller interpretation of the idea that the White Lodge acts on the expanding force, and the Dark on the contractive. I understand this as follows:

The spiritual forces, following the action of the Great Breath, flow outwards and downwards periodically, and periodically withdraw into their own centre. This is known as the “descent and reascent of the gods.” It is for men to lift themselves in aspiration towards the descending gods. When the spiritual forces are in full play of activity they are to be felt on *all* planes, even on the physical and most objective, where they are not indeed always sensed by men who may yet act with them from some interior perception not cognized by the brain-mind. Of course you will see that this is again quite different from the action of those amongst mankind who do cognize the spiritual activity, in any degree whatever, and who apprehend the meaning of right action at such periods.

Following the method of that Planetary Spirit who imparts the vibration of truth for the Manvantara, the White Lodge acts with the expanding force, and, like it, and with it, withdraws into its own plane and centre, to work no more actively (externally) when the contractive force is on. On the spiritual plane there is always activity so long as the Great Breath is in manifestation at all. Roughly speaking, at such times the Adept of the White Ray, the white sexless Unity, acts in *Samadhi*, etc., only. You will see that when the spiritual expansion is on in great force all planes of nature feel it, according to the higher or lower evolution of the beings of that plane. But when the spiritual currents withdraw, each plane sets up its own action and reaction in the substance of that plane.

The dark powers, on the contrary, act with the contracting force. That is to say, they act with and increase the action and reaction especial to each plane; such planes are the physical and lower astral.

Master has said: “It is impossible to worship both sides of nature at once.” The word “worship” should be deeply underscored. For by “worship” is meant exclusive devotion to both Eros, the One Ray, the

expansive compassion, and to the differentiated action and reaction of *Jiva-prana* especial to physical nature. Some great occultists have erred in this respect. As take the example of Paracelsus. Such men have thought that they could work on the higher manasic and other planes at favourable cyclic moments, and could then act in the body in separative physical and other extremes, supposing that by this they were copying the example shown by the manifested duality. They failed to discern Karma as a universal law, and to learn that Reaction really means that the spiritual forces are withdrawn to their own plane, to their own centre, and that the action then observed by men in nature is an action of a differentiation of force common to nature alone. Hence these men failed to reach the great truths.

When the spiritual forces expand from within outward, all nature thrills responsive; even the hierarchies of lower powers can only assert themselves on those among mankind already predisposed to their influence. But the word *reaction* is one which covers, in fact, that action referred to as coming from the unprogressed Planetaries, with all their hierarchies down even to the unprogressed elementals, with tendency to limitation, to fix and arrest thought-moulds, as to fix and arrest the worlds hanging suspended in minor *pralaya*.

Heed now the danger of this spiritual current to those amongst you whose thought-forms, whether of creed or plan, or what not else, are fixed. Were such a current forced into a sphere largely insensible, so far as mind may reach, to noetic action, the result would only be that these erroneous ideas of rigid mould would more actively vibrate, would more vividly impress the brain-mind. Herein lies the danger of forcing the evolution of a man. Even when Karma permits, this process is one dangerous to the co-ordination of the various bodies; and danger, great and grave danger, is incurred either to the physical body or in the reaction set up in the mind itself.

In the case of some the danger is in large part that of the physical body. They may feel the reaction in the mind also; but forewarned is forearmed, and if they have been taught — and in some measure have grasped the teaching — to observe this reaction in the brain-mind as the action of the dark quality in nature (*tamo-guna*), to check pictures, even thoughts, and not to regard this effect of reaction on the lower mind as an expression of the real self, they have lessened little by little and in part the tendency to be carried away by it.

In other cases the danger lies less in the physical than in the brain-

mind, which may feel the reaction of which I speak, in so far as there may be these mental pictures of rigid mould, which require time ere they can be dissolved in that Light which fluxes all things, and which works to more rapid purpose as men increase its power by looking to it alone. The dark powers can make fierce assaults in ways not generally understood, but which are felt in the form of terrible mental reaction. That reaction awakens the pictures of erroneous ideas to fresh life, and casts their vivid images anew upon the brain; bewilderment results. If at these times we set all down to the reaction common to nature, and induced by the force of our aspirations, avoiding meanwhile our own fixed mental preconceptions, we soon find that a time comes in which the Readjustor does his great work. This Readjustor may be the Higher Self, its messengers, or Karmic circumstance, or a Master, and even our own inner man: in all these cases it is the Self.

