

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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## WHITE LOTUS DAY

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On the 8th of May next, all students of Theosophy will celebrate the anniversary of the passing of H. P. Blavatsky. There are those who, calling themselves Theosophists, look upon Mme. Blavatsky as one of the founders of the original Society (there are now in existence in the West several Theosophical Societies) and as one of their leaders. Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists revere her as their Guru or Teacher. This distinction is not without a difference, nor is it drawn to belittle those who do not adopt the way of the United Lodge of Theosophists. The foundation of our work is the study of the philosophy which H.P.B. recorded, application of her Teachings in self-discipline and for self-improvement, and promulgation of the ageless Theosophy of which she was the Messenger. Because we are students, H.P.B. is our Teacher, but not of the ordinary kind; our study is not prosecuted in blind faith but very intelligently, so that we are able to test the primary ideas at any time and find them to be true in experience; in an increasing measure, reading and reflection on her writings unfold that higher sense and intuition which clarifies the vision. Such a study compels application, that is, an honest endeavour to purify the carnal nature, to weaken the citadel of the Personal Ego and to use it as a shrine which holds within itself the light of Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul. This, of course, is a very long and arduous task, but the practitioner is sustained in his hard labour by the opportunities which he makes for himself to love humanity and to serve it—to love not some particular members of humanity but the whole of it as an impersonal unit. We say this particularly because without a perception of this prin-

ciple the policy of the United Lodge of Theosophists is not understood, and no person, however ardent, can participate correctly in the carrying out of its programme. The basis of the promulgation of Theosophy and therefore the method employed are impersonal, as the heart-warming Declaration of the Lodge shows.

Study of the metaphysical, cosmical and philosophical ideas of Theosophy aids the aspirant in his task of self-purification. They become the impersonal soul of his personal conduct. Their intimate relation to ethics makes them powerful engines which propel the car of real human progress. Often rules of conduct are but another name for our personal manners, communal customs and national habits. Rules of conduct should spring from universal principles whose operations are called by sages Laws of Nature. H.P.B. give such principles and so the ethics of Theosophy are as different from and as superior to ordinary ethics as the One Wisdom-Religion is superior to all the creeds of the world.

If the study of metaphysics shows us what our ethics should be the ethics of Theosophy lead naturally to the promulgation of the ideas without which humanity must remain weak, narrow-minded and mean-hearted. Study of Theosophy brings courage by unveiling the strength of the Soul and leads to the practice of the Theosophical Teachings which clear the mind, broadening as well as deepening it. The Soul so energized proceeds to participate in the spiritual service of the race, which removes every vestige of meanness from the heart and makes it throb with love and generosity.

This triple duty which every earnest and sincere Associate of the United Lodge of Theosophists performs convinces him of the greatness of the Teachings of Theosophy and increases his devotion to their Recorder, H.P.B. What better preparation for the real celebration of White Lotus Day can there be than the remembering these facts of our experience? It should bring us further strength to labour more strenuously and more methodically so that a large number of our fellow men may join the army of Fortune's Favourite Soldiers who are battling against the darkness of ignorance and the lure of personal aggrandisement.

## THE CRUCIFIXION AND THE RESURRECTION

DURING the Easter holidays the Universal Christ will be crucified again. He has been nailed to the Cross these two thousand years, since the greater part of Christendom visualizes the Crucifixion only, and worships the Death of the Saviour. It is incapable of understanding the Resurrection. How Jesus came under the law and along with two thieves was executed according to the then prevailing custom, is fully recognized. But the event of the Resurrection is not a living reality; it is a myth, a beautiful myth, a myth with a message, but a myth all the same. And those who like to think of themselves as practical people desire to profit by the lesson of history. Such people also let the myth give to them a little of its refreshment and exaltation once a year — by remembering it and then forgetting it. This may sound sarcastic. The writer only feels sad and articulates these thoughts in all seriousness.

The reaction from the belief in the Bible as the Holy Word of God is seen in the view that it is an interpretation made by religious secluses who were devoid of any historical sense and ignorant of the elementary knowledge of science. The Higher Criticism bridges these extremes. Its most valuable help to Christendom in the re-orientation of religious outlook has been the death-blow it has delivered to the church dogmas. While the Higher Criticism has dealt justly with the church interpretation of the Bible, it has been more than a little neglectful of, and unfair to, the writers whose works trace the pages of the New Testament. It is fashionable to class together the poetry of the Gospels and the dogmas of the churches. There is not any great attempt to distinguish between the Gospels as history and the Gospels as myth. The truth of the prosaic facts of history is recognized, but the view is not generally accepted that a truth of equal if not greater value may be enshrined in the myths. How many would concede that the life and labours of Jesus, recorded in the Gospels, are written in a cipher, and written not for the purpose of imparting historical information but in the hope that certain suggested spiritual verities may inspire and may become subjects of study and of contemplation?

Those who are familiar with the old Eastern method of composing myths see in the Gospels that device at work. How did the ancient historians, who were poets and seers, reason? In this wise:

What value has any historical fact if it be not endowed with its spiritual message and its *universal* application? Is there any event, purely realistic in the material sense, without its soul and its romance? Are not all world-circumstances but shadows of spiritual happenings? And therefore does not true realism belong to the Spirit-World, ours being the world of shades? Consequently is it not true that history is not a document of mundane facts but a drama of supermundane forces projecting itself in the world of human beings? Would we not be false to our vocation if we chronicle but the puppet-show of mortals without disclosing the hidden purpose?

Not only Dravidian and Aryan, but also Buddhistic literature shows unmistakable marks of this view. Its influence on the Gospel chroniclers must be taken into account. That influence was perhaps personally exerted by the disciples of the Thera-Puttas, the Buddhist Missionaries who left their country in the reign of Asoka and whose effort made an impress in Egypt, Greece and Judaea. Is it not possible that the writers of the Gospels were among those who were brought up in the Asiatic tradition and who employed the Asiatic technique in dramatizing the life-events of Jesus?

This digression gives the opportunity to express a hope that at least a few Christians may reread the Gospels from the old oriental point of view. Professing atheists, destructive anarchists, proud disbelievers, as well as interested politicians have pressed into their service the findings of the Higher Criticism. Why should not, then, mystics and idealists make full use of another aspect of the Higher Criticism in the cause of a truly moral renaissance? Study of the Higher Criticism reveals a constructive side which if properly investigated and meditated on would deepen the religious outlook. We should not permit the work of the Higher Criticism to stop at the death of separative creeds; we must utilize it and lead it to bring to birth a cosmopolitan, a catholic, a universal Religion capable of binding the different races of men into a splendid Brotherhood. Padris cannot use that weapon which the Higher Criticism has unearthed, for then they would drive the last nail into the coffin of church, mosque and synagogue. View the Gospels as an attempt at giving a Christian shape and form to certain *universal* truths which inspired the entire pagan world at one time, and which fell not only into disuse but also into misuse. The universal character of the spiritual verities indicates the grand possibility of once again un-

ing peoples by the bond of faith — belief illumined by reason and knowledge. Read the Gospels as Christian translations of universal facts of mystic experience, and their lack of the historical and scientific sense will no longer be an obstacle.

