

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

VOL. 44, No. 6

17th April 1974

THE TEMPLE OF THEOSOPHY AND WHITE LOTUS DAY

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, April 1957.
—Eds.]

Those who wish to succeed in theosophy, abstract or practical, should remember that want of union is the first condition of failure. But let ten determined theosophists unite themselves; let them work together, each according to his own way, in one or another branch of universal science, but let each one be in sympathy with his brother; let this be done, and we can answer for it that each member would make greater progress in the sacred science in one year than could be made in ten years by himself. In theosophy what is needed is emulation and not rivalry.—H.P.B.

ALL sincere Theosophists will prepare themselves in the coming 21 days to celebrate, with solemnity born of faith and joy born of devotion, the anniversary of the passing of their guide, philosopher and friend, H. P. Blavatsky.

Among all who call themselves theosophists, there are students who use the knowledge obtained in service; there are nominal theosophists who are genuine well-wishers of the Movement; and there are those whom H.P.B. called the drones of Theosophy. All without exception respect the inaugurator of the Theosophical Movement. But there are those among the students whose intuition makes them look upon H.P.B. as their instructor and their Guru.

The heart of each, to whatever class he belongs by nature, proclaims his soul-status — the colour of his mental caste, the tone of his character, the number of his personality.

Those whose intuitions are not touched by the mental lucubrations of others value H.P.B.'s writings as instructions given not for debate but for application. Such are bound to feel the Power of the Guru enshrined in those instructions. Such have a duty to the drones — show compassion to them; also to the well-wishers — show friendliness to them; also to those who volunteer to spread knowledge — render help to them. Among those few for whom H.P.B. has become a Guru there is the kinship and companionship of co-disciples. For them the record runs:

The disciples (Lanoos) of the law of the Heart of Diamant (magic) will help each other in their lessons. The grammarian will be at the service of him who looks for the soul of the metals.

If the companions treading the path of discipleship, *i.e.*, the path of tests and trials, move in amity, faith and devotion they will all pass their tests and overcome their trials. Chelas learning the Law of the Heart will not succeed if others are not helped to succeed. The Law tries the strength of the marching feet, the agility of the working hands, the beating of the loving heart, the purity of the concentrated head. Above all the Law of the Heart Doctrine will try our Love and test our lust; try our Patience and test our anger; try our Generosity and test our greed. We need not be afraid of our infirmities; all students of Theosophy are bound to be sick now and again. But "that sick man is not to be pitied, who hath his cure in his sleeve"!

Out of failures must come the power of repentance; out of successes the power of service. Thus only can every failure be turned into a success, and every success into Soul-Power.

All this was taught by H.P.B., the Guru. She hoped that her pupils would complete the building of the Temple of Theosophy for which she not only laid the foundations, but also, being a great architect, offered the blueprint. She said that the Temple should have four pillars — Sincerity, Will, Unselfishness and Moral Power. She once wrote:

Every pledge or promise unless built upon four pillars — absolute sincerity, unflinching determination, unselfishness of purpose, and *moral power*, which makes the fourth support and equipoises the three other pillars — is an insecure building. The pledges of those who are sure of the strength of the fourth alone are recorded.

Moral Power is declared indispensable in the living of the soul-life and in serving all souls.

H.P.B. wants us to be sure of our Moral Power; without it our sincerity can mislead us, our strong will can become sheer obstinacy and our unselfishness a cloak for exploiting others. Moral Power is Spiritual Stamina. With the aid of the first three, but neglecting the fourth, a probationer may easily develop a demoniac temperament. Moral Power strengthens our sincerity and directs it aright, steadies our will so that it flows harmlessly and harmoniously, purifies and elevates our motive and method alike. Moral Power is lust-less, wrath-less, greed-less.

No probationer is free from the motions of lust and anger and avarice. Who but a blind egotist could fancy himself free from all demoniac tendencies? But every probationer, if humble, will learn to fight the triple-faced Devil who tempts us all in a myriad ways.

If we aspire to serve all, above all to serve the Holy Ones who serve all, then we, each one of us, must acquire piety of body and of mind. Without this piety we will succumb to the unholy forces of the dark side of Nature. Therefore we must never forget to observe the Hour of Repentance. It will prepare us to answer the call of H.P.B., and let us take this as our Message for this year's White Lotus Day:

Bring a little peace into the world, in the hearts of those who suffer, by raising for them a corner of the veil which hides the divine truth. Let those who are strongest show the road to those who are weaker, and help them to climb the steep hill of life; and let them teach these to fix their eyes on the Beacon which shines on the horizon like a new star of Bethlehem beyond the mysterious and unknown sea of the Theosophical Sciences — and let the disinherited ones of life recover hope.

THE PROBLEM of life is *man*. MAGIC, or rather Wisdom, is the evolved knowledge of the potencies of man's interior being; which forces are Divine emanations, as intuition is the perception of their origin, and initiation our induction into that knowledge. . . . We begin with instinct; the end is OMNISCIENCE.

—ALEXANDER WILDER

THE ACT OF LEARNING

IF, as Sri Krishna says, knowledge springs up spontaneously within oneself in the progress of time, given of course the necessary prerequisites, why is it necessary to have books and teachers, *gurukuls* and *ashrams*, monasteries and brotherhoods for mystic study? Why even pore over books and diagrams, glyphs and symbols? The answer is that right study helps in the process of acquiring the very prerequisites that would open the flood gates of wisdom. These include devotion, steadfastness and mental discipline. Without the help that study alone can give, there can be no systematic questioning, no strong search, no planned approach, nor yet the easy familiarity with the abstract such as is necessary for enlightened reasoning and thought.

The living of the higher life demands that we understand the why of many a circumstance, the wherefore of many a calamity. The secret of the human heart in general has to be fathomed lest we fail to understand the mystery of our own heart. Study alone can help in the process — a study, moreover, which can make the man learn. Each man knows through personal experience that the good which he desires to do, he oftentimes fails to do. Worse still, he finds to his horror and shame that he indulges in the very evil that his better nature asks him to avoid. This force of a lure that weans the man away from paths of goodness and duty has to be known and analysed and its seats of power identified. This done, the student has to arouse in himself that force which in all circumstances will rise superior to any power which the cohorts of evil can muster. No light tasks these, nor can the man expect to complete them in the span of one short incarnation. The knowledge garnered through learning in this life has to be so elevated that it can be carried forward into the next life, and this is not possible if it is mixed with the learning that pertains to the mortal aspects of man and nature. All knowledge that is acquired through selfish intent is inimical to spiritual progress and must in time perish, even though it have its cycles of survival. The study of metaphysics and the search for that particular knowledge for which the incarnation was planned, have both to be entered upon in all earnestness. But this effort may be frustrated, its energies diverted by the mass of false and misleading knowledge that is being constantly poured out from press and pulpit, college and university.

It is a truism that when the mind is placed on cosmic ultimates

and when pure metaphysics engages the mind of man, all earthly desires get stilled and even the ambition to secure knowledge for one's own self is lost. It is during such moments of unalloyed concentration that a conjunction takes place between the Manas of man and the ubiquitous Buddhi. It is then that knowledge comes and becomes a permanent acquisition of the Soul.

For the devoted disciple, *The Voice of the Silence* lays down the following obligation: "...seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law." Fortunate he who can find the inquirer of the willing ear; more fortunate he who can expound the Law without allowing his personality to intrude. But the fear of giving expression to a misunderstood implication of that Law is no excuse for non-promulgation either through direct contact or through the more impersonal channels of unsigned articles and papers. If the fear does exist and is genuine, it can be removed by a deeper study and a diligent questioning of the Scriptures. The effort at promulgation necessitates a purposeful study, a learning of the basic fundamentals. These have then to be so presented as to induce the listener himself to go to the Scriptures. An inducement to study is thus held out to the inquirer and this is the best service a man can undertake; for study is bound to furnish the mind of the inquirer with ideas round which the new-found life must be made to revolve. It is well to remember that there exist propagators of falsehoods and of such knowledge as weds the man to the perishable. All men do not woo learning for the purpose of reaching to the higher life. The military scientist pursues his studies for the discovery of more diabolical engines of torture and destruction; the Alchemist studies to find the elixir that will prolong his physical existence; the miser and the profligate, the tyrant and the seeker after pleasure, study — each in his own way — to augment their greed, their desired pleasure and their thirst for power. The knowledge which panders to the gratification of all such appetites is to be shunned. It becomes the murderer of the souls of men.

Very few be they who take to the study that will enable them to people their current in space with ideas and images that are potent for good alone. Such study consists of hours spent in research and in imbibing spiritual knowledge the while good and noble intentions provide the throbbing, vibrant back-drop to their efforts. It is with such an at-

titude of dedication that study has to be undertaken. In such endeavour the attitude of mind with which the student approaches his study sets the pace for enlightenment. When the going becomes hard and the reading of abstruse propositions brings no appreciable understanding, there is the danger that study may degenerate into a chore; and where enthusiasm wanes, there no intellect can help to decipher the hidden meaning. To avoid such moments, preparation of the mind and body must precede by long hours the moment when study begins. This preparation is a necessary adjunct to study; is in fact an integral part of study itself. It requires the man to clothe himself in proper mind so that no breeze, however strong, can waft an earthly thought within. The school and college student knows the value of a calm mind for the prosecution of his studies. He knows this through personal experience, but fails to carry its lesson when he embarks upon the quest for the higher knowledge, the esoteric wisdom.