On this plane the dark powers rely upon their ability to create a *Maya*. If they see that we are not to be trapped in the prominent lines of work, they lay their hands where our currents exist but in some very small matter. Let me suppose a case, and one common enough. X may have indulged in some criticism of another, small, and coupled with sincere and kind thought up to his lights. The dark powers could seize upon these pictures (vivified already by sound and its objectivizing power), could dress them up with more subtle matter, could enlarge them, enliven them with elementals and also could assume X's image, making all appear very large and bitter to the brain, whose nervous matter they would then proceed to impress with these images more than half their own creation. The object is to make it appear that all these things came from X, and the impression of other minds and repetition by them causes the evil to grow and spread. How are we to avoid this? We should refrain from all criticisms, especially in times of disturbance, when the etheric tension is great, and when all our spheres are tense as harp strings which feel every stir of the air. We must not manage, precipitate, nor force. We may work on and leave results to the Law and its wiser servants. Let us each assume that the others do not think harshly nor critically of us, but put it all against the dark powers of lower Nature. We may and must defend others, when necessary, but let us do so upon a basis of principle and fraternity of *the whole*. By gentleness, detachment, strict attention to duty, and retiring now and then to the quiet place, bring up good currents and keep back all the evil ones. There must be silence in heaven for a time, or the

dark ones rejoice to so easily get good, malleable images for annoying us. Remember it is the little things this work is done through, for they are not noticed and their effects are not traced to them, while larger things draw the eyes and minds of all, and hence are not good "blinds."

Self-abnegation and charity may yet save the day for that nucleus of the Light, that child of the cycle and of our hope, whom we have created to give forth the great blessing of the spiritual identity of all being, and will project the T.S. into the next century as a living wedge to cleave the darkness of the darkest age. Watch then and stand, but not as men who stand in a desperate cause. Stand as those stand in whose hearts the living Light has awakened, has burned and has borne witness to the truth. Stand calmly, stand serenely; bear witness yourselves to that Compassion which is that Light itself. Give heart to those feeble ones amongst you whom time and great Karma may well shake, by a fraternal quiet support which is beyond all loud asseveration, which needs no defence of self, but which waits upon the Hope of the ages, the Spiritual Light "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" if that man will.

Beware of brain pictures which partake of the chains and delusions of matter. Their oscillations in the form of brain-mind action and reaction we may largely avoid. When you are not sure, stand still. Turn the peaceful heart away from all sharp clamour and await the hour of right action, resting meanwhile on the duties of the moment. Thus shall we baffle those hierarchies which have a place in the duality of manifestation, upon which the great White Lodge cannot expend those high energies of which it is the guardian and evolver, since those powers must disappear with nature when the Great Breath shall be manifest alone. But it is *our* part to wage that war, since we have given them within our spheres a home, dwelling places and a power. Ours to evolve every atom, to drive the dark dwellers from their homes dissolved by the fluid mind which yields readily to the spiritual influx, and to the changes it brings in the akasic substance. Masters have long since left that task — once their task, too — behind.

Neither should we judge those who have interpreted events, bewilderment, suffering, according to their karmic tendency. Enfold them also in the divine Compassion. All we have to do is to work and to wait in silence of the lips and of the brain. If we succeed in this, ours will be the great reward of hearing more clearly from that Light within our-

selves which will guide us to action when the right moment for that action shall have arrived.