Christendom interprets the Gospels as the life-story of a unique Being. No one was born as Jesus was born; no one taught as Jesus taught; no one died as Jesus died. Human intelligence revolts against this view, especially when it perceives the uniformity of Nature, the infallibility of her laws of sequence and succession. Suppose Christendom were to awaken to the fact that such uniqueness is a fiction which cunning has imposed as a fact on credulity!

How many Saviours can we not name who at birth were threatened with death (yet always escaped) by an opposing power, call it Kansa or Mara or Herod? All of Them were tempted, persecuted and finally said to have been murdered; then They all descended to the Nether world, Naraka, Hades, Hell, to save the Souls of the damned. On Their triumphant return They all became transformed into Gods and were given the epithet of *Soter* — Saviour. Such is the biography of Tammuz, of Horus, of Atys, of Memnon. Those who composed the Gospels “plagiarized” the old pagan stories. Political Imperialism compromising with religious fanaticism nailed Jesus to the Cross like a criminal — but is that the Cross to which the authors of the Gospel refer? No. Their vision discerned the Real Immortal Cross, the symbol of the Mysteries in Greece, in Egypt, in Persia, in India — the Mystery of Vithoba at Pandharpur, and that even more ancient one of Vishvakarma, the Divine Carpenter, who sacrificed himself to HIMSELF.

The Mystery of the Cross or the Sacrificial Death has two aspects: (1) the great cosmic event, the descent of Deity, or *Avatara* — Incarnation of the Word-Verbum-Logos, or *Sabda-Brahman* in Sanskrit; and (2) the great human event, the Ascent of the Conqueror, man become the Super-Man, *Jivan-Mukta*, the *Life-Saviour*. In the human kingdom there is a continuous descent and ascent, crucifixion and resurrection of the Christ in man. Among the Immortals from age to age — *yuge-yuge* — cycle by cycle, there is a Descent of Righteousness so that man may rise, abandoning the heresy of separateness, into the Kingdom of the Living, sending forth the cry — “O God, my God, how thou dost glorify me!”

“Blasphemy,” thunders forth the orthodox fanatic, and by no

means is he dead. "Arrant nonsense," asserts the scientist, though nowadays he is hesitant to do so publicly. "Superstition, beautiful superstition, I grant," cries the man or woman who finds good in all things — religion, science, art — and is the all-potent compromiser. "It is a fact, for thus have I heard," repeats the lover of Religion but not religions, the seeker of the verities of Soul-science, the student who compares ancient and modern philosophies and extracts the essence from them all.

Let the Christian turn Pagan. Then he will see the greater than historical truth of the Crucifixion Myth. Then he will begin to worship the Resurrection. He will learn that nobody died or need die for him. Crucifixion being a Process of Life is universal and omnipresent. The Cross in Nature is the Tree of Life on which the flower of Resurrection blooms and bears the fruit of Ascension. Within the fruit is the Seed of Supreme Life, that is, of all Divine Incarnations, which the Hindus call the *Bij*, which is Maha-Vishnu.

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AN Old Master said: "Turn your heart round and enter the origin. Do not search for what has sprung out of it! When you have gained the origin, what has sprung out of it will come to you of itself. If you want to know the origin, penetrate your own original heart. This heart is the source of all beings in the world and outside the world. When the heart stirs various things arise. But when the heart becomes empty, the various things also become empty. If your heart is driven round by neither good nor bad, then all things are just as they are."

—From *The Wisdom of the Zen Masters*, Irmgard Schloegl

## WHAT PROOF HAVE WE?

### I

[We reprint here, from *The Path* for February 1894, the first part of an address to the Blavatsky T.S., London, by Mrs. J. C. Keightley. The concluding part will appear in our next issue.—Eds.]

MR. CHAIRMAN, FRIENDS: Before entering upon the question of the evening I shall ask your permission to make use, temporarily, of the pronouns "you" and "we." By the use of the pronoun "you" I shall for the moment designate persons outside the Theosophical Society, who might or might not be inquirers about, or interested in, the Eastern Teachings. By the use of the pronoun "we" I shall designate all the members of the Theosophical Society, and I will beg you to remember that I recognize in reality no such distinction; that I make use of this nomenclature for the purposes of clear illustration only, and that experience has shown full well that there are many devoted Theosophists who have never heard that word, and many using the word who have not even grasped the outermost significance thereof.

The question of the evening is, "What proof have we?" Now this question is being asked daily more and more, is pressing upon us from all sides. For this reason, before entering into any argument as to the nature of proof itself, I wish to examine into the bearing and reason, in short the justification, of this question; I wish to see what reason there is in its being put to us at all. And above all it is necessary to know *why* it is put to us and who are the persons who bring it forward. For, at the very outset of his entrance into the Theosophical forum (and by "forum" I mean that place wherein a man may speak of his convictions — and be heard), the Theosophist finds himself almost immediately confronted by this question of proof. Too often the question converts the forum into the arena; the place where the combat as if for life, or for that which is dearer than life, goes on. The rightfulness of this question naturally becomes our first concern. When we speak of our belief you press up to us demanding this proof. What right have you to make that demand? There are two things which constitute a man's right: first, there is his need of a thing — his real need; that constitutes a right in the eyes of any moral community; *secondly*

— and a bad second — there are rights of custom. Let us examine the lesser rights first, *viz.*, the rights of custom.

Are you accustomed, then, in your daily life to demand the proof of things before you can accept them? Do you demand proof of the purity of the water you drink, of the food you eat, of the financial investments you make? On all these depend health, life, immunity from care. Do you go to the root of each subject, examining each for yourself, or do you take the asseveration of one or another expert on the subject? You do examine, I know, but do you examine to the very root? No! What journeys, what expense, what knowledge would that not involve! Hence the custom has arisen of accepting the verdict of an expert number of our fellow beings upon such points: each person is supposed to have examined more or less into the subject, though he may or may not have done so. Have you ever heard of the story of the aged gentleman who determined to take nothing without absolute proof and who was therefore found at midnight still longing to partake of his early cup of coffee, usually taken before rising, because the busy chemist called in had not yet had time to decide whether milk, sugar and coffee were pure? Would you not, then, be quite as belated in your daily life if you were to undertake to obtain unimpeachable proofs for yourselves? It has hence come about that you believe many an improbable thing without proof. You trust your friends, your wives, your societies, your churches, your scientists, yes, even your theologians, at times, without proof. It would be rare to find a man who would admit that he did not believe the world moves round the sun, and yet what *proof* has he of that? None. He has not even the knowledge necessary to obtain the real proof, that proof which is found alone in a man's own experience. In the same way he has accepted the presence of life, or lives, in the air and the water. He has accepted many a problem, many a discovery in this scientific age; he feels that to deny these would also make him a laughing stock. And if we ask him, "What proof have you of this or that?" he gives us in reply some well-known name.