At the commencement of a consideration of such a vast subject as study, it becomes pertinent to ask what ideas, trends, habits, foods, environments, sounds and places are inimical to an all-out effort. Besides taking care of these, the student has to attain a psychic stability of his own. Moods of elation and depression; cravings and thirsts that intensify desires and force the mind to move towards their satiety; magnetic emanations of men and places as are destroyers of equilibrium; sights and sounds that are arousers of the viler passions — these provide the soiling substances that cling and make the eyes of the soul bleary and blind to the spiritual light which shines continuously in and around man. Has the student placed sentinels at all the doorways through which evil may enter? Has he forged the weapons that will turn the intruder away? The manner in which he sets about the task will constitute his first steps in self-study.

For applied study, the student has that little gem of a book called appropriately *The Voice of the Silence*. May be that the great ones who in aeons past had heard the message of that Voice had set its instructions down for those whose ears had yet to open on to the eternal. These teachings have been made public by Madame Blavatsky who dedicated her book "to the few" — to those who had the will to do; to those who had the soul to dare. In the Third Fragment of that book are set out the divine Paramitas — the transcendental virtues — deeds that the man must ensoul by his diviner part, deeds moreover that would make the action vibrate in tune with nature and with the divine will. The first

of these virtues is DANA — the key of charity and love immortal. It represents the act of giving, a voluntary offering with no expectation of a reward. Since any personal bias would make mortal any act of love and charity, the student has to seek for and imbibe that knowledge which is rooted in the imperishable. Immortal love is defined by Saint Paul thus:

Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, nor quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.

DANA is also the love that springs from gratitude; it is an offering that is without reservations, that is full, and that embraces all in its circumference.

Study of such knowledge is priceless, for it builds up, howsoever gradually, the inner faculty that can perceive and evaluate. A deeper study of *The Voice of the Silence*, if undertaken daily, makes for an immortal companionship of great ideas, and therefore in larger or smaller measure of the great. It is from such study that enlightenment comes.

IF the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things through the narrow chinks of his cavern.

—WILLIAM BLAKE

“ CHOOSE THE GREAT ROAD ”

The opinion of the Tirthankaras is that knowledge, faith and right conduct are the true causes of true liberation; never the outward marks.

By praises and hymns one obtains the wisdom consisting in knowledge, faith and conduct.

—*Uttaradhyayana Sutra*

THE MYSTERIES of taking birth are as great as those which attend the death of the body. While it is clear to all that he who is born must one day die, it is not as clear to all that death is followed by birth in another body. Unless we learn to contemplate what *Nitya-prabhava* and *Nitya-pralaya* imply we cannot comprehend the emancipation of the soul into immortality; and the still more mysterious process of the raising of the body to be a temple of Light like that of the grand Tirthankara.

The Jain community celebrated Mahavira Jayanti on the 4th of April and that brought the above thoughts to mind. There is a difference between the compulsory birth of mortals whose Karma draws them to embodied existence and the Birth of an Emancipated Jina, the conqueror of mortality and of all limitations of body and of mind. By his *Vir* — the dauntless Energy that fights its way to the supernal truth — the Soul known as Mahavira reached perfection. As the last of the Tirthankaras, he graciously took voluntary birth for the helping of humanity.

What determines the voluntary incarnation of such divine men as Mahavira and his illustrious predecessors — the twenty-three earlier Tirthankaras, the first of whom, Rishabha Deva, was the founder of the Jain School of philosophical discipline? This doctrine of a line of Divine Incarnations is to be met not only in Jainism; in other Traditions, like that of “the Buddhas who have been and who shall be,” or that referred to in the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, we come upon the same teaching. It is a reasonable and convincing truth in the light of the teaching about cycles, yugas, manvantaras, and kalpas; the Greeks also had their *kuklos*, the Cycle of Necessity.

Now, is it not strange that the cycle which drew Mahavira to earth was also adorned by other Great Teachers — the Buddha Gautama in India, Lao-tse and Confucius in China, Pythagoras in Greece, and others? The fifth and sixth centuries B.C. seem to be a very special

period marked by the motion of the *Chakra*, the Wheel of Progress, of the ups and downs of the ever-lengthening spiral of evolution.

Can we find a definite underlying purpose of the cycle as it affected human history? It seems to us that the Age opened a new chapter, a new dispensation for those human souls who were becoming ready to tread the Path of Harmlessness, of Tenderness, of the Inner Light.

Great Divine Men come *yuge-yuge*, cycle after cycle, to educate the mind of the race, to emancipate its heart from the thralldom of cruelty born of hatred which is but an expression of violence. Buddha's great statements are very well known. Lao-tse also taught the Wisdom of Non-violence. "To the good I will be good; to the evil-doers I will also be good, in order to make them good." "Requite injury with kindness"; and so on. We can multiply quotations from other texts. They all echo the *Dashavaikalika Niryukti*:

Subdue wrath by forgiveness, conquer vanity by humbleness, fraud by straightforwardness, and vanquish greed through contentment.

What was the peculiar and particular contribution of Mahavira to the age to which he came? The principles he taught particularly touched the personal life so that his followers, even today, have rules for the conduct of life which bring them to the Path of the Inner Light, the Way to the Microcosm within the carapace of cruelty which the body is; thence to proceed to the Great Without, the Mighty Macrocosm.

To begin with, the daily prayer:

I forgive all souls; let all souls forgive me. I am on friendly terms with all; I have no enmity towards anybody. (*Avashyaka Niryukti*)

This reminder at dawn and as we retire for sleep is a very salutary exercise. In the bustle of the market-place we are apt to forget our prayer. Memory is at once the friend and the foe of man and we should seek the help of the following Jain text of the *Yogashastra* which, daily reflected upon after the dawn prayer, will prove helpful:

In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self, and should therefore refrain from inflicting upon others such injury as would appear undesirable to us if inflicted upon ourselves.

But a philosophical principle is essential. How can one, even one born in a Jain family, accept and practise these ideas if his heart's faith

and his mind's inclinations are wrong? Every Jain by birth and all who follow the Jain Discipline should perceive this:

Right belief is conviction in one's own self. Knowledge is a Knowledge of one's own self. Right conduct is by absorption in one's own self. How can there be bondage then?

This creates and confirms self-confidence, and without self-confidence we are slaves. Mortals can be divided into two groups: those who are capable of acting with a sense of responsibility to the Self within and those who rely on others; the former are the masters, the latter, the slaves of life. Says the *Acaranga Sutra*:

Man! Thou art thine own friend.
Why wish for a friend beyond?

But mortals are weak; their past Karma hangs round their necks as a chain which eats into the flesh; but by right knowledge it can be made a necklace of opportunities. By repentance, by chasing away from the mind ill-gotten pleasures, by teaching others, one learns to follow the commandments and to walk the Inner Way. So instructs the *Sutra-kirtanga Sutra*.

Lord Mahavira's message brings the light of knowledge to all who are longing for peace in their own hearts and for the world at large! May we all prove worthy to receive the compassion which flows from the Lotus Feet of all Tirthankaras! May Their Sight of Love fall on many!

THE MORE DEEPLY I go into my own religion, the more I become capable of penetrating and assimilating the core, the really positive content of other religious perspectives. This attitude seems to me the only one capable of providing a sacred ground for inter-religious meeting.

—JACQUES-ALBERT CUTTAT

THE ROOTS OF RITUALISM IN CHURCH AND MASONRY

[This concluding portion of H. P. Blavatsky's article is reprinted from *Lucifer*, May 1889.—EDS.]

VII

THE RITUALISM of primitive Christianity — as now sufficiently shown — sprang from ancient Masonry. The latter was, in its turn, the offspring of the, then, almost dead Mysteries. Of these we have now a few words to say.

It is well known that throughout antiquity, besides the popular worship composed of the dead-letter forms and empty exoteric ceremonies, every nation had its *secret* cult known to the world as the MYSTERIES. Strabo, one among many others, warrants for this assertion. (*Vide Georg*, lib. 10.) No one received admittance into them save those prepared for it by special training. The neophytes instructed in the upper temples were initiated into the final Mysteries in the crypts. These instructions were the last surviving heirloom of archaic wisdom, and it is under the guidance of high Initiates that they were *enacted*. We use the word "enacted" purposely; for the *oral* instructions *at low breath* were given only in the crypts, in solemn silence and secrecy. During the public classes and general teachings, the lessons in cosmogony and theogony were delivered in allegorical representation, the *modus operandi* of the gradual evolution of Kosmos, worlds, and finally of our earth, of gods and men, all was imparted in a symbolical way. The great public performances during the festivals of the Mysteries, were witnessed by the masses and the *personified* truths worshipped by the multitudes — *blindly*. Alone the high Initiates, the *Epoptae*, understood their language and real meaning. All this, and so far, is well known to the world of scholars.

It was a common claim of all the ancient nations that the real mysteries of what is called so unphilosophically, *creation*, were divulged to the elect of our (fifth) race by its first dynasties of *divine* Rulers — gods in flesh, "divine incarnations," or *Avatars*, so called. The last Stanzas, given from the *Book of Dzyan* in *The Secret Doctrine* (Vol. II, p. 21), speak of those who ruled over the descendants "produced from the holy stock," and . . . "who redescended, who made peace with the fifth (race) who taught and instructed it."

The phrase "made peace" shows that there had been a previous *quarrel*. The fate of the Atlanteans in our philosophy, and that of the *prediluvians* in the Bible, corroborates the idea. Once more — many centuries before the Ptolemies — the same abuse of the sacred knowledge crept in amongst the initiates of the Sanctuary in Egypt. Preserved for countless ages in all their purity, the sacred teachings of the gods, owing to personal ambition and selfishness, became corrupted again. The meaning of the symbols found itself but too often desecrated by unseemly interpretations, and very soon the Eleusinian Mysteries remained the only ones pure from adulteration and sacrilegious innovations. These were in honour of (Ceres) Demeter, or Nature, and were celebrated in Athens, the flowers of the intellect of Asia Minor and Greece being initiated thereinto. In his fourth Book, Zosimus states that these Initiates embraced *the whole of mankind*;¹ while Aristides calls the Mysteries the *common temple of the earth*.