Do you not now see that power is only attainable by man on condition of his being able to work with either one pole of force or the other — with spirit which finds manifested fruition only in going forth, and not in withdrawal, or with nature which fructifies only in so far as she is able to contract, indraw and to retain some portion of that ever-acting spirit? Man, having power to choose, makes the first right steps when he acts only through the heart-perceptions of fraternity, resignation, patience, courage, altruism, all evolved by the high magic of the great name of Humanity; all strengthened and broadened when attained and used for love of that race which shall be the temple of the Spirit if it will, and by the help of those amongst us who have the ideal of service with and for the Elder Servitors. Otherwise you strengthen the intellect only; intellect the perceiver of form and formulated ideas; intellect whose proper service is to verify in Nature the *facts* of the continuity of spiritual laws, as intuition holds the office of verifying those laws with the Buddhi eye when Nature sleeps in man. Thus in every act in life you have a choice; each tells for or against spiritual evolution. Each choice is a step: the aggregate of these steps impels you to or from right choice in all the crises of great tests when the karmic hour strikes. You should use all the knowledge given to you to interpret the action and reaction of life about you. Thus only can you have a real and living compassion, thus only can you draw nearer to that ever-living Spirit contained by no moulds but container itself of the whole. Faithful to this trust you shall be able to understand the perplexities of events, letting action and reaction have place in you, the body active, the mind tranquil. Interpreters, without being judges in the least, you shall stand firm on ground of your own, amidst the tide of the world, able to remain yourselves inactive until the inner voice shall indicate the presence of the descending gods. Then listen greatly, will greatly, and obey. This done, the blessing of the great White Lodge shall indeed be yours, won by you in that service in which they won the right to bestow it.

—JASPER NIEMAND

(*To be continued*)

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## THE ART OF SACRIFICE

SACRIFICE as ordinarily understood is a kind of offering or propitiation to god or gods, to certain powers or elementals, on special occasions, in order to obtain some benefit or fulfil some cherished desire, and as such it is divorced from the daily duties and hourly affairs of life.

True sacrifice is an inner attitude of mind and heart based on real understanding of the unity and harmony of the one divine life and law. It is the giving of oneself in loving service to all, on any and all planes, without any selfish motive. Such acts of service become sacrificial acts.

Throughout Nature we see expressions of sacrifice, which is related to the law of interdependence operating in all her kingdoms. They provide us with nourishment; fresh air and water keep us alive; without light and sunshine everything would perish. What sacrificial actions do human beings perform to enrich Nature? It is daily robbed in all its departments. Is it not our duty to help the forward progress of various kinds of lives, which we use all the time, by impressing them with pure thoughts and noble feelings? "Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance." Nature is the material ally of man, who has to become a co-worker with her, by understanding her laws.

The great teachers have sacrificed themselves for the sake of mankind. Sri Krishna instructs Arjuna in the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bharata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness." In the Eighth Discourse he speaks of himself as the great sacrifice, *Adhiyajna*.

The great teachers of the world have indeed made the supreme sacrifice of renouncing the peace and bliss of *Nirvana*, their well-earned rest, to take birth in human bodies for the spiritual welfare of the human race. Time and again they have pointed to the way of life and love, of truth and wisdom, but the frailty of human nature soon makes men forget all about it. Cyclically the messengers appear on the scene to revive the Message, and in *The Voice of the Silence* the image is given of the Guardian Wall formed by them to protect mankind from further and far greater misery and sorrow. But for their compassion and

sacrifice, the world would be in greater darkness and gloom than it is today.

On the metaphysical plane, it is the eternal thought in the eternal mind that brings about differentiation, so that the one becomes the many — unity in diversity. In the germ of the universal mind arises the pure desire for the progressive evolution of different lives on different planes, and at the appointed hour the rest and the repose of all beings ends, and there begins the activity of a new period of evolution, leading to further progress. At the midway point of evolution, the solar gods, the great divine intelligences, sacrificed themselves to incarnate in the mindless incipient men, to give them the spark of the higher Manas. In every atom of life there is intelligence of a kind, but man alone has the higher consciousness which was awakened in him by the sacrifice of these great gods.