To such a point has this practice been carried that Prof. Tyndal said some years ago in the United States that in his belief the testimony of a number of veracious witnesses constituted ample proof. We can give you this, and the world-known names besides if you will, in support of Theosophy, but you would not accept; yo

probably would laugh at it. In our opinion you would be quite right in doing so. Nevertheless, I point out to you that in thus meeting us at the outset with a demand for proof, you are setting up as a right that which you do not ask of any other department of the world's knowledge, except in a very few rare circumstances which I shall specify hereafter. To take up another point of the subject: not long ago I met a gentleman well known in all English-speaking countries as a literary man of wide and varied accomplishments. He spoke to me of certain matters in which I felt deep interest. So deep indeed was this interest that later on I said to him, "Can you give me any proof of what you advance?" What was his reply? It was this: "I did not ask you to believe the statements I was then putting forward, as matters of interest, of conversation, of what you please; I repeat, I did not seek your belief, consequently you have no right to ask proof of them. Proof may only justly be asked of a man who is endeavouring to secure your adherence to what he puts forward."

This I believe is the common tenet. Consequently, the Theosophist, young or old, educated or non-educated, wise in experience or just entering upon that experience, official or non-official, has an entire right to put forward his belief with all the eloquence and earnestness he can muster to the task without laying himself open to any charge of dogmatism, without giving you any right to demand his proofs. In order to be dogmatic he would have to make two assertions. (a) "These are the lines of my belief and I will never alter them, never enlarge them; they shall never grow fuller or wider than they now are. (b) I insist upon your accepting this present statement of mine as the only truth." If he has not unmistakably done these two things, he triumphantly escapes the charges of biased minds who see dogmatism in his earnestness and narrowness in his eloquent definition. I think if you will follow out these lines it will be plain to you that custom does not sanctify this demand so pressed upon Theosophists; no, not even that hallowed Custom which has been erected as a goddess in our midst but which changes her fashion and face with every year. Even the legal rule demands that the accuser, the challenger, shall prove his case.

In coming to man's *need* of proof we touch upon deeper ground. I do not mean to say by this that the need is deep in every man; as we have in fact seen, it rarely is so. But let us suppose a man

who has gone forth from all accustomed modes of thought, self-banished, as it were, from the normal realm of mind. Hungering for food, food for that man who is "the man that was and is and shall be, for whom the hour shall never strike," he comes and asks us "What proof have you of these things?" To *his* need we must perforce turn a compassionate ear. And yet, how little can we do; for look you, we are not divided from him in thought, or heart, or experience by any will whatsoever of our own. It is the mere fact that we have touched what he has not touched, that we have seen where his eyes were closed, that we have heard while he listened to another voice, it is this fact which makes the difference between us. It is not a difference of higher or lower, of greater or lesser knowledge, of superiority or inferiority; it is simply the difference of experience, as colourless as the difference between rates of vibration; we have evolved to a different point, or by differing means and our conclusions vary from his because the content of our consciousness varies from his. But in a moment, in the flash of an eye he may see all his past by another light, by the inner light, and may find himself transported much further along the great evolutionary path than we ourselves now are. All our knowledge is relative, and where a point of time makes up the situation, another point of time may alter its uttermost foundation.

When, further, a man has a real need of anything in this world what does he ordinarily do? Let us suppose that he wished to ask of a chemist, of the shoemaker at his awl or of the miner shut out from daylight and health in his pit; what would happen then? We can fancy him going to the miner and saying, "I want proof of the geological strata in which your ore lies; proof that yours is the proper method of excavating; proof that this ore which I see at the mouth of the pit has really been brought up by you and by no other and from the place which you describe." What is the answer? A jeer and a curse, perhaps. Or perhaps a question, "Are you a miner? If you be, come on down and see for yourself." And if you are not, a further jeer. So with the shoemaker. He shows you his finished article; but if you ask him to demonstrate to you that it was made precisely so and so, from the skinning of the dead beast and the tanning of the leather up to the final fashioning that fits it for the child's dainty foot, a stare of surprise will be the least and the most courteous reply you can expect. Or far

yourself entering the laboratory of Crookes or of Tesla or Edison and demanding proofs of his latest discoveries. Let us again take the Artist, the Sculptor, or any earthly creator you may choose, into this conclave, and let us in fancy ask him for the much-sought-for-proof. They may show us the finished thing; they may demonstrate all its parts; is that proof? No! No! How do we know that it was made as they say; by the methods they describe; with the materials they claim; under the conditions they assert? We would have to obtain their formula, or what science calls their working hypothesis; we would have to take that home with us, and securing just the same conditions, just the same materials, work out by their methods, duly prescribed, to their exact results. This being so, the first question they would ask of us is this, "Are you a man of my trade?"; and finding we were not, they too would turn aside from us with a more or less courteous putting-off as the case may be. It is clearly evident that every man who has attained, in any department of life, knows one primary thing, and that is, that no man can understand those results which are *his* proofs unless he also knows the working hypothesis and has experience of the trade.

What I am coming to is this. In order to have your proof, you must work for it. In all this great universe there is no proof obtainable except by work; whether work of the body; work of the eye; work of the mind, that great overseer which sums up the results of all other classes of work; work there must be or proof there is none. And, speaking for myself, I honour, I may say revere, the man or woman strong enough, patient enough, determined enough to get proof. For the only proof lies in man's own experience. There is no other that does not melt away like the hoar frost on the mountain, like the foam dashed from the turbulent sea.

It thus comes about that the attitude of the Theosophist, or indeed of any really thinking person, is the attitude imposed by Nature herself. To know a thing you must be it; you must have experience of it. When the Theosophist quotes from the Christian Bible those most occult words, "Lead the life if ye would know the doctrine," he is not putting you off because of any lack of proof of his own, because of any want of power of speech or eloquence, because he cannot point out the work, the method of work, or the way. No; he is uttering one of the eternal verities, and great Nature herself sustains him. Experience you must have, be-

fore you know a thing in its depth and breadth and length. In matters of the mind this experience may be purely mental, as in matters of sympathy; but mental experience in certain souls is at once the most objective and most evident of all experiences. Hence when you ask us for proof we know well that you are asking what you ask of very few. We know well that you rarely put your theologians or scientists or great artisans or inventors or mechanics or labourers — no, not even your statesmen or your women — to this test. Nevertheless, the true Theosophist, recognizing that he is in part his brother's keeper, will not return the answer of Cain, who cried, "Am I my brother's keeper?", but, on the contrary, he will meet you with a fact in nature — the fact that you must work for your proof even as he worked, and that without such work the facts which he may offer will never become an integral part of your experience, will never be accepted by the thinking man within you as a truth in which he has part.