It is to preserve some reminiscence of this "temple," and to rebuild it, if need be, that certain elect ones among the initiated began to be *set apart*. This was done by their High Hierophants in every century, from the time when the sacred allegories showed the first signs of desecration and decay. For the great *Eleusinia* finally shared the same fate as the others. Their earlier excellency and purpose are described by Clement of Alexandria who shows the greater Mysteries divulging the secrets and the mode of construction of the Universe, this being the beginning, the end and the ultimate goal of human knowledge, for in them was shown to the initiated Nature and all things *as they are*. (Strom. 8.) This is the Pythagorean *Gnosis*. Epictetus speaks of these instructions in the highest terms: "All that is ordained therein was established by our masters for the instruction of men and the correction of our customs." (*Apud Arrian. Dissert. lib. cap. 21.*) Plato asserts in the *Phaedo* the same: the object of the Mysteries was to re-establish the soul in its primordial purity, or *that state of perfection from which it had fallen*.

VIII

But there came a day when the Mysteries deviated from their purity in the same way as the exoteric religions. This began when the state bethought itself, on the advice of Aristogeiton (510 B.C.), or drawing from

¹ Says Cicero in *de Nat. Deorum*, lib. I—"omitto Eleusinam sanctam illam et augustam; ab initiantur gentes orarum ultima."

the *Eleusinia* a constant and prolific source of income. A law was passed to that effect. Henceforth, no one could be initiated without paying a certain sum of money for the privilege. That boon which could hitherto be acquired only at the price of incessant, almost superhuman, effort toward virtue and excellency, was now to be purchased for so much gold. Laymen — and even priests themselves — while accepting the desecration lost eventually their past reverence for the inner Mysteries, and this led to further profanation of the Sacred Science. The rent made in the veil widened with every century; and more than ever the Supreme Hierophants, dreading the final publication and distortion of the most holy secrets of nature, laboured to eliminate them from the *inner* programme, limiting the full knowledge thereof but to the few. It is those *set apart* who soon became the only custodians of the divine heirloom of the ages. Seven centuries later, we find Apuleius, his sincere inclination toward magic and the mystical notwithstanding, writing in his *Golden Ass* a bitter satire against the hypocrisy and debauchery of certain orders of *half*-initiated priests. It is through him also that we learn that in his day (second century A.D.) the Mysteries had become so universal that persons of all ranks and conditions, in every country, men, women and children, all were *initiated*! Initiation had become as necessary in his day as baptism has since become with the Christians; and, as the latter is now, so the former had become then — *i.e.*, meaningless, and a purely dead-letter ceremony of mere form. Still later, the fanatics of the new religion laid their heavy hand on the Mysteries.

The *Epoptae*, they “who see things as they are,” disappeared one by one, emigrating into regions inaccessible to the Christians. The *Mystae* (from *Mystes* or “veiled”) “they who see things only as they appear,” remained very soon, alone, sole masters of the situation.

It is the former, the “set apart,” who have preserved the true secrets; it is the *Mystae*, those who knew them only superficially, who laid the first foundation stone of modern masonry; and it is from this half pagan, half converted primitive fraternity of Masons that Christian ritualism and most dogmas were born. Both the *Epoptae* and the *Mystae* are entitled to the name of *Masons*: for both, carrying out their pledges to, and the injunction of, their long departed Hierophants and “Kings,” *rebuilt*, the *Epoptae* their “lower,” and the *Mystae* their “upper” *temples*. For such were the irrespective appellations in antiquity, and are so to this day in certain regions. Sophocles speaks in the *Electra* (Act 2) of the foundations of Athens — the site of the Eleusinian Mysteries —

as being the "sacred edifice of the gods," *i.e.*, built by the *gods*. Initiation was spoken of as "walking into the temple," and "cleaning" or *rebuilding the temple* referred to the *body* of an initiate on his last and supreme trial. (*Vide* St. John's Gospel, II. 19.) The esoteric doctrine, also, was sometimes called by the name of "Temple," and popular exoteric religion, by that of "city." To *build a temple* meant to found an esoteric school; to "build a city temple" signified to establish a public cult. Therefore, the true surviving "Masons" of the *lower* Temple, or the *crypt*, the sacred place of initiation, are the only custodians of the true *Masonic* secrets now lost to the world. We yield willingly to the modern Fraternity of Masons the title of "Builders of the *higher* Temple," as the *a priori* superiority of the comparative adjective is as illusionary as the blaze of the burning bush of Moses itself in the Templars' Lodges.

IX

The misunderstood allegory known as the Descent into *Hades*, has wrought infinite mischief. The exoteric "fable" of Hercules and Theseus descending *into the infernal regions*; the journey thither of Orpheus, who found his way by the power of his lyre (*Ovid Metam.*); of Krishna, and finally of Christ, who "descended into Hell and the third day rose again from the dead" — was twisted out of recognition by the non-initiated *adapters* of pagan rites and transformers thereof into Church rites and dogmas.

Astronomically, this *descent into hell* symbolized the Sun during the autumnal equinox when, abandoning the higher sidereal regions, there was a supposed fight between him and the Demon of Darkness who got the best of our luminary. Then the Sun was imagined to undergo a *temporary death* and to descend into the infernal regions. But mystically, it typified the initiatory rites in the crypts of the temple, called the Underworld. Bacchus, Herakles, Orpheus, Asklepios and all the other visitors of the crypt, *all descended into hell and ascended thence on the third day*, for all were initiates and "Builders of the lower Temple." The words addressed by Hermes to Prometheus, chained on the arid rocks of the Caucasus — *i.e.*, bound by ignorance to his physical body and devoured therefore by the vultures of passion — apply to every neophyte, to every *Chrestos* on trial. "To such labours look thou for no termination until the (or *a*) god shall appear as a substitute in thy pangs and shall be willing to go both to gloomy Hades and to the murky

depths around Tartarus." (Aeschylus: *Prometheus*, 1027, ff.) They mean simply that until Prometheus (or man) could find the "God," or Hierophant (the Initiator) who would willingly descend into the crypts of initiation, and walk around Tartarus with him, the vulture of passion would never cease to gnaw his vitals.² Aeschylus as a pledged Initiate could say no more; but Aristophanes, less pious, or more daring, divulges the secret to those who are not blinded by a too strong preconception, in his immortal satire on Heracles' *descent into Hell*. (*Frogs*.) There we find the chorus of the "blessed ones" (the initiated), the Elysian fields, the arrival of Bacchus (the god Hierophant) with Herakles, the reception with lighted torches, emblems of *new LIFE and RESURRECTION* from the darkness of human ignorance to the light of spiritual knowledge — eternal LIFE. Every word of the brilliant satire shows the inner meaning of the poet:

Wake, burning torches... for thou comest
Shaking them in thy hand, Iacche,
Phospheric star of the nightly rite.

All such final initiations took place during the night. To speak, therefore, of anyone as having descended into Hades, was equivalent in antiquity to calling him a *full Initiate*. To those who feel inclined to reject this explanation, I would offer a query. Let them explain, in that case, the meaning of a sentence in the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*. What can the poet mean, if not that which is asserted above, when introducing the aged Anchises in the Elysian fields, he makes him advise Aeneas, his son, to travel to Italy... where he would have to fight in Latium, a rude and barbarous people; therefore, he adds, before you venture there "*descend into Hades*," *i.e.*, get yourself initiated.

The benevolent clericals, who are so apt to send us on the slightest provocation to Tartarus and the infernal regions, do not suspect what good wishes for us the threat contains; and what a holy character one must be before one gets into such a sanctified place.

It is not pagans alone who had their Mysteries. Bellarmin (*De Eccl.*

² The dark region in the crypt, into which the candidate under initiation was supposed to throw away for ever his worst passions and lusts. Hence the allegories by Homer, Ovid, Virgil, etc., all accepted literally by the modern scholar. Phlegethon was the river in Tartarus into which the initiate was thrice plunged by the Hierophant, after which the trials were over and the new man *born anew*. He had left in the dark stream the old sinful man for ever, and issued on the third day, from Tartarus, as an *individuality*, the *personality* being dead. Such characters as Ixion, Tantalus, Sisyphus, etc., are each a personification of some human passion.

Triumph. lib. 2, cap. 14) states that the early Christians adopted, after the example of pagan ceremonies, the custom of assembling in the church during the nights preceding their festivals, to hold vigils or “wakes.” Their ceremonies were performed at first with the most edifying holiness and purity. But very shortly after that, such immoral abuses crept into these “assemblies” that the bishops found it necessary to abolish them. We have read in dozens of works about the licentiousness in the pagan religious festivals. Cicero is quoted (*de Leg.* lib. 2. cap. 15) showing Diagondas, the Theban, finding no other means of remedying such disorders in the ceremonies than the suppression of the Mysteries themselves. When we contrast the two kinds of celebrations, however, the Pagan Mysteries hoary with age centuries before our era, and the Christian *Agapae* and others in a religion hardly born and claiming such a purifying influence on its converts, we can only pity the mental blindness of its defenders and quote for their benefit Roscommon, who asks:

When you begin with so much pomp and show,
Why is the end so little and so low?

X

Primitive Christianity — being derived from the primitive Masonry — had its grip, pass-words, and degrees of initiation. “Masonry” is an old term but it came into use very late in our era. Paul calls himself a “master-builder” and he was one. The ancient Masons called themselves by various names and most of the Alexandrian Eclectics, the Theosophists of Ammonias Saccas and the later Neo-Platonists, were all virtually Masons. They were all bound by oath to secrecy, considered themselves a Brotherhood, and had also their signs of recognition. The Eclectics or Philaletheians comprised within their ranks the ablest and most learned scholars of the day, as also several crowned heads. Says the author of *The Eclectic Philosophy*:

Their doctrines were adopted by pagans and Christians in Asia and Europe, and for a season everything seemed favourable for a general fusion of religious belief. The Emperors Alexander Severus and Julian embraced them. Their predominating influence upon religious ideas excited the jealousy of the Christians of Alexandria. The school was removed to Athens, and finally closed by the Emperor Justinian. Its professors withdrew to Persia,³ where they made many disciples.