Hence, tradition shows the celestial *Yogis* offering themselves as voluntary victims in order to redeem Humanity — created god-like and perfect at first — and to endow him with human affections and aspirations. To do this they had to give up their natural status and, descending on our globe, take up their abode on it for the whole cycle of the Mahayuga, thus exchanging their impersonal individualities for individual personalities — the bliss of sidereal existence for the curse of terrestrial life. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 246)

From their original pure and high state, human beings became with every cycle more selfish, more materialized, and today they show forth animal tendencies in a measure which is abnormal at this stage of our evolution. It is only the recognition of the superior mind in us and the control of the lower mind and the personal nature — a daily sacrifice of the lower at the altar of the higher Self — that will enable man to be self-redeemed and to act on the basis of his higher nature.

Lord Krishna instructs Arjuna not to abandon three kinds of acts — those of *dana*-charity, *yajna*-sacrifice, and *tapas*-mortification. They have to be considered as the daily duties of life, and not be kept aside for special occasions. This attitude will make any and every action a sacramental one, dedicated to the highest in us and in all. As Sri Krishna puts it:

I accept and enjoy the offerings of the humble soul who in his worship with a pure heart offereth a leaf, a flower, or fruit, or water unto me. Whatever thou doest, O son of Kunti, whatever thou

eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever mortification thou performest, commit each unto me.

We are not asked to offer something we cannot afford, something great and valuable; all that is indispensable for true sacrifice is a pure heart, which augments the value of whatever is offered.

There are so many wrong types of sacrifice. Some offer animal sacrifices in the false belief that this will wipe away their sins. Others torture their bodies and disfigure themselves. Still others run away from their homes, neglect their own duties and live in seclusion in forests or on mountain tops. "Some sacrifice the up-breathing in the down-breathing and the down-breathing in the up-breathing, by blocking up the channels of inspiration and expiration," says the *Gita*. Such sacrifices produce their own effects on the physical and psychic planes, but the sacrifice through spiritual knowledge is superior to all others. This is not understood correctly and therefore there are so many misconceptions about sacrifice.

In *The Key to Theosophy*, in the very important section "What Is Practical Theosophy?" there is a sub-section entitled "On Self-Sacrifice," which, H.P.B. says, is "giving to others *more* than to oneself"; but she further states: "Self-sacrifice has to be performed with discrimination." Hence the need for reflecting before acting, before taking a step in one or another direction. "A man has no right to starve himself *to death* that another man may have food, unless the life of that man is obviously more useful to the many than is his own life."

Once the great law of Karma is understood to some extent at least, the ways and means to sacrifice will suggest themselves naturally, and the higher aspects of sacrifice will manifest themselves. We get daily inspiration from the lives and teachings of all the great teachers down the ages, but there are also examples of true sacrifice among the common people. There was Florence Nightingale, the Lady of the Lamp, who went to Crimea to nurse the soldiers who were dying without help. There was St. Francis of Assisi, the great lover of animals and a great humanitarian. H.P.B. gives the illustration of the young Belgian, Father Damien, who volunteered to go to Molokai to help the lepers there, to give them light and comfort and solace. He lived with them for 18 years, and succumbed to the disease in the end. Such examples can be multiplied. All are reflections of the "great sacrifice," the archetypal sacrifice, mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine*. We are told about the

“Wondrous Being” descended from a “high region” in the early part of the Third Race:

He is . . . the “Nameless One” who has so many names, and yet whose names and whose very nature are unknown. He is *the* “Initiator,” called the “GREAT SACRIFICE.” For, sitting at the threshold of LIGHT, he looks into it from within the circle of Darkness, which he will not cross; nor will he quit his post till the last day of this life-cycle. Why does the solitary Watcher remain at his self-chosen post? Why does he sit by the fountain of primeval Wisdom, of which he drinks no longer, as he has naught to learn which he does not know — aye, neither on this Earth, nor in its heaven? Because the lonely sore-footed pilgrims on their way back to their *home* are never sure to the last moment of not losing their way in this limitless desert of illusion and matter called Earth-Life. Because he would fain show the way to that region of freedom and light, from which he is a voluntary exile himself, to every prisoner who has succeeded in liberating himself from the bonds of flesh and illusion. Because, in short, he has sacrificed himself for the sake of mankind, though but a few Elect may profit by the GREAT SACRIFICE. (I. 208)