And now let me ask, What is proof? In Western lands there is a maxim, "The law is common sense." Let us, then, have recourse to this embodied common sense in order to make out our reply. Last week I asked one of the ablest barristers in London for a definition of proof. After a little puzzlement he said that the best reply he could make me would be that proof was "evidence sufficient to satisfy the Court." That sounds well; but Courts vary. There are some inquirers who assert that the production of phenomena would be sufficient proof of all the teachings of the East. This reminds us of the tale of two Rabbis, the first of whom was endeavouring to prove to the second that he knew more of the Supreme Being than his friend. In proof of this the learned Rabbi No. I offered to cause the walls of the temple where they sat to fall down. The second Rabbi placidly remarked: "Friend, that would prove that thou didst indeed know how to cause walls to fall down but it would prove nothing else." Moreover, a law of the human mind very often commented upon would render such phenomena valueless. I am again reminded of another tale, the newest parrot story as imported from America (with the profanity discreetly left out for the parrot not being intentionally, or, as we may say, consciously profane, I think this little attention is due to him in a Theosophical Lodge). My parrot lived in a shop of a seller of fireworks, and was used to seeing very brilliant specimens of coruscations se

off for the benefit of intending purchasers. These gave him great delight. In fact, he became quite hardened to them and began to regard them with an air of cynical and accustomed habit. One day, however, the shop blew up; the parrot found himself landed in a distant and barren field, minus his feathers (for he did not take his wardrobe with him on that rapid journey). Scratching his naked head with his bleeding claw, he exclaimed: "Ain't it wonderful! What *will* happen next?" This attitude is that of the phenomena seeker who, witnessing more and more, desires the repetition of the same experience over and over, but a little stronger each time; as witness the Spiritualists, who with all their remarkable phenomena have built up no real philosophy. But I will not take up your time by enlarging further upon this head, but shall be happy if anything I may have said will serve as a text which you can follow out in your own mind. And to those to whom the whole discourse may appear dull I would offer a prescription embodied in two of George Herbert's most exquisite lines addressed to the Church-goer:

"And if the preacher weary,  
God takes the text and preaches patience."

I am quite sure if you learn patience, Sovereign Patience, from my discourse, you will have learned a virtue greater than any I have within my gift.

*(To be concluded)*

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LOWER MANAS is that aspect of Manas which is connected with, and interested in, physical existence; the astral-physical brain is the instrument of registration and expression of the memories of physical life, the storehouse, so to speak, of personal experiences. When the person is not occupied actively in thought and action with some subject or object, the astral-physical brain presents pictures of past scenes, thoughts and feelings; herein lies the cause of most dreams. Even when awake and active, there underlies our mental activity this memory stratum of personality which colours what we think, say and do. In all ways, in the generality of human beings, this automatic resurgence obscures the action of the Higher Mind, the Real Ego.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## THE ETHICS OF THEOSOPHY

OUR WORLD is in sore need of an ethical philosophy — that is acknowledged by all. We are convinced that Theosophy is such a philosophy; we are convinced that it is capable of transforming the attitude of the individual, and of changing the mind of the race. Though immemorial and ancient, “in the course of time the mighty art was lost” — that art of living founded on the synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy; and it was H. P. Blavatsky who restored it in the modern world. “It is even the same exhaustless, secret, eternal doctrine” of the *Bhagavad-Gita* (IV. 3) about which she said:

To the public in general and the readers of the *Secret Doctrine* I may repeat what I have stated all along, and which I now clothe in the words of Montaigne: Gentlemen, “I HAVE HERE MADE ONLY A NOSEGAY OF CULLED FLOWERS, AND HAVE BROUGHT NOTHING OF MY OWN BUT THE STRING THAT TIES THEM.” Pull the “string” to pieces and cut it up in shreds, if you will. As for the nosegay of FACTS — you will never be able to make away with these. You can only ignore them, and no more. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. xlvi)

The Ethics of Theosophy are its most vital aspect, and they are shown to be rational and profound by the metaphysics of Theosophy. Theosophy, wrote H.P.B.,

was intended to stem the current of materialism, and also that of spiritualistic phenomenalism and the worship of the Dead. It had to guide the spiritual awakening that has now begun, and not to pander to psychic cravings which are but another form of materialism. For by “materialism” is meant not only an anti-philosophical negation of pure spirit, and, even more, materialism in conduct and action — brutality, hypocrisy, and, above all, selfishness — but also the fruits of a disbelief in all but material things, a disbelief which has increased enormously during the last century, and which has led many, after a denial of all existence other than that in matter, into a blind belief in the *materialization of Spirit*. The tendency of modern civilization is a reaction towards animalism, towards a development of those qualities which conduce to the success in life of man as an animal in the struggle for animal existence. Theosophy seeks to develop the human nature in man in addition to the animal, and at the sacrifice of the superfluous animality which modern life and

materialistic teachings have developed to a degree which is abnormal for the human being at this stage of his progress. (*Five Messages*, p. 6)

To combat this materialism in conduct and action, which still flourishes, Theosophy offers principles and rules of ethics not for mere belief but for actual practice, and thus teaches the animal-man to be a human-man. Theosophy insists that man shall understand why he should do good and how, and thus advocates the double activity of learning and doing. To do good seems an easy task, but to do it rightly—! The knowledge of what is good to do is not easily acquired. Who is ignorant of the elements of good life and good labour? None; and yet when called upon to define what self-sacrifice is, or whence selfishness, or why one should be sober, or how to mortify the personal self—there is not only difference of opinion but a grand confusion. Theosophy helps its students to give definite values and names to definite principles and things; thus its abstract philosophy produces a very concrete system of ethics.

Between philosophy and ethics there is a divorce; Theosophy regards them as two sides of a shield and offers an ethical philosophy by which life is to be lived day by day. Theosophy has joined together what theology of every organized religion succeeded in pulling asunder. Theosophy has garbed in reasoned explanation the ethics of the old world—of the *Sermon on the Mount*, the *Tao-te-King*, the *Dhammapada*, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and has made its rules and injunctions useful for personal application.

*Teach to eschew all causes; the ripple of effects, as the great tidal wave, thou shalt let run its course.*

This ancient aphorism is once again taught in Theosophy.

Work with causes; leave effects to work themselves out; “the suppression of one single bad *cause* will suppress not one, but a variety of bad effects.” If we inquire—wherein lies the *cause* of human misery? we learn that

Verily there is not an accident in our lives, not a misshapen day, or a misfortune, that could not be traced back to our own doings in this or in another life. If one breaks the laws of Harmony . . . one must be prepared to fall into the chaos one has oneself produced.

And what is true of the individual is equally true of any assem-

blage of individuals — a nation, a race, etc. Laws of Harmony are named laws of Life and, collectively, the Law of Ethical causation. That Law

predestines nothing and no one... creates nothing, nor does it design. It is man who plans and creates causes, and Karmic law adjusts the effects; which adjustment is not an act, but universal harmony, tending ever to resume its original position, like a bough, which, bent down too forcibly, rebounds with corresponding vigour. If it happen to dislocate the arm that tried to bend it out of its natural position, shall we say that it is the bough which broke our arm, or that our own folly has brought us to grief? (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 305)

Two difficulties arise: first, people find it very difficult to live by the discipline which alone uncovers the causes of events to their gaze; secondly, the zest, the enjoyment, the feeling of emotional more-ness are so bound up with effects, that most people do not like to leave them alone — till suffering compels them. People eat the fruit of Karma, and even when their attention is drawn to the fact that it is poison-fruit, they say — “may be so, but it tastes good”; once again, it is abject suffering which dissuades them from pursuing the old course. These defaulters include even students of Theosophy — for they too are mortals on whom the yoke of sense presses heavily.