³ And we may add, beyond, to India and Central Asia, for we find their influence every where in Asiatic countries.

A few more details may prove, perchance, interesting. We know that the Eleusinian Mysteries survived all others. While the secret cults of minor gods such as the *Curates*, the *Dactyli*, the worship of Adonis, of the Kabiri, and even those of old Egypt had entirely disappeared under the revengeful and cruel hand of the pitiless Theodosius,⁴ the Mysteries of Eleusis could not be so easily disposed of. They were indeed the religion of mankind, and shone in all their ancient splendour if not in their primitive purity. It took several centuries to abolish them, and they could not be entirely suppressed before the year 396 of our era. It is then that the "Builders of the *higher*, or City Temple" appeared first on the scene and worked unrelentingly to infuse their rituals and peculiar dogmas into the nascent and ever fighting and quarrelling church. The triple *Sanctus* of the Roman Catholic Mass is the triple S.: S.: S.: of these early Masons, and is the modern prefix to their documents or "any written *balustre* — the initial of *Salutem*, or Health" as cunningly put by a Mason. "This triple masonic salutation is the most ancient among their greetings." (Ragon)

XI

But they did not limit their grafts on the tree of the Christian religion to this alone. During the Mysteries of Eleusis, wine represented Bacchus and Ceres — wine and bread, or corn.⁵ Now Ceres or Demeter was the female *productive principle* of the Earth; the spouse of Father

⁴ The murderer of the Thessalonians, who were butchered by this pious son of the Church.

⁵ Bacchus is certainly of Indian origin. Pausanias shows him the first to lead an expedition against India, and the first to throw a bridge over the Euphrates. "The cable which served to unite the two opposite shores being exhibited to this day," writes this historian, "it being woven from vine-branches and trailings of ivy" (X. 29. 4). Arrianus and Quintus-Curtius explained the allegory of Bacchus' birth from the thigh of Zeus, by saying that he was born on the Indian Mount *Meru*. We are aware that Eratosthenes and Strabo believed the Indian Bacchus had been invented by flatterers to simply please Alexander, believed to have conquered India as Bacchus is supposed to have done. But on the other hand Cicero mentions the god as a Son of Thyoné and Nisus; and Dionysus means the god Dis from Mount Nys in India. Bacchus crowned with ivy, or *Kissos*, is Krishna, one of whose names was *Kissen*. Dionysus was pre-eminently the god who was expected to liberate the *souls of men* from their prisons of flesh — Hades and the human Tartarus, in one of its symbolical senses. Cicero calls Orpheus a son of Bacchus; and there is a tradition which not only makes Orpheus come from India (he being called dark, of tawny complexion), but identifies him with Arjuna, the *chela* and adoptive son of Krishna. (*Vide Five Years of Theosophy: "Was Writing Known Before Panini?"*) [Reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, May 1965.]

Aether, or Zeus; and Bacchus, the son of Zeus-Jupiter, was his father manifested: in other words, Ceres and Bacchus were the personifications of Substance and Spirit, the two vivifying principles in Nature and on Earth. The hierophant Initiator presented symbolically, before the final *revelation* of the mysteries, wine and bread to the candidate, who ate and drank, in token that the spirit was to quicken matter: *i.e.*, the divine wisdom of the Higher Self was to enter into and take possession of his inner Self or Soul through what was to be revealed to him.

This rite was adopted by the Christian Church. The Hierophant who was called the "Father," has now passed, part and parcel — *minus* knowledge — into the "Father" priest, who today administers the same communion. Jesus calls himself a vine and *his* "Father" the husbandman; and his injunction at the Last Supper shows his thorough knowledge of the symbolical meaning (*vide infra*, note) of bread and wine, and his identification with the *logoi* of the ancients. "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." "This *is* a hard saying," he adds. . . . "The words (*rhemata*, or arcane utterances) that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life." They are; because "it is the Spirit that quickeneth." Furthermore these *rhemata* of Jesus are indeed the arcane utterances *of an Initiate*.

But between this noble rite, as old as symbolism, and its later anthropomorphic interpretation, now known as *transubstantiation*, there is an abyss of ecclesiastical sophistry. With what force the exclamation — "Woe unto you lawyers. For *ye have taken away the key of knowledge*," (and will not permit even now *gnosis* to be given to others); with what tenfold force, I say, it applies more now than then. Aye; that *gnosis*, "ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were (and are) entering ye prevented," and still prevent. Nor has the modern priesthood alone laid itself open to this blame. Masons, the descendants, or at any rate the successors, of the "Builders of the upper Temple" during the Mysteries, they who ought to know better, will pooh-pooh and scorn any one among their own brethren who will remind them of their true origin. Several great modern Scholars and Kabalists, who are Masons, and could be named, received worse than the cold shoulder from their Brethren. It is ever the same old, old story. Even Ragon, the most learned in his day among all the Masons of our century, complains of it, in these words:

All the ancient narratives attest that the initiations in the days of old had an imposing ceremonial, and became memorable for ever through the grand truths divulged and the knowledge

that resulted therefrom. And yet there are *some modern Masons, of half-learning*, who hasten to treat as charlatans all those who successfully remind of, and explain to them these ancient ceremonies! (*Cours. Philos.* p. 87 note 2)

XII

Vanitas vanitatum! nothing is new under the sun. The "Litanies of the Virgin Mary" prove it in the sincerest way. Pope Gregory I introduces the *worship* of the Virgin Mary and the Chalcedonian Council proclaim her the mother of God. But the author of the *Litanies* had not even the decency (or is it the brains?) to furnish her with any other than pagan adjectives and titles, as I shall presently show. Not a symbol, not a metaphor of this famous Litany but belonged to a crowd of goddesses; all Queens, Virgins, or Mothers; these three titles applying to Isis, Rhea, Cybele, Diana, Lucifera, Lucina, Luna, Tellus, Latona *triformis*, Proserpina, Hecate, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, Leucothea, Astarte, *celestial* Venus and Urania, *Alma Venus*, etc., etc., etc.

Besides the primitive signification of trinity (the *esoteric*, or that of Father, Mother, Son) does not this Western *trimurti* (three faces) mean in the masonic pantheon: "*Sun, Moon, and the Venerable*"? a slight alteration, forsooth, from the Germanic and Northern *Fire, Sun and Moon*.

It is the intimate knowledge of this, perchance, that made the Mason, J. M. Ragon, describe his profession of faith thus:

For me *the Son is the same as Horus, son of Osiris and Isis*; he is the SUN who *every year redeems the world from sterility and the universal death of the races*.

And he goes on to speak of the Virgin Mary's particular litanies, temples, festivals, masses and Church services, pilgrimages, oratories, Jacobins, Franciscans, vestals, prodigies, *ex voto* niches, statues, etc.

De Maleville, a great Hebrew scholar and translator of Rabbinical literature, observes that the Jews give to the moon all those names which, in the *Litanies*, are used to glorify the Virgin. He finds in the *Litanies of Jesus* all the attributes of Osiris — the Eternal Sun, and of Horus, the Annual Sun. And he proves it.

Mater Christi is the mother of the Redeemer of the old Masons, who is the *Sun*. The *hoi polloi* among the Egyptians claimed that the child, symbol of the great central star, *Horus*, was the Son of *Osireth* and *Oseth*, whose souls had *ensouled*, after their death, the *Sun* and the

Moon. Isis became, with the Phoenicians, *Astarte*, the names under which they adored the Moon, personified as a woman adorned with horns, which symbolized the crescent. Astarte was represented at the autumnal equinox after her husband (the Sun's) defeat by the Prince of Darkness, and descent into Hades, as weeping over the loss of her consort, who is also her son, as Isis does that of her consort, brother and son (Osiris-Horus). Astarte holds in her hand a cruciform stick, a regular cross, and stands weeping on the crescent moon. The Christian Virgin Mary is often represented in the same way, standing on the new moon, surrounded by stars and weeping for her son *juxta crucem lacrymosa dum pendeat filius* (*vide Stabat Mater Dolorosa*). Is not she the heiress of Isis and Astarte? asks the author.

Truly, and you have but to repeat the *Litany to the Virgin* of the R. Catholic Church, to find yourself repeating ancient incantations to *Adonaia* (Venus), the mother of Adonis, the Solar god of so many nations; to *Mylitta* (the Assyrian Venus), goddess of nature; to *Alilat*, whom the Arabs symbolized by the two lunar horns; to *Selene*, wife and sister of *Helion*, the Sun god of the Greeks; or, to the *Magna Mater*, . . . *honestissima, purissima, castissima*, the Universal Mother of all Beings — because SHE IS MOTHER NATURE.

Verily is *Maria* (Mary) the Isis Myrionymos, the Goddess Mother of the ten thousand names! As the Sun was *Phoebus*, in heaven, so he became *Apollo*, on earth, and *Pluto*, in the still lower regions (after sunset); so the moon was *Phoebe* in heaven, and *Diana* on earth (*Gaea, Latona, Ceres*); becoming *Hecate* and *Proserpine* in Hades. Where is the wonder, then, if Mary is called *regina virginum*, "Queen of Virgins," and *castissima* (most chaste), when even the prayers offered to her at the sixth hour of the morning and the evening are copied from those sung by the "heathen" Gentiles *at the same hours* in honour of *Phoebe* and *Hecate*? The verse of the "Litany to the Virgin," *stella matutina*,⁶ we are informed, is a faithful copy of a verse from the litany of the *triformis* of the pagans. It is at the Council which condemned Nestorius that Mary was first titled as the "Mother of God," *mater dei*.