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IN such an age as this, the ritualistic sacrifice of a different age which has indeed a magical effect becomes a sacrifice to be performed by each man in his own nature upon the altar of his own heart. And especially is this so with theosophists of sincerity and aspiration. Being born as we are in these days, among families with but small heritage in the way of descent from unsullied ancestors, we are without the advantage of great natural spiritual leanings, and without certain peculiar powers and tendencies that belong to another cycle. But the very force and rapidity of the age we live in give us the power to do more now in fewer incarnations. Let us then recognize this, and learn what is our duty and do it.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Every day in India some 7,000,000 attend the cinema and out of these only 200,000 see foreign films — that is, a mere 2.85%. But they are the educated and 75% of them are in the impressionable years of youth. Do these films, imported mainly from the U.S.A., corrupt their minds? The question is pertinent because of the Government's decision not to renew the licence for the import of American films into India.

In *The Illustrated Weekly of India* for March 19, Jimi Hafizji writes on the effects of foreign films on the Indian youth. While the official clampdown has been motivated by other reasons, it is being increasingly felt in many quarters that these films are unleashing an unhealthy influence. More and more sex-and-violence-oriented films have found their way to cinema houses in India and this has given rise to a vital moral question which can no longer be ignored while deciding the future pattern of film imports. Jimi Hafizji's report describes the corrupting influence:

The Indian youth is exposed to more morally subversive forces in these motion pictures than in any other mass communication network. Western films often accentuate crass materialism that neglects all other values, and provide escapism that ultimately prevents youth from grasping the meaning of life. Today foreign actors and actresses are frequently heard mouthing profanities and four-letter words that were once strictly reserved for hard-core pornography. But, above all, sex and violence have been singled out as predominant elements that tend to undermine the morals of the younger generation.

The image of the permissive society is prominently reflected in the increasing promiscuity and frankness of its motion pictures: 9 out of 10 foreign films released these days are certified for "adult" exhibition. Yet teenagers throng cinema halls....

Western films run the entire gamut of erotic experiences, leaving nothing untouched in the sexual spectrum from extra-marital relations, rape, lesbianism, homosexuality and incest to group sex, wife-swapping, pre-marital sex and perverted sex crimes. Any film with a sexual slant is a box-office sellout....

Brutality in Western cinema, no less than obscenity, is contributing markedly to the corruption of the young. The variety of crime and cruelty which most "Westerns" and spy thrillers depict in detail is enormous. Shooting, stabbing, sado-masochistic killing, judo, karate and simply any form of bloodshed is made

to look natural and manly....

More young Indians are visiting the cinema today than they ever did in the past. And the increasing popularity of Western films is being remarkably accompanied by growing juvenile delinquency in the country. Teenage drinking, gambling, Eve-teasing, illicit mating and a host of similar vices have been largely imbibed from today's blatantly lurid movies from the West. The current spate of immorality in the country is appalling. Among the 20 million victims in India, the incidence of venereal disease is highest in the 15-25 age group. Bombay has even acquired the dubious distinction of being one of the world's ten worst-affected cities!

On an average, 7,000 juvenile delinquents are rounded up every year in India.

Film distributors and exhibitors defend their position by saying that they give the audience what it wants. When occasionally a clean and decent film has been released it has come to financial grief while third-rate spy thrillers are "minting millions."

Opinions vary and while some agree that Western films with their glamorous presentation of lawlessness and lewdness are eroding the morals of young people, others dismiss this view as alarmist. The article cites many views, of high-school and college students, professors and others, but whatever the view, by March 31 the American distributors will have imported their last few films under the old agreement. With fewer U.S.-distributed Western films in the future, it remains to be seen whether Indian youth will become less corruptible.

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As an old French proverb has it, "One-half of Paris dies from dining, the other half from supping." Improper eating and drinking are among the principal causes of disease and death in society. Some scientists are of the opinion that eating one-third less might enable us to live longer. Dr. Roy L. Walford of the UCLA School of Medicine holds that a cut in the normal food intake can not only give a person longer life, but also make him less susceptible to cancer. (*Today's Health*, December 1971)

Dr. Walford recommends that one should start when one is very young. The effect is less pronounced when one starts in maturity. "We overfeed children," he says, especially with so-called "energy foods," including ice cream, chocolate and sugary breakfast cereals. A nutrition-

wise person could live on one-third and maybe even one-half less than the average American diet, Dr. Walford concludes, provided he didn't skimp on vitamins, minerals and protein.