However, from this central truth of Theosophical ethics an entirely new attitude to life, work and people arises. Altruism and disinterestedness assume new meanings; luxuries and necessities take new values; and altogether new standards of life reveal themselves. Not only is all this true in the world of objects; the affections and attachments undergo a transformation — blood-ties, religious bonds, patriotism, are assigned different values. Further still progress and civilization, knowledge and inventions of science do quite new garbs. The past and the future lose their vagueness; they begin to live in new forms. Just as for the astronomer and the mathematician the firmament speaks a language other than that for the ordinary man, so also space and time and all objects therein tell a tale of themselves to the Theosophist, different from what falls on the ears of flesh. Aspirants and students of Theosophy try to gain and retain this new attitude, and among them are those who belong to no Theosophical organization.

But is not this task a special one, which the large masses of people cannot undertake? — we will be asked. Theosophy answers — that it is not wholly true. For, there are four links of the golden chain which should bind the masses and the classes in every land, as well as nations and races, into one family, one Universal Brotherhood. They are (1) Universal Unity and Causation; (2) Human Solidarity; (3) the Law of Karma; (4) Reincarnation. These lead to a full recognition of equal rights and privileges for all, and without distinction of race, colour, social position, or birth. Let the natural leaders of the masses, those whose modes of thought and action will sooner or later be adopted by those masses, begin to learn and live by the ethics of Theosophy, and they will be able to teach these facts, suited to the mass *mind*, and elevate it. For every class as for every temperament Theosophy has instruction and guidance.

Lest all this may sound arrogant, or like making special claims on behalf of Theosophy, we will quote these words of H.P.B.:

Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor. (*Five Messages*, p. 8)

We will close with a description of the practical working of the doctrine of *Universal Brotherhood* which the Masters of H.P.B. gave:

*He who does not practise altruism; he who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or poorer than himself; he who neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation, or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery; he who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defence as he would undertake his own — is no Theosophist.*

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## ACQUISITION AND APPLICATION

ACQUISITION and Application have a certain similarity of sound, but, unfortunately, in practice, they can be totally apart. What is the good of acquiring, *i.e.*, getting possession of, say, a useful tool, or a valuable item of knowledge, and not applying, *i.e.*, making use of, either of them for some worthwhile end?

We would not be so foolish with regard to the tool, which is an obvious, tangible *something*, but when it comes to knowledge, whether procured deliberately through study, or gained by chance (though chance it never is), we often carelessly allow it to slip away again from our memory, making no use of it whatsoever. We acquire, but do not apply. So what is the good of acquiring it in the first place?

“We often,” says Mr. Judge, “find Theosophists among themselves debating complicated doctrines that have no present application to practical life” (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 54). That is on a par, say, with those householders who spend their money on some article for the home, which is superfluous at the moment, but, if put past, might just possibly prove useful in the future, provided they do not forget where they put it.

“At the same time,” continues Mr. Judge, “other members and some inquirers breathe a sigh of relief when anyone directs the inquiries into such a channel as shall cause all the doctrines to be extended to daily life and there applied.”

Sensible people! Practical people! For then there is no gap between Acquisition and Application. Each of the twain ensures the value of the other, as it is meant to do. “Each Theosophist,” says Mr. Judge, “should strive to so understand Theosophical philosophy (Acquisition) as to be able to expound it in a practical and easily understood manner (Application), so that he may be a wider philanthropist by ministering to the needs of the inner man.” (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 53)

Returning to the householders mentioned above, a storeroom can become uncomfortably crowded, especially if there has not been good judgement as to what is acquired and put into it, but only a haphazard picking up of this or that. Even so, says Mr. Judge speaking of the “ethical application of Theosophy,” when we have come to know the doctrines, if our mental furniture (as we may call it) should “conflict with old opinions, those must be cast off...

The spirit of Theosophy must be sought for; a sincere application of its principles to life and act should be made." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 33)

Sincere Application, thus practised, fully justifies Acquisition. It transforms the latter from a mere selfish mental pleasure into a valuable aid to the promulgation of Theosophy. Just as wastage of money on goods that are only to be consigned to a storeroom cannot be justified if we know of cases of immediate need and poverty, so cannot Acquisition, however estimable in itself, be approved (certainly not by Mr. Judge) if it is only for our personal satisfaction.

"It is wiser," he points out, "for Theosophists to study the doctrine of Brotherhood and its application," Brotherhood being, as students hardly need reminding, the core of the Theosophical Movement. Rather than a far-reaching search for knowledge he would have students "purify their motives and actions, so that after patient work for many lives, if necessary, in the great cause of humanity, they may at last reach that point where all knowledge and all power will be theirs by right." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 18*, p. 4)

By right! Not simply by the effort, or even the power, of individual acquisition. Acquiring personally, or rather, the urge to acquire personally, entails the risk of becoming self-centred. Like the householders with their possessions secure behind locked doors, our Theosophy may be for our personal advantage only. Therefore Mr. Judge urges Branch membership if possible. It is a safeguard against egotism. "The work of a Branch ought to be entered into by all the members with an unselfish spirit. . . . Every individual, by eliminating the desire to get knowledge for himself, will thereby make the Branch as a whole open and porous to the unseen but real and powerful influences managed from behind the scenes by the great personages who have as a part of their work in the world the theosophic movement, and who are constantly at work among us for the purpose of aiding those who are sincere and unselfish." (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 74)

What we have acquired can then be applied usefully, for "the work and influence of a Branch hinge upon the knowledge of Theosophical doctrine, upon the motives, ideas, and ideals of the members," i.e., upon what those members have acquired and are able to contribute to the whole. (*Ibid.*, p. 70)

Acquisition. Application. Let us unite the two. They are valuable only in partnership. That Mr. Judge proved this personally we

learn from one of his letters to an inquirer, in which he says, "Every little thing I ever learned I have now found out to be of use to me in this work of ours." Here we see Acquisition, admirable in itself, transmuted into Application, which is the essential. "Theosophy," says the Sage to the Student, "is a dead thing if it is not turned into life." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 122)

Beyond both, far ahead, lies Attainment, to be reached only by the help of the other two. So let us, for the present, concentrate on these, as a faithful disciple of W.Q.J. would have us do. "Apply, apply, apply the teaching," says Robert Crosbie.

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LIFE is not so short but that there is always time enough for courtesy.

Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is the triumph of enthusiasm; nothing great was ever achieved without it.

The reward of a thing well done is to have done it.

Shall I tell you the secret of the true scholar? It is this: Every man I meet is my master in some point, and in that I learn of him.

Good manners are made up of petty sacrifices.

He has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear.

That which we are we shall teach, not voluntarily, but involuntarily.