In our next, we shall have something to say about this famous Litany of the Virgin, and show its origin in full. We shall cull our proofs, as we go along, from the classics and the moderns, and supplement the

⁶ The "Morning Star," or *Lucifer*, the name which Jesus calls himself by in *Rev.* xxii. 16, and which becomes, nevertheless, the *Name of the Devil*, as a theosophical journal assumes it!

whole from the *annals* of religions as found in the Esoteric Doctrine. Meanwhile, we may add a few more statements and give the etymology of the most sacred terms in ecclesiastical ritualism.

XIII

Let us give a few moments of attention to the assemblies of the "Builders of the upper Temple" in early Christianity. Ragon has shown plainly to us the origin of the following terms:

(a) "The word 'mass' comes from the Latin *Messis* — 'harvest,' whence the noun *Messias*, 'he who ripens the harvest,' Christ, the Sun."

(b) The word "Lodge" used by the Masons, the feeble successors of the Initiates, has its root in *loga* (*loka*, in Sanskrit), a locality and a *world*; and in the Greek *logos*, the World, a discourse; signifying in its full meaning "a place where certain things are discussed."

(c) These assemblies of the *logos* of the primitive *initiated* masons came to be called *synaxis*, "gatherings" of the Brethren for the purpose of praying and celebrating the *caena* (supper) wherein only bloodless offerings, fruit and cereals, were used. Soon after these offerings began to be called *hostiae* or sacred and pure *hosties*, in contrast to the impure sacrifices (as of prisoners of war, *hostes*, whence the word *hostage*). As the offerings consisted of the harvest fruits, the first fruits of *messis*, thence the word "mass." Since no father of the Church mentions, as some scholars would have it, that the word *mass* comes from the Hebrew *missah* (*oblatum*, offering) one explanation is as good as the other.

Now the word *synaxis* was also called by the Greeks *agyrmos*, (a collection of men, assembly). It referred to initiation into the Mysteries. Both words — *synaxis* and *agyrmos*⁷ — became obsolete with the Christians, and the word *missa*, or mass, prevailed and remained. Theologians will have it, desirous as they are to veil its etymology, that the term *messias* (*Messiah*) is derived from the Latin word *missus* (messenger, *the sent*). But if so, then again it may be applied as well to the Sun, the *annual messenger*, sent to bring light and new life to the earth and its products. The Hebrew word for Messiah, *mashiah* (anointed, from *mashah*, to anoint), will hardly apply to, or bear out the identity in the

⁷ Hesychius gives the name (*agyrmos*) to the first day of the initiation into the mysteries of Ceres, goddess of harvest, and refers to it also under that of *Synaxis*. The early Christians called their mass, before this term was adopted, and the celebrations of their mysteries—*Synaxis*, a word compounded from *sun* "with," and *ago* "I lead," whence, the Greek *Synaxis* or an *assembly*.

ecclesiastical sense; nor will the Latin *missa* (mass) derive well from that other Latin word *mittere*, *missum*, "to send," or "dismiss." Because the communion service — its heart and soul — is based on the consecration and oblation of the host or *hostia* (sacrifice), a wafer (a thin, leaf-like bread) representing the body of Christ in the Eucharist, and that such wafer of flour is a direct development of the harvest or cereal offerings. Again, the primitive *masses* were *caenas* (late dinners or suppers), which, from the simple meals of Romans, who "washed, were anointed, and wore a *cenatory* garment" at dinner, became consecrated meals in memory of the last Supper of Christ.

The converted Jews in the days of the Apostles met at their *synaxes*, to read the Evangels and their correspondence (Epistles). St. Justin (150 A.D.) tells us that these solemn assemblies were held on the day called *Sun* (Sunday, *dies magnus*), on which days there were psalms chanted "collation of baptism with pure water and the *agapae* of the holys *caena* with bread and wine." What has this hybrid combination of pagan Roman dinners, raised by the inventors of church dogmas to a sacred mystery, to do with the Hebrew *Messiah*, "he who causes to go down into the pit" (ro Hades), or its Greek transliteration *Messias*? As shown by Nork, Jesus "was never anointed either as high priest or king," therefore his name of *Messias* cannot be derived from its present Hebrew equivalent. The less so, since the word anointed, or "rubbed with oil," a *Homeric term*, is *chris*, and *chrío*, both to anoint the body with oil. (See *Lucifer* for 1887, "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels.")

Another high Mason, the author of *The Source of Measures*, summarizes this *imbroglio* of the ages in a few lines by saying:

The fact is there were *two Messiahs*: One, as causing himself to go down into the pit, for the salvation of the world;⁸ this was the sun shorn of his *golden rays* and *crowned with blackened ones* (symbolizing this loss) as the thorns. *The other* was the triumphant *Messiah*, mounted up to this *summit of the arch of Heaven*, personated as the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*. In both instances he had the cross. . . .

At the *Ambarvales*, the festivals in honour of Ceres, the *Arval* (the assistant of the High Priest) clad in pure white, placing on the *hostia*

⁸ From times immemorial every initiate before entering on his supreme trial of initiation, in antiquity as at the present time, pronounces these sacramental words. . . . "And I swear to give up my life for the salvation of my brothers, which constitute the whole mankind, if called upon, and to die in the defence of truth. . . ."

(sacrificial heap) a cake of corn, water and wine, tasted the wine of *libation* and gave to all others to *taste*. The *oblation* (or offering) was then taken up by the High Priest. It symbolized the three kingdoms of Nature — the cake of corn (vegetable kingdom), the sacrificial vase or *chalice* (mineral), and the *pall* (the scarf-like garment) of the Hierophant, an end of which he threw over the oblation wine cup. This pall was made of pure white lamb-skins.

The modern priest repeats, gesture for gesture, the acts of the pagan priest. He lifts up and offers the bread to be consecrated; blesses the water that is to be put in the chalice, and then pours the wine into it, incenses the altar, etc., etc., and going to the altar washes his fingers saying, "I will wash my hands *among the INNOCENT* and encompass thy altar, O Lord." He does so, because the ancient and *pagan* priest did the same, saying, "I wash (with lustral water) my hands among the *INNOCENT* (the fully initiated Brethren) and encompass thy altar, O great Goddess" (Ceres). Thrice went the high priest round the altar loaded with offerings, carrying high above his head the chalice covered with the end of his snow-white lamb-skin. . . .

The High Priest of antiquity repeated thrice during the divine service his "*O redemptor mundi*" to Apollo, 'the Sun'; his *mater Salvatoris*, to Ceres, the earth; his *Virgo paritura* to the Virgin Goddess, etc., and pronounced *seven ternary commemorations*. (Hearken, O Masons!)

The ternary number, so revered in antiquity, is as revered now, and is pronounced five times during the mass. We have three *introibo*, three *Kyrie eleison*, three *mea culpa*, three *agnus dei*, three *Dominus Vobiscum*. A true masonic series! Let us add to this the three *et cum spiritu tuo*, and the Christian mass yields to us the same *seven triple commemorations*.

PAGANISM, MASONRY, and THEOLOGY — such is the historical trinity, now ruling the world *sub rosa*. Shall we close with a Masonic greeting and say:

Illustrious officers of Hiram Abif, Initiates, and "Widow's sons." The Kingdom of Darkness and ignorance is fast dispelling, but there are regions still untouched by the hand of the scholar, and as black as the night of Egypt. *Fratres, sobrii estote et vigilate!*

—H.P.B.

SOCIALISM AND BROTHERHOOD

Both Gospels, the Buddhist and the Christian, were preached with the same object in view. Both reformers were ardent philanthropists and practical *altruists* — *preaching most unmistakably Socialism* of the noblest and highest type, self-sacrifice to the bitter end.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THERE IS a good deal of talk about socialism everywhere, including in this country of India. The term socialism, however, is used very casually and there seem to be as many varieties of socialism as there are countries.

What do we mean by socialism? It is clear that the core of all socialist theories contains a truth — the desirability of every individual having the opportunity to live his life in freedom, without exploiting others, and without allowing himself to be exploited by others. As this freedom to live and to work cannot be obtained individually — so it is presumed — those who desire to obtain it have clubbed themselves together as socialists.

This is a simple proposition simply put, but, as the history of decades reveals, there are innumerable difficulties which those who desire to live and to labour in freedom, unmolested and unmolesting, have experienced. The simple moral basis of socialism has been lost sight of in the economic and political aspects. Further, the individual labourer is lost in the mass of labour. Not to exploit has been overlooked in the talk of not being exploited. Like so many good and noble movements, the socialist movement also has suffered from a bias in favour of the mechanistic and materialistic philosophy of life. A sane vision has become a distorted ugly dream. It is taken for granted that the socialist movement is modern, a product of industrialization in our machine-ruled civilization. That socialistic ideas and ideals are as old as human thought is hardly recognized.

To appreciate truly the reality underlying socialism we have to go to a spiritual philosophy of life. Unless the terms “to live in freedom,” “individual,” “exploitation,” etc., are defined, we are bound to see distorted images of realities.

On what philosophic ground does the socialist stand? The starting point of every action is thought. Even if we were to postpone raising the primary and fundamental question — “who or what is the indi-

vidual?" — we cannot shelve, without injuring ourselves, this question: "How am I using the capital I possess?"

Each one of us is a capitalist inasmuch as each possesses brain and brawn which are creators of capital. And so the question arises of the use to which our own capital or our own possessions are put. The same question may be put in another form: "To what extent am I an exploiter?" Our mental confusion will appreciably lessen if we perceive and state: "The factor of primary importance is not who is exploiting me, but whom am I exploiting."