While the physical and psychic abuses of modern life are much to blame, there is a further reason for the general ill health of the human race, tracing back to ages far earlier than the present historical period. *The Secret Doctrine* explains that during the Atlantean or Fourth Race, human beings sinned against Nature "by turning the holy mystery of procreation into animal gratification."

Hence the law of Karma "bruised the *heel*" of the Atlantean race, by gradually changing physiologically, morally, physically, and mentally, the whole nature of the Fourth Race of mankind, until, from the healthy King of animal creation of the Third Race, man became in the Fifth, our race, a helpless, scrofulous being, and has now become the wealthiest heir on the globe to constitutional and hereditary diseases, the most consciously and intelligently bestial of all animals! (II. 411)

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According to an AP dispatch from Washington printed in *The Hindu* for February 20, a U.S. Health Department report has branded alcohol as America's most-abused drug. The report states that alcoholism "is one of the most tragic and decapacitating and costly illnesses which afflict the nation today. Directly or indirectly, alcohol-related problems affect the lives of tens of millions of our men, women and children." It is estimated that about 9.6 million Americans are alcoholics or alcohol abusers, out of the 95 million who consume the liquor.

The 121-page report links drinking to one-third of homicides, and one-half of all traffic deaths — 28,000 in a recent year. The ratio of highway fatalities is even higher among youths aged 16 to 24. Alcoholism will cut 10 to 12 years of an addict's life, while draining annually the economy of \$10,000 millions on account of man-hours lost, \$2,000 millions in terms of health and welfare services, and \$3,000 millions in property damage, medical expenses and other costs.

What of the psychic effects of alcohol which are even more serious than the physical? Theosophy asserts that alcohol is most prejudicial to the moral and spiritual growth of man, "for alcohol in all its forms has a direct, marked, and very deleterious influence on man's psychic condition. Wine and spirit drinking is only less destructive to the development of the inner powers, than the habitual use of hashish,

opium, and similar drugs. (*The Key to Theosophy*, Indian ed., pp. 259-60)

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While our civilization boasts of advance in some directions, there is clear evidence of its opposite in others. One instance is the unlimited cruelty man inflicts on animals and the apathy he shows to their suffering. Ambika Sethi, in her article "Born Free..." (*Times Weekly*, March 19), deplors that while on the one hand we in India talk so much of *ahimsa*, we do not worry in the least about being cruel to animals:

Every day a number of animals die in crowded cities; they suffer cruelty on roads where they are kicked, stoned or maimed or even shoved down gutters. While numerous others awaken to yet another torturous day in captivity as they are herded together to be beheaded. So much thoughtless cruelty still prevails. Children get a vicarious pleasure out of stamping, maiming and stoning dogs, cats and cows. So many birds are shot at with air guns just for fun. And yet we turn a blind eye to all this.

Pigs were the worst treated animals. Red hot spits were run through their bodies so that the heat would soften the flesh. Dishes for emperors were made from the tongues of hundreds of singing birds. . . .

We have progressed a lot since the Middle Ages and consider ourselves to be more civilized than our forefathers. But are we really civilized?

You cannot ply a taxi with more than four people but when you overload a hack victoria, with 10-12 people, when only three are permitted, not a finger is lifted at you. Occasionally you are fined a rupee or two, but that hardly deters owners. This is because they earn much more by overloading their gharries. More than 90 per cent of the gharry horses in Bombay are reported to be crippled because of overloading or defective shoeing. . . . When old and of no use they are usually abandoned to die a slow, painful death.

In India the cow is worshipped, yet the very people who worship it, thoughtlessly inflict cruelty on it. . . .

Thousands of mutilated bodies are left to die writhing in pain — they are the frogs, minus their hind legs which have been mercilessly cut off or torn apart from their bodies. These are sent abroad and are an expensive delicacy. According to the

SPCA report, in the last six months more than one million kilograms of frogs' legs have been exported.