—EMERSON

## THE NUMBER SEVEN AND OUR SOCIETY

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THE thoughtful reader must have pondered well over the mysterious import that the number *Seven* seems to have always had among the ancients, as succinctly epitomized in our June number, as well as the theory of cycles, discussed in the July issue. It was there stated that the German scientists are now giving attention to this manifestation of the numerical harmony and periodicity of the operations of Nature. A series of statistical observations, embracing some centuries of historical events, tend to show that the ancients must have been perfectly aware of this law when constructing their systems of philosophy. In fact, when statistical science shall have been fully perfected, as it seems likely to be, there will be constantly increasing proofs that the evolution of heroes, poets, military chieftains, philosophers, theologians, great merchants, and all other remarkable personages, is as capable of mathematical estimate upon the basis of the potentiality of numbers, as the return of a comet by the rules of astronomical calculations. The comparatively modern system of life insurance rests upon the calculated expectancy of life on the average at certain ages; and, while nothing is so uncertain as the probable longevity of any single individual in a community, nothing is more certain than that the probable life-chance of any one person, in the mass of population, can be known on the basis of the general average of human life. In fact, as M. de Cazeneuve, in the *Journal du Magnétisme*, justly observes, the law of numerical proportions is verified in every department of the physical sciences. We see it in chemistry as the law of definite proportions and multiple proportions; in physics, as the law of optics, acoustics, electricity, etc.; in mineralogy, in the wonderful phenomena of crystallization; in astronomy, in the celestial mechanics. Well may the writer, above quoted, remark: "Physical and moral laws have so infinitely numerous points of contact, that, if we have not as yet reached the point where we can demonstrate their identity, it is none the less certain that there exists between them a very great analogy."

We have attempted to show how, by a sort of common instinct, a peculiar solemnity and mystical significance has been given the number *Seven* among all people, at all times. It now remains for us to cite, from the experience of the Theosophical Society, some

facts which indicate how its power has manifested itself with us. Continually our experiences have been associated with *Seven* or some combination or multiple of it. And it must be remembered that, in not a single instance, was there any intention that the number should play a part in our affairs; but, on the contrary, what happened was in many cases exactly the reverse of what we desired. It was only the other day that we began to take any note of the striking chain of circumstances, and some have only been recalled now at the moment of writing.

The two chief founders of our Society were the President, Colonel Olcott, and the Conductor of this Magazine. When they made each other's acquaintance (in 1874), the office number of the former was *seven*, the house number of the latter *seventeen*. The President's Inaugural Address before the Society was delivered November 17, 1875; the Headquarters were established in the *47th* street (the up-town streets in New York are all designated by numbers), and Colonel Olcott's office was removed to 71 Broadway. On the *17th* December 1878, our delegates to India sailed for London; the voyage, owing to storms and fogs, lasted *seventeen* days; on the *17th* January 1879, we left London for Liverpool to take the steamer for Bombay, got on board the next day, but lay all night in the Mersey and on the *19th* — the *seventeenth* day from our landing in England we got to sea. On March 2 — *seventeen* days after reaching Bombay — we removed to the bungalows where we have ever since been living. On the 23rd March, *thirty-five* ( $7 \times 5$ ) days after landing Colonel Olcott delivered his first public oration on Theosophy, at Framji Cowasji Institute, Bombay. July 7, the first Prospectus, announcing the intended foundation of *The Theosophist* was written on the *27th* September, the first "form" was made up at the printing-office, and on October 1 — our *227th* in India — the magazine appeared.

But we anticipate events. In the beginning of April, last year Colonel Olcott and the Conductor of this Magazine went to the N. W. Provinces to meet Swami Dayanand, and were absent from the Headquarters *thirty-seven* days, and visited *seven* different cities during the trip. In December of that year we again went northward, and on the *21st* ( $7 \times 3$ ) of that month, a special meeting of the Society of Benares Pandits was held to greet Colonel Olcott and elect him an Honorary Member in token of the friendliness of the

orthodox Hindu pandits for our Society — a most important event.

Coming down to the Ceylon trip, we find, on consulting the diary, that our party sailed from Bombay May 7, the steamer starting her engines at 7.7 A.M. We reached Point de Galle on the 7th. At the first meeting in Ceylon of candidates for initiation, a group of *seven* persons presented themselves. At Panadure, *seven* were also initiated first, the evening proving so boisterous and stormy that the rest could not leave their houses. At Colombo, *fourteen* ( $7 \times 2$ ) were initiated the first night, while, at the preliminary meeting to organize the local branch temporarily, there were *twenty-seven*. At Kandy, *seventeen* comprised the first body of candidates. Returning to Colombo, we organized the "Lanka Theosophical Society," a scientific branch, on the 17th of the month, and on the evening, when the Panadure branch was formed, *thirty-five* names ( $7 \times 5$ ) were registered as fellows. *Seven* priests were initiated here during this second visit, and at Bentota, where we tarried to organize a branch, there were again *seven* priests admitted. *Thirty-five* ( $7 \times 5$ ) members organized the Matara branch; and here again the priests taken into fellowship numbered *seven*. So, too, at Galle, *twenty-seven* persons were present on the night of the organization — the rest being unavoidably absent; and at Welitara the number was *twenty-one*, or three times *seven*. Upon counting up the entire number of lay Buddhists included in our *seven* Ceylon branches, that are devoted to the interests of that faith, we find our mystical number *seven* occupying the place of units, and what adds to the singularity of the fact is that the same is the case with the sum-total of priests who joined our Parent Society.

Our septenary fatality followed us all throughout the return voyage to Bombay. Of the Delegation, two members, having urgent business, took an earlier steamer from Colombo, thus reducing our number to *seven*. Two more fully intended to come home from Galle by the vessel of the 7th July, but, as it turned out, she did not touch there and so, perforce, our band of *seven* came together on the 12th — the *fifty-seventh* day after our landing. The sea voyage from Ceylon to Bombay may be said to begin upon leaving Colombo, since the run from Galle to that port is in Ceylonese waters. From friends — five laymen and two priests — again *seven* — who came aboard at Colombo to bid us farewell, we learned that the July *Theosophist* had reached there, and being naturally anxious

to see a copy, urgently requested that one should be sent us to look at, if possible, before 5 o'clock P.M., the hour at which it was thought we would leave port. This was promised us, and, after our friends left, we watched every craft that came from shore. Five o'clock came, then six and half-past six, but no messenger or magazine for us. At last, precisely at *seven*, one little canoe was seen tossing in the heavy sea that was running; she approached, was alongside; on her bows, painted on a white ground was the Number *Seven*; a man climbed over the ship's rail, and in his hand was the paper we were waiting for! When the anchor was up and the pilot's bell rang for starting the engines, two of our party ran to look at the ship's clock: it stood at *seven* minutes past 7 P.M.