The great Buddha was a far-sighted socialist: He saw that exploitation was not confined only to that of the so-called poor by the so-called rich. Socialist programmes are conceived for removing poverty. But what is poverty? And is it not strange that the poverty which the Western socialism so fiercely combats was accepted by the Buddha as one of the conditions for His great socialistic experiment — the Order of Bhikkhus, the Sangha, which He founded? He made rules for obtaining food and clothing, for living and labouring, for Himself and His monks. The Brotherhood of Bhikkhus brought to thousands of men and women peace of mind, freedom of life and the opportunity for labour to serve the community.

Some of these Bhikkhus, in groups, travelled Westwards and introduced the idea of Buddhist socialism in Egypt and Judea. The Essenes, the Therapeuts and others lived in *ashrams*, and using the rule "Exploit no one" lived in tranquillity and served the people by example.

Pythagoras himself established his Sodality at Crotona and the influence which it exerted was wide-spread in his day and extended for centuries in time.

Gandhiji's rules for his Ashram resemble, in some respects strikingly so, those which Philo gives in describing the Essenes and the Therapeuts. They are very different from the rules of modern trade unions. They belong to the socialism of the elder Eastern world. And we in modern India will do well to study this forgotten and obsolete inheritance of ours which Gandhiji tried to reintroduce in our midst.

Perhaps there is no other single statement on this topic which so vividly strikes our imagination as the sentence in that short but marvellous *Isha Upanishad*, in the very first verse: "Covet not the wealth of any"; or, to put it in question form: "Covet naught, for whose is wealth?"

After all, does not this contain the whole problem of our era? Is it

not a self-evident truth which must ultimately be accepted? Sri Aurobindo translates it more aptly for our civilization in a direct and emphatic manner: "Lust not after any man's possessions."

The root vice of all nations of today is greed; the desire to find a place in the sun is nothing more than an expression of *lobha*, covetousness, the angry and ambitious desire to grab nature's goods so that the grabber may impose his will on other nations.

Each one of us is a capitalist, for each is a child of Mother Nature — the richest of mothers. We inherit from her great wealth, but when it is used to impoverish others, our brothers, the sons of the same Mother, we forfeit what she has bestowed on us in giving us birth. Whose is wealth? It belongs to the Mother — for the term of our incarnation we are trustees of what we inherit from others or what we earn by our own intelligence and our own labour.

We are not the owners of what we possess, but its trustees. If in the past we have been greedy and have robbed others of their possessions, and if we have now come to realize that we did wrong, then our first duty is to make amends.

People talk of Brotherhood, but its practice is greatly neglected, because it seems most difficult. How to suffer in patience our own exploitation by others and yet to practise not exploiting another? It is very difficult, but not impossible. Very much depends upon a new point of view in economics. The science of economics has to look at the advantages to the individual and to the nation of poverty which does not mean beggary and starvation, but a way of using the plenty which Nature provides. A really higher standard of mental and moral life in which body and Soul are kept together intelligently and in which service is rendered through one's profession or occupation will emerge through such a study. The question is not how great is our poverty, but how rich are we in our possibilities.

Let us then, as said, cultivate the attitude to life in which we do not fix our attention on how much we are being exploited by others, but, looking within ourselves, note how much we are exploiting others.

Inner strength is born of self-confidence; and reliance on our own self begets trust in others. Distrust works havoc. Our times are out of joint because of the almost universal distrust. Brotherhood can be practised by reliance on our own Soul and by trusting the Souls of others. Read in this light the sage advice of H. P. Blavatsky:

It is not . . . Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we who reward or punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that Harmony depends, or — break them.

Nor would the ways of Karma be inscrutable were men to work in union and harmony, instead of disunion and strife. For our ignorance of those ways — which one portion of mankind calls the ways of Providence, dark and intricate; while another sees in them the action of blind Fatalism; and a third, simple chance, with neither gods nor devils to guide them — would surely disappear, if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause. With right knowledge, or at any rate with a confident conviction that our neighbours will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, the two-thirds of the World's evil would vanish into thin air. Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. It is the constant presence in our midst of every element of strife and opposition, and the division of races, nations, tribes, societies and individuals into Cains and Abels, wolves and lambs, that is the chief cause of the "ways of Providence." We cut these numerous windings in our destinies daily with our own hands, while we imagine that we are pursuing a track on the royal high road of respectability and duty, and then complain of those ways being so intricate and so dark. We stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making, and the riddles of life that *we will not solve*, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us. . . .

This state will last till man's spiritual intuitions are fully opened, which will not happen before we fairly cast off our thick coats of matter; until we begin acting from *within*, instead of ever following impulses from *without*; namely, those produced by our physical senses and gross selfish body. Until then the only palliative to the evils of life is union and harmony — a Brotherhood *IN ACTU*, and *altruism* not simply in name. The suppression of one single bad *cause* will suppress not one, but a variety of bad effects. And if a Brotherhood or even a number of Brotherhoods may not be able to prevent nations from occasionally cutting each other's throats — still unity in thought and action, and philosophical research into the mysteries of being, will always prevent some, while trying to comprehend that which has hitherto remained to them a riddle, from creating additional causes in a world already so full of woe and evil.

MAN—THE WEAVER OF FREEDOM

THE *Voice of the Silence*, being chosen fragments from the *Book of the Golden Precepts*, dedicated by Madame Blavatsky "to the Few," is a priceless gem especially meant for the daily use of disciples, those men and women who have determined to follow the discipline given therein and to tread the spiritual path while living in the world and performing the daily duties of life. Many are the significant designations by which the disciple is addressed in the book, and one of them is "*O weaver of thy freedom.*" It is necessary to note that this particular designation immediately follows the enumeration of the Golden Keys opening the portals leading to the summit lost in glorious light Nirvanic. We are advised to master the Paramitas of perfection, the transcendental virtues, for weaving our freedom. This shows that this freedom is higher and superior to the one known to the world in general and claimed by the majority of the people. It is not political or economic or social freedom pertaining to the physical plane. It does not mean liberty to do what one wishes without any consideration for others; it is rather spiritual freedom, freedom from the bondage of a hundred chords of passions and desires and sense inclinations. Man is a divine being, a self-conscious thinker and chooser, and in order to weave his freedom and rise above the lower, personal nature he has to cultivate the divine virtues so as to close up completely the three gates of hell, *kama-krodha-lobha*, which have victimized our modern civilization in one way or another.

It is one's own choice and responsibility and effort that makes one the weaver of his freedom. Lord Buddha tells us: "Ye who suffer! Know ye suffer from yourselves." Nobody compels us to do anything against our will. With a right attitude of mind and heart and following the spiritual principles one can set oneself free slowly but in all certainty. Political freedom has not brought wisdom and peace to any country. During the French Revolution the cry was for liberty, equality, fraternity. Did France achieve this aim? Abraham Lincoln spoke of government of the people, by the people, for the people. Does it obtain in the United States of America today? And is India practising the principles of non-violence that Gandhiji stood for? H.P.B. states:

To seek to achieve political reforms before we have effected a reform in *human nature*, is like putting new wine into old bottles. Make men feel and recognize in their innermost hearts what is their

real, true duty to all men, and every old abuse of power, every iniquitous law in the national policy, based on human, social and political selfishness, will disappear of itself. . . . No lasting political reform can be ever achieved with the same selfish men at the head of affairs as of old. (*The Key to Theosophy*)

Lord Buddha taught: "Within yourselves deliverance must be sought; each man his prison makes." This depends very much upon the individual's understanding of his own nature, his relationship with the divine source as well as his knowledge of nature and nature's laws.

The aspirant on the path is a weaver of his freedom; as does a skilful weaver, the warp and the woof of life are to be firmly woven and the shuttles of the loom precisely handled. The value of any material depends on its texture and durability and also on the beauty of design and colouring; so too one has to weave one's freedom on the basis of the immortal and imperishable aspect of his nature where peace and bliss abide. Speaking of Divine Law, Lord Buddha is made to say in *The Light of Asia*:

It slayeth and it saveth, nowise moved
 Except unto the working out of doom;
 Its threads are Love and Life; and Death and Pain
 The shuttles of its loom.

So we need to remember the power of love and life as freedom is woven thread by thread so as to give shape to the splendid pattern given us by the great Renunciators. Immortal love and charity is the first of the divine Paramitas, followed by harmony in thought, word and act which makes us integrated beings. As we weave our freedom, patience is necessary; we cannot afford to be ruffled by disappointments or frustrations, but have to hold on and march on to the destined goal. The fourth virtue is equal-mindedness to pleasure and to pain, remaining firm and perceiving the truth. It is necessary to be indifferent to our own pleasure and pain, but at the same time to be ever watchful to relieve others of their suffering. On the way to supernal truth, one naturally needs dauntless energy-*Virya* which is the fifth virtue. The world is surrounded by lies terrestrial which have to be conquered, subdued and left behind. Then only the light of truth can be perceived. This will lead to the sixth virtue of *Dhyana*, the practice of which will open up the realm of *Sat* eternal and its ceaseless contemplation. Then man becomes a super-man, the son of the Dhyanis. He has won his freedom from material bondage.