Smaller animals and reptiles like squirrels, lizards and even cats and rats are skinned alive for the manufacture of vanity articles like ladies' handbags, shoes, caps and shawls....

Most zoos, especially in cities like Bombay, are in a sorry plight. A few animals held captive in cages, living in an absolutely alien habitation and sulking away, can hardly be a source of delight. Such rigid confinement is nothing short of cruelty.... The improvement of conditions in zoos is urgently needed.

The laws framed to prevent or minimize the cruelties meted out to animals have many loopholes and man's viciousness continues unabated. The SPCA authorities feel that the apathetic attitude of people towards this problem is shocking. Even pet owners often ill-treat their pets.

Misplaced loyalty is nothing short of cruelty. Some time back a beauty parlour for dogs was set up in Madras, called the Pink Parlour. Such moves are ridiculous. It would be much better to set up an abandoned animals' home instead. Much more can be done by private welfare bodies, not the least of which is improving the lot of animals set aside for torture and destruction in the name of scientific research.

Cruelty is always bad, under whatever attempted justification, and in every case among the injured is the perpetrator himself of the cruel act. We are selfish and unjust right through, and therefore must in the nature of things be cruel. How can this be changed? *Lucifer* for December 1890 had the following suggestion:

Educate! Educate!! The children are our salvation. Just as the student of occult nature can imbue the new atoms of his body, which momentarily replace the old ones, with less vicious tendencies and thus regenerate himself by moral Alchemy and attain the "Elixir of Life," so can a nation work its own regeneration by educating the new atoms of its national body, its children. ... Hate breeds hate; unfeelingness and animalism breed their like unceasingly, and the finer sentiments and intuitions are crushed out of all our children and replaced with a Spartan cruelty in which they ignorantly glory.... "The child is father to the man," and the early habits of thought and feeling continue throughout life. Oh the pity of it! When will the *mind* of the nation, its parents, guardians and preceptors, be strong enough to influence its *matter*, when?

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Writing on "Our Fate in the Stars" in *The Illustrated London News* (Christmas Number, 1971), Ian Lyon quotes the following from *New Scientist*, April 25, 1968:

Dr. Podshibyakin reported that research . . . had found a relation between road accidents and solar activity. Their statistics showed that the day after the eruption of a solar flare road accidents increased, sometimes by as much as four times above the average. . . . When a solar flare occurs, an immense amount of ultra-violet radiation is produced. This increases the ionization of the terrestrial atmosphere to such an extent that during that period shortwave communication on earth is likely to be disrupted. Whether solar flares may also have some effect on the human metabolism is an interesting idea.

There is enough evidence for the view that movements of the planets have a relationship to events on earth. Not long ago, the problem of the magnetic storms which cause radio disturbance was looked into and it was found that disturbance-free fields were formed when planets were in  $60^\circ$  and  $120^\circ$  angles to the Sun. Most magnetic storms occur when two or more planets are in conjunction or  $180^\circ$  or  $90^\circ$  to the Sun.

While happenings outside our earth are related to events on this planet, can it be said that the relations between planets and people's lives are of the quality modern astrology claims? Can our lives be chopped up and our characters assessed in the arbitrary way astrologers do? The astrologer who attributes everything to the influence of the stars, as if a man were born with a stereotyped destiny and no free will or power to choose, is just as absurd as the materialist who blindly labels anything and everything astrological as so much "trash." Theosophical teachings are clear on the subject. Referring to "the hidden influences which are affecting us day by day, and even minute by minute, H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 275):

. . . the ancients, whose "ignorance" is assumed . . . fully realized the fact that the reciprocal relations between the planetary bodies are as perfect as those between the corpuscles of the blood, which float in a common fluid; and that each one is affected by the combined influences of all the rest, as each in its turn affects each of the others. As the planets differ in size, distance, and activity, so differ in intensity their impulses upon the ether or astral light, and the magnetic and other subtile forces radiated by them in certain aspects of the heavens.

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