At Tuticorin, Mr. Padshah, one of our party, went ashore as his desire was to return by rail to Bombay, so as to see Southern India; the little boat in which he went ashore we noticed, after she had got clear from the crowd of craft alongside, bore the number forty-seven. Going down the coast on our outward voyage, our steamer touched at *fourteen* ( $7 \times 2$ ) ports; coming home, our vessel owing to the monsoon weather and the heavy surf along the Malabar Coast, visited only *seven*. And, finally, as though to show us that our septenate destiny was not to be evaded, it was at exactly *seven* o'clock — as the log of the *S. S. Chanda* shows — when we sighted the pilot off Bombay harbour, at 7.27 the bell rang to slow down the engines, at 7.47 the pilot stepped on the "bridge" and took command of the ship, and, at 9.37, our anchor was dropped off the Apollo Bunder, and our voyage was thus ended on the 24th of July the *seventy-seventh* day after the one on which we had sailed for Ceylon. To ascribe to mere coincidence this strange, if not altogether unprecedented, concatenation of events, in which the Number *Seven* was, as the astrologers might call it, "in the ascendant," would be an absurdity. The most superficial examination of the doctrine of chance will suffice to show that. And, if, indeed, we must admit that some mysterious law of numerical potentialities is asserting itself in shaping the fortunes of the Theosophical Society, whither shall we turn for an explanation but to those ancient Asiatic philosophies which were built upon the bedrock of Occult Science?

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## INFLUENCING THE RACE MIND

It is a truism that men and women in their millions live without any objective in life, without any goal to attain. And yet each one, a peasant as well as a prostitute, lives according to some ideas which, however vague and shadowy, are innate in their very consciousness. These innate intuitions persist, and no matter how much they are hemmed in by outer environment and worldly events, they do not fail to assert themselves from time to time. Outer influences from religion, from science, from literature, penetrate their minds and hearts and unbeknown to them affect their outlook on the world and their behaviour with others, though the intuitive urge is still there.

A more direct influence is that of politics: Nationalism has become the religion of the masses. Politicians are in a position to wield their power directly on the mind of the masses. Be they overbearing dictators or persuasive democrats, they are looked upon by the masses as practical instruments for the improvement and betterment of life; and so politicians have today a greater following than popes and bishops or doctors and engineers, or even creative writers. The power and influence of the politician is so great that popes and bishops, and many men of science as of letters, become his servile instruments. The politician calls out the tune of blessings or curses from religious preachers; the politician commands the scientist to manufacture deadly weapons; the politician has even begun, and has succeeded in certain countries, to order the poet and the playwright to supply the particular demand he creates.

Next, ours has been rightly called the Age of Science. While the influence of the politician is more direct, that of the scientist is more lasting. Scientific achievements have convinced the senses and the brains of men to such an extent and in such a manner that they have learnt to rely on science for their emancipation and enlightenment. Now, science has emphasized the mechanistic and the materialistic aspects of life and has created in the people the desire for what is called a high standard of living, by which is meant physical conveniences, bodily comforts and enhanced sense existence.

But in face of knowledge and inventions of the men of science, the masses are experiencing frustration. A high standard of living does not necessarily bring happiness and satisfaction; it has its snags and sometimes creates more problems than it solves. People are

beginning to gain a deeper insight into affairs and are fast coming to the conclusion that something more than scientific knowledge and inventions is necessary. Even when bread and butter are produced plentifully, these are not available for hungry mouths; and still more—even when these are made available and a high standard of physical life is established, man feels the need of something more so that he may use and enjoy the leisure which increase of knowledge and scientific inventions is forcing upon him. Physical means of subsistence alone do not make a man's life complete.

And so the tide is turning.

Idealists in every country, be they scientists or artists or philosophers, are beginning to recognize that unless the politician himself becomes an idealist and broadens his vision and deepens his insight, the religion of nationalism will destroy the nations and therefore civilization itself.

Among these idealists there are a large number of men of letters. The influence of the pen may not directly penetrate the consciousness of the people as the word of the orator-politician does; it may not produce as quick a response as the word of the scientist does; but it does filter through, making a more permanent dent in the heart of the Race, for the influence of the pen in sweetening as well as inspiring the life of the masses is very powerful, however indirect it may be. As H.P.B. wrote in her article "The Tidal Wave":

Look around you and behold! Think of what you see and hear, and draw therefrom your conclusions. The age of crass materialism, of Soul insanity and blindness, is swiftly passing away. A death struggle between Mysticism and Materialism is no longer at hand, but is already raging. And the party which will win the day at this supreme hour will become the master of the situation and of the future; *i.e.*, it will become the autocrat and sole disposer of the *millions* of men already born and to be born, up to the latter end of the twentieth century. If the signs of the times can be trusted it is not the *Animalists* who will remain conquerors. This is warranted us by the many brave and prolific authors and writers who have arisen of late to defend the rights of Spirit to reign over matter. Many are the honest, aspiring Souls now raising themselves like a dead wall against the torrent of the muddy waters of Materialism. And facing the hitherto domineering flood which is still steadily carrying off into

unknown abysses the fragments from the wreck of the dethroned, cast-down Human Spirit, they now command: "So far hast thou come; but thou shalt go no further!"...

Literature — once wrote a critic — is the confession of social life, reflecting all its sins, and all its acts of baseness as of heroism. In this sense a book is of a far greater importance than any man. Books do not represent one man, but they are the mirror of a host of men....

A new era has begun in literature, this is certain. New thoughts and new interests have created new intellectual needs; hence a new race of authors is springing up. And this new species will gradually and imperceptibly shut out the old one, those fogies of yore who, though they still reign nominally, are allowed to do so rather by force of habit than predilection. It is not he who repeats obstinately and parrot-like the old literary formulae and holds desperately to publishers' traditions, who will find himself answering to the new needs; not the man who prefers his narrow party discipline to the search for the long-exiled Spirit of man and the now lost *truths*; not these, but verily he who, parting company with his beloved "authority," lifts boldly and carries on unflinchingly the standard of the *Future Man*. It is finally those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests and *selfishness*, will have bravely fought for human rights and *man's divine nature*, who will become, if they only win, the teachers of the masses in the coming century, and so their benefactors....

If asked, what is it then that will help, we answer boldly: Theosophical literature; hastening to add that under this term, neither books concerning adepts and phenomena, nor the Theosophical Society publications are meant.

Take advantage of, and profit by, the "tidal wave" which is now happily overpowering half of Humanity. Speak to the awakening Spirit of Humanity, to the human Spirit and the Spirit in man, these three in One and the One in All.... It is writers of this kind that are needed in our day of reawakening; not authors writing for wealth or fame, but fearless apostles of the living Word of Truth, moral healers of the pustulous sores of our century. (*She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*)

There is a mental revolution in progress, though it is obscured by the economic and political turmoil. The masses are struggling not only for more money but also — struggling to free their minds

and their hearts of old beliefs and notions. They are struggling to create a new social order in which class competitions and nationalistic rivalries will disappear; they are struggling to establish a mode of living in which all the constituents of their being should play their legitimate parts, including the urge within their minds and the aspirations of their hearts. The masses do not know how to formulate with precision the intuitive surge they dimly feel. How can the creative artist best help in guiding the emergence of a new idealistic philosophy?