Man is born with a divine destiny, but with each rebirth in a fleshly body he gets involved in material existence, is overpowered by *trishna*, *tanha*, lust and thirst for things, and cleaves to the shadows, forgetting the higher and spiritual aspect of himself. Hence the necessity for the self-conscious thinker to make a deliberate attempt to keep in close contact with his Divine Parent, to follow ever the guidance it gives, and let the inner light shine through his personal existence. Theosophy teaches that fate or destiny is of our own making, the result of causes generated along right or wrong lines, selfishly or unselfishly, but man can exercise his free will while acting in the living present, thus changing his self-made destiny to some extent at least. To bring this about, he must not allow himself to drift with the current, but has to take his evolution in his own hands and guide it wisely so as to weave his freedom, realizing that no one else will set him free. What a great privilege to realize that we have within ourselves the power to change the trend of our existence, that all the great teachers have done so and left for us their teachings to guide our footsteps! H.P.B. states in *Isis Unveiled*:

From the remotest antiquity *mankind* as a whole *have always been convinced of the existence of a personal spiritual entity within the personal physical man*. This inner entity was more or less divine, according to its proximity to the *crown* — Chrestos. . . . They rejected fatalism, for fatalism implies a blind course of some still blinder power. But they believed in *destiny*, which from birth to death every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb. (II. 593)

She further states in *The Secret Doctrine*:

The closer the approach to one's *Prototype*, "in Heaven," the better for the mortal whose personality was chosen, by his own *personal* deity (the seventh principle), as its terrestrial abode. For, with every effort of will toward purification and unity with that "Self-god," one of the lower rays breaks and the spiritual entity of man is drawn higher and ever higher to the ray that supersedes the first, until, from ray to ray, the inner man is drawn into the one and highest beam of the Parent-SUN. (I. 638-39)

These two quotations from H.P.B.'s monumental works can be most helpful to the aspirant on the spiritual path trying to weave his own freedom in his own humble way.

THE SERPENT'S BLOOD

[This allegory by Mr. Judge was first published in *The Path* for January 1889, under the pen-name of Bryan Kinnavan.—EDS.]

IT WAS an old and magic island. Many centuries before, the great good Adepts had landed on its shores from the West and established for a while the Truth. But even they could not stay the relentless tread of fate, and knew that this was only a halting place, a spot where should be concentrated spiritual power sufficiently strong to remain as a leaven for several cycles, and that should be a base upon which in long ages after ages might be erected again the spiritual temple of truth. These blessed beings remained there for centuries uncounted, and saw arise out of the adjoining seas other lands, first of soft mud that afterwards hardened into rocks and earth. They taught the people and found them apt students, and from their number drew many disciples who were full of zeal as well as patience and faith. Among the least of those I was, and toiled long and earnestly through successive lives upon the Island. And the Island came to be known as the Isle of Destiny, from mysterious future events foretold for it by the greatest of the Adepts and their seers.

Yet I succeeded not in reaching the point where I could hope to pass on from the Island with the teachers, who said that at a certain day they must travel away to other lands, leaving behind them their blessing to those who willingly remained of the disciples; those who rebelled had still to remain, but without the aid and comfort of the benediction of the blessed ones.

At last the day of separation came and the kingly guides departed, leaving well established the true religion and practice. Yet we all knew that even that must have its decay, in which perhaps even some of us might have a hand, but the centre of power was not to depart from the Island until its destiny should be accomplished; the power might be hidden, but it would remain latent until the time arrived.

Many years came and went; still I found myself upon the Island again and again reincarnated. With sorrow I saw the ancient practices overlooked and different views prevailing. It was the power of the serpent.

On one well-known mountain the Masters had placed a gem, and at the mountain's base a tower. These I have spoken of incidentally in

a former tale.¹ I knew that mountain well, and saw it every day from the tower at some distance away where my own duties lay. I was present when the wonderful gem was placed upon the mountain, and of all those who saw the grand event, I alone remembered. Since that day many centuries had rolled away, and the other disciples, reincarnated there also, had forgotten the event but knew of the gem. Some of them who in other lives had been my servants in the tower were now my earthly superiors because they had devoted their minds to formal outward power, which is only the weak symbol of the reality that should exist within.

And so the tradition alone remained, but the diamond now blazed less brilliantly than in the days when I first knew it. By night its rays shot up into the heavens, and the priests month after month tried ceremonies and prayers in vain, in order to cause it to burst forth in all the glory of its pristine days. They knew that such a blaze was a possibility — indeed an old prophecy — but that was all they could tell, and were ignorant of the remainder of it, which, if they had known, perhaps none of their ceremonies would have been performed. It was that the great and glorious blaze of light from the mountain diamond would only take place after the last drop of the serpent's blood was spilled upon the Island, and that then the diamond itself would never again be found upon the rock where it had rested for so many ages. And I alone of them all knew this; but I knew not where the serpent was to be found. His influence was felt and seen, for in the early days he alone was the sole reptile that eluded pursuit, as his birth was due to the evil thoughts of a wandering black magician who had landed for a week upon the Island so long before that the priests had no record of it. This serpent had to be killed and his blood spilled upon the ground to remove forever the last trace of the evil done by the magician, and for that event only was the diamond kept upon the mountain through the power of the good Adepts who had put it there. It preserved the germ of truth from the serpent's breath, and would not be needed when he was destroyed. Had the priests known this, no ceremonies for increasing its brilliancy would have been tried, as they would rather suffer the serpent's influence than lose the gem. Indeed, they believed that their tenure of power was in some way connected with the diamond mountain. They were right. I knew the fatal result for them when I succeeded in discovering the place of the serpent.

¹ "A Curious Tale," reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, July 1973.—Eds.]

Day after day and long into the darkness of the night, I meditated and peered into every corner of the Island. At the full moon when the diamond grew a little clearer, I saw the slimy traces of the serpent upon the Island but could never find his lair. At last one night a fellow-student who had passed on before me with those by whom the diamond had been set, and who now and again returned through their aid to help his old friend, came to see me and, as he was going away, said, "Look at the foot of the mountain."

So near the sacred diamond I had never thought it possible the foul reptile could be found; and yet it was there; through the evil nature of the high-priest, he had taken up his secure retreat. I looked and saw him at the foot, breathing venom and black clouds of the soul's despair.

The great day of ceremonies for the diamond was again at hand, and I determined that then should witness the death of the serpent and the last bright shining of the diamond.

The morning broke clear and warm. Great throngs of people crowded about the mountain-temple, expectant of some great result from the ceremonies. It seemed as if these natural psychics felt within them that the diamond would burst forth with its ancient light, and yet every now and then a fear was expressed that in its greatest beauty it would be lost to them forever.

It was my turn to officiate at the ceremony after the high priest, and I alone was aware that the serpent had crawled even into the temple and was coiled up behind the shrine. I determined to seize him and, calling upon our ancient master, strangle him there and spill his blood upon the ground.

Even as I thought this, I saw my friend from other lands enter the temple disguised as a wandering monk, and knew that my half-uttered aspiration even then was answered. Yet death stared me in the face. There, near the altar, was the sacred axe always ready to fell the man who in any way erred at the ceremony. This was one of the vile degenerations of the ancient law, and while it had been used before upon those who had only erred in the forms, I knew that the Priest himself would kill me as soon as the diamond's great flame had died away. The evening darkness would be upon us by the time that the moment in the performance permitted me to destroy the enemy of our race. So I cared not for death, for had I not faced it a thousand times as a blessed release and another chance?

At last the instant came. I stooped down, broke through the rule,

and placing my hand behind the shrine caught the reptile by the neck. The High Priest saw me stoop and rushed to the axe. Another moment's delay, and all hope was gone. With superhuman power I grasped and squeezed. Through my skull shot a line of fire, and I could see my wandering monk wave his hand, and instantly the Priest stumbled and fell on his way to the axe. Another pressure, and the serpent was dead. My knife! It was in my girdle, and with it I slit his neck. His red and lively blood poured out upon the ground and—the axe fell upon my head, and the junior priest of the temple fell dead to the floor.

But only my body died. I rose upon the air and saw myself lying there. The people neither stirred nor spoke. The Priest bent over me. I saw my wandering monk smile. The serpent's blood spread slowly out beside my body, and then collected into little globes, each red and lively. The diamond on the mountain behind the temple slowly grew bright, then flashed and blazed. Its radiance penetrated the temple, while priests and people, except my wandering monk, prostrated themselves. Then sweet sounds and soft rustling filled the air, and voices in strange language spoke stranger words from the mountain. Yet still the people did not move. The light of the diamond seemed to gather around the serpent's blood. Slowly each globe of blood was taken up by the light, except one more malevolent than the others, and then that fateful sphere of life rose up into the air, suddenly transformed itself into a small and spiteful snake that with undulating motion flew across the air and off into the night to the distant Isles. Priest and people arose in fear, the voices from the mountain ceased, the sounds died out, the light retreated, and darkness covered all. A wild cry of despair rose up into the night, and the priest rushed outside to look up at the mountain.

The serpent's blood still stained the ground, and the diamond had disappeared.

As the fragrance of a tree in full blossom is wafted by the wind from a distant place, even so the fragrance of meritorious deeds spreads far and wide. . . . A man who is exposed to (open and hidden) sins must strive to guard himself from them, that he may attain Immortality.

—*Yajnikyupanishat*

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The weekly newsmagazine *Time* in its issue for March 4 (Asia edition) deals with what has become today a complex and controversial subject — that of psychic phenomena. It is admitted that hardly a person lives who has not had psychic experience of one kind or another. Though modern science and psychology have learned to explain much of what was once inexplicable, mysteries still remain for present-day investigators in the hidden realms. Says *Time*:

The workings of the mind still resist rational analysis; reports of psychic phenomena persist. Are they all accident, illusion? Or are there other planes and dimensions of experience and memory? Could there be a paranormal world exempt from known natural law? . . .

Those questions are being asked by increasing numbers of laymen and scientists hungry for answers. The diverse manifestations of interest in so-called psychic phenomena are everywhere:

In the U.S., *The Secret Life of Plants* becomes a bestseller by offering an astonishing and heretical thesis: greenery can feel the thoughts of humans.

At Maimonides Medical Center in New York City, the image of a painting is transmitted by ESP, and seems to enter the dreams of a laboratory subject sleeping in another room.

In England, a poll of its readers by the *New Scientist* indicates that nearly 70% of the respondents (mainly scientists and technicians) believe in the possibility of extrasensory perception.

At the University of California, Psychologist Charles Tart reports that his subjects showed a marked increase in ESP scores after working with his new teaching machine.

In Los Angeles, a leaf is cut in half, then photographed by a special process. The picture miraculously shows the "aura" or outline of the whole leaf.

In Washington, the Defense Department's Advanced Research Projects Agency assigns a team to investigate seemingly authentic psychic phenomena at the Stanford Research Institute.

On both sides of the Atlantic, Uri Geller, a young Israeli psychic, astounds laymen and scientists alike by bending spoons and keys apparently with the force of his thoughts.

In the Philippines, Tennis Star Tony Roche is relieved of painful "tennis elbow" when an incision is made and three blood

clots are apparently removed by the touch of a psychic healer, who knows nothing of surgery or of modern sanitation.

In the U.S., the number of colleges offering courses in parapsychology increases to more than 100.

In the U.S.S.R., researchers file reports on blindfolded women who can "see" colours with their hands.

In California, ex-Astronaut Edgar Mitchell, who while on the Apollo 14 moon mission conducted telepathy experiments with friends on earth, founds the Institute of Noetic Sciences. His new mission: investigate occurrences that will not yield to rational explanation.

In London, Arthur Koestler examines psychic research with the zeal of the believer. . . . In his unforgettable metaphor, modern scientists are "Peeping Toms at the keyhole of eternity." That keyhole is stuffed with ancient biases toward the materialistic and rational explication and, consequently, away from the emerging field of psychic research. Once skeptics abandon those prejudices, says Koestler, they will be free to explore fresh concepts and new categories.

In the United States, many serious paranormalists are already exploring a wide range of psychic phenomena. In Durham, N.C., J. B. Rhine still investigates precognitive powers. At the nearby Psychological Research Foundation, William Roll and a research staff investigate "survival after bodily death." At the University of Virginia Medical School, Psychiatrist Ian Stevenson also studies the plausibilities of re-incarnation. At a Maimonides research centre, Dr. Montague Ullman directs tests in which message senders "think" images into the brains of sleeping subjects. In Connecticut, Robert Nelson directs the Central Premonitions Registry, meticulously recording the prophecies of the dreams and visions that people send him. All these researchers believe to some extent in the existence of some form of paranormal psychic powers.

The Parapsychological Association gained new respectability in 1969 when it won membership to the eminent American Association for the Advancement of Science, after several previous vain attempts. "The whole history of scientific advance," argued Dr. Margaret Mead, one of Parapsychology's greatest proponents, "is full of scientists investigating phenomena that the Establishment did not believe were there."

Despite the fact that psychic phenomena have today several articulate spokesmen, there are many who are still unconvinced. A long history

of hoaxes and extravagant claims has thrown the shadow of doubt even on the genuine phenomena. Yet there is no denying that the psychic is gaining more and more adherents.

At the very least [says the *Time* essay], the paranormal establishment has questioned the dogma, emphasized the ignorance and underlined the arrogance of modern medicine and science. Indeed, modern doctors have scarcely breached the frontiers of the mind. Science has all too frequently destroyed the layman's sense of wonder by seeking materialistic explanations for all phenomena.

As C. P. Snow says: "Scientists regard it as a major intellectual virtue to know what not to think about." Complains one Stanford Research Institute spokesman: "The society we live in doesn't give you permission to have psychic abilities. That is one reason that so much talent is suppressed." As Martin Gardner believes, "Modern science should indeed arouse in all of us a humility before the immensity of the unexplored..."

The possibility of life on other planets has become a much-debated topic. Norman Cousins, in his editorial "A Rendezvous With Infinity" (*Saturday Review/World*, February 9, 1974) makes some pertinent comments on how to unshackle the mind to take in the idea of infinity:

Infinity applies both to space and time. Given infinite time and infinite space, anything that occurs at one place or at one time in the universe is bound to occur elsewhere... The principle of exclusivity has no standing in the cosmos.

The solar system is not unique. Nature shuns one of a kind. It is unreasonable and unscientific to say that throughout the numberless celestial systems there are no other planets which support life in advanced form...

Cramped notions of infinity tend to constrict speculations about the cosmos, and we fail to ask the primary question. The primary question is not, Where did life come from? The primary question should be, How did the conditions of life originate? How did they come together in vital confluence? Life is forced into being by the interaction of these precise and exquisite conditions. So long as this interaction continues, life is inevitable. Infinity supplies a stage for inevitability....

We need not feel diminished by these ideas. The process of growing up as a cosmic species is different from the process of growing up as an individual. We come of age as sentient creatures

when we accept the fact that the universe is not constructed for our particular benefit or convenience. Far from feeling spurned or shrunken, we can have an enlarged sense of privilege over our place in the total scheme of things. A great adventure opens before us. We have new worlds to contemplate. We have new connections to make. The rendezvous with infinity becomes us. As we enlarge our sense of the cosmos, we enlarge our consciousness. We extend the reach of mind. We learn more about our potentialities. . . .

What is important about life is not that it may or may not be rare or unique. What is most important is that, whatever its frequency in infinity, life is infinitely precious.

It is precious because of what it is, not because of any universal prevalence.

It is precious because the human mind can contemplate its relationship to the universal order. We do not have to experience infinity in order to encompass it.

Life is precious because we have access to the phenomenon of cause and effect. We are able to create our own causes and shape our own effects. We can dwell on the experience of past lives and thereby enhance our own.

Life is precious not because it is perfectible but because the human mind can comprehend the idea of perfectibility. There are no limits to the fineness of human sensitivities. These sensitivities respond to the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Life is precious because humans can do things for the first time. We can create in ways we have never created before. We can do the impossible.

Finally, nothing about human life is more precious than that we can define our own purpose and shape our own destiny.

We justify the gift of life in many ways — by our awareness of its preciousness and its fragility; by developing to the fullest the sensitivities and potentialities that come with life; by putting the whole of our intelligence to work in sustaining and enhancing the conditions that make life possible; by cherishing the human habitat and shielding it from devastation and depletion; by removing the obstructions in our access to, and trust in, one another.

The celebration of life is the most natural business on earth.

“The Workaholic” is a term used by Allan Fromme to characterize those afflicted with the work fever, those who feel an urgent need to

achieve, at the sacrifice of all else (*Cosmopolitan*, November 1973). In our success/achievement-oriented age, the addiction to work can become a serious problem; a person may become so habituated to productivity as his way of achieving self-regard that he loses the ability to relate to others, to love, or to enjoy life.

The "workaholic" [Dr. Fromme writes] could only exist in a society such as ours — one that stresses productivity at the expense of other important human values. Why should a hard worker be more respected than the person gifted with an ability to enjoy life? Why should a high achiever be more esteemed than a great lover? Why should a woman's satisfaction with herself stem more from a prestigious, high-paying job than from laughing freely and easily with lots of people? Why? Because in many ways our society has encouraged too narrow a vision in many of us, over-stressing the importance of achievement... emphasizing only what we *do* and not what we *are*...

One vital factor missing in this formula: nothing in our tradition tells us when to stop and *enjoy* the fruits of all our labour. The result of this flawed outlook is that many people don't slow down after becoming successful, but continue to work even harder than before...

The important question remains — *why* do people work harder than they have to? Why are we so foolish? Partly, the answer has to do with maintaining appearances... to satisfy the expectations of others... Is this the only reason we sometimes work too hard — merely to be appreciated, to get favourable attention? In my clinical experience, I've found that the urge to be liked and approved of is the key to many people's overemphasis on work...

The inability to use leisure creatively may well be the most common, yet least noticed, reason for overwork...

In more severe "work addictions," deeper psychological factors usually play an important role... Probably *all* workaholics are, at least to some extent, compulsive, but sometimes a person can be *so* possessed by inner drives that normal life becomes impossible for them. Only *constant* work can satisfy the true compulsive's mysterious craving to be, at all times, *perfect!*

The best solution to this problem is to practise *other* ways, besides work, of winning approval... The best antidote to overwork is to behave *counter* to one of the most-respected adages of our society — namely, *don't* mix business with pleasure. We are taught that pleasure is the hard-earned reward for a long week's work, and that to do a good job, we must keep business and plea-

sure apart. This, I believe, is a very serious mistake. We must begin to realize that life becomes increasingly meaningful as we fulfil *ourselves* through enjoyment, rather than living simply to please others or to placate inner guilts. We must recognize, too, that work can also be fun, that one can have a good time on the job without becoming ineffective. A person's effectiveness is never impaired because she enjoys her work; on the contrary, enjoyment means you can do *more* and use *less* energy.

One to two per cent of India's population — more than five million people — suffers from severe forms of mental illness, and up to another three per cent from mental retardation. These figures were cited at the all-India psychiatrists' conference held recently in Bangalore. It stressed the need for comprehensive measures to treat the mentally ill. (*The Times of India*, March 20)

Nearly five million mental patients need immediate hospitalization, but only 18,000 beds are available. There are only about 300 qualified psychiatrists in the country.

One of the points made was that tackling the mental health problem has been complicated by the general belief that the malady is incurable. Most patients are not aware of modern research in this field. Instead, mental illness is considered by many people as a form of retribution for past sins, or attributed to sorcery practised by enemies. Families still call in quacks who make deep cuts in the forehead of the patient and make blood flow to propitiate the "evil spirit."

The conference recommended early revision of the Indian Lunacy Act because it was full of outmoded ideas and theories. It suggested that care of the mentally ill be made part of social welfare.

A greater incidence of mental illness seems to be part of the price we have to pay for our industrial civilization, which deprives so many of the opportunity for creative activity and gives them in its place a meaningless routine. As with physical illness, so with mental ill health prevention is better than cure, and psychoanalysis, tranquillizing drugs and the like are no substitutes for obedience to the laws of mental hygiene.