Creative writers are often moved by the feeling aspect of Nature which expresses itself as Compassion and Altruism. Just as men of science seeking and pursuing truth contact the hidden mind of Nature and gather knowledge, so poets and novelists, essayists and dramatists, are fitted by temperament to touch the comely heart of Mother Nature and to feel the Presence of Compassion which functions everywhere and at all times, but for which the scientist has little use.

Freeing himself from the limitations of the effete forms of life, leaving the scientist to work with that aspect of Nature which is red in tooth and claw, and specializing in feeling the Divinity which works graciously in gentleness everywhere in Nature, the creative artist is in an excellent position to help our civilization. He can take modern humanity away from the crushing, Soul-denying doctrines of modern science, away from the warring, nationalistic creeds of the politician, away from the narrowing, illiberal sectarianism of the church, the synagogue, the mosque; and whither? Towards the Truth that the Spirit in man is alive and functioning, towards the Goodness born of the realization of the Brotherhood of all men, towards the Beauty that sees Order in chaos, and Harmony in the manifold differentiations of great Nature.

“As a man thinks, so he becomes.” Masses of men and women are given mental food by the writers. Creative writers cannot take lightly their responsibility towards the mind of the people, and at the present hour those people are looking out for ideas and thoughts which will go towards their own formulation of a philosophy of life. Men of letters can offer a thousand applications phrased in forms of loveliness and beauty, and the Truths to be so phrased may be tabulated thus:

I. Man is a Spiritual Being, a God in the making who is divine

in essence and in substance; the human Soul may be compared to an artist who creates with the hammer of reason and the chisel of will a self-consciousness more and more free to think for itself, more and more able to sing the Chant of Unity, Harmony and Compassion.

II. Humanity is one indivisible whole: some of us are hands and feet in the body of the Race; others are heads and still others are hearts; but each is here to fulfil his own mission, to maintain health, prosperity and harmony in that human Family to which all of us belong.

III. Nature is not purposeless; her movements are not aimless and fortuitous. Justice operates in the moral world as causation does in the material world. Man's ideation elevates Nature when she labours with the aid of that Law of Justice.

The Spirituality of Man, the Solidarity of all Mankind, the Justice of the Law of Compensation — these are the philosophical Truths which can make the lives of all inspiring, beneficent, contented.

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BE PATIENT, kindly and wise. for perhaps in the next moment of life, the light will shine out upon thy companion, and you discover that you are but a blind man, claiming to see. Remember this, that you own not one thing in this world. Your wife is but a gift, your children are but loaned to you. All else you possess is given to you only while you use it wisely. Your body is not yours, for Nature claims it as her property. Do you not think, Oh Man, that it is the height of arrogance for you to sit in judgment upon any other created thing while you, a beggar, are going about in a borrowed robe?

If misery, want and sorrow are thy portion for a time, be happy that it is not death. If it is death be happy there is no more of life.

—W. Q. JUDGE.

## THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

Life invests itself with inevitable conditions, which the unwise seek to dodge, which one and another brags that he does not know; that they do not touch him; but the brag is on his lips, the conditions are in his soul. If he escapes them in one part, they attack him in another more vital part.

—EMERSON

WE NEED HELP in the business of living, but only so that *we can* live, not that someone will live for us. "Casting our burden upon the Lord" will not help us; it is the carrying of our own burden that will bring out our character and strength and lead us on, and we gain courage to begin this work when we realize that perfection is not to be reached by one jump but by gradual stages, starting from *where we now are*, and progressing life after life.

The first great lesson we learn is the first truth taught by the Buddha — Sorrow is. There is no life without sorrow or suffering in some form or another — physical, emotional, mental. The baby suffers in the process of growth; the child, in its developing emotional life; the adult, in his anguish. We only need to look at the lives of those around us or read biographies of the celebrated to know this is true.

Death, the universal factor, brings sorrow, sometimes one of the greatest of sorrows. Its very universality ought to show us that an outpouring of grief at the death of a loved one is unseemly. The Buddha asked the young mother with her dead babe at her breast to go and fetch him a few mustard seeds — only they must have come from a home where death had not visited. The mother searched and came again to the Buddha, but without the mustard seeds. He then said what we all should learn: "The grief which all hearts share grows less for one." In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare makes the King say to the sorrowing Prince, "Your father lost a father; that father lost his." While we are alive and well we should face the fact that death is inevitable. Much of sorrow, however, is unnecessary: it is produced by our own actions, feelings and thoughts here and now. This kind of sorrow and suffering can be prevented, but only when we realize that at the present stage of evolution suffering and sorrow are the lot of man. Once this fact is faced, the inquiring mind asks, Why should this be? What is the cause? Having found the

cause, the next step is to find out how it can cease to be. It was because the Prince Siddhartha, who became the Buddha, saw the suffering and sorrows of the world that he began his search for the answer to life, and he made this the basis of his first sermon in the Deer Park near Benares.

This question cannot, as he showed, be satisfactorily answered unless to the idea of reincarnation is added its twin doctrine — Karma, or the law of cause and effect, beneficent and retributive. We already know that this law works in material nature, for on it all our daily living is based. We know that there can be no effect without a cause, and no cause without an effect, materially speaking, but we are not so familiar with the ramifications of this law as regards the spoken word, actions, thoughts, feelings. None of these can escape being changed into effects, and these effects come back to the producer of the causes. The old proverb, "Curses, like chickens, come home to roost," is fundamentally true of all life, for whatever happens or is, is the result of a prior cause.

If this is true, then our character, our environment, our opportunities and lack of them, are all effects from causes generated by us, somewhere, sometime.

Till recently, in the West, the factor bringing effects to us has been said to be God, the Creator. Christian scriptures contain such statements as, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "... With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Translate the word God by Law, and many misconceptions are cleared up, for, though we see the inevitability of the statement and indeed its dreadfulness, as it seems at first, it holds in itself its redemption, for nothing is *final*. The law is inevitable, but each *new* cause produces *its* effect, and therefore we, the actors, are masters of our Fate. We can sow what causes we like; nothing hinders us except the effects from our own past causes, and these are only obstacles to be overcome. It is essential that we should think on these ideas. They are well expressed by Sir Edwin Arnold in *The Light of Asia*, giving the Buddha's teachings:

... each man's life

The outcome of his former living is;

The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes,

The bygone right breeds bliss.

He cometh, reaper of the things he sowed,  
 Sesamum, corn, so much cast in past birth;  
 And so much weed and poison-stuff, which mar  
 Him and the aching earth.

And lest we say that this is not true because we do not see that the wicked suffer, but observe that it is often the good man who suffers, we read on: "... tomorrow it will judge, or after many days."

Here is the science of living, the explanation of all the mishaps great or small, of life, of worlds and of men. Here is a statement of the Great Ones which we can prove for ourselves, if not fully, at least in part. Logically, it is a perfect answer to the causes of wars, crime, misery, opportunities, incidents of birth, race and locality. It is the logical answer to those otherwise inexplicable incidents of "one being taken and another left" which we read of in air accidents, bombings and other calamities. In Lin Yutang's words, "The moment we live in, is a causal and indissolvable link between yesterday and tomorrow." These things are not mysteries into which we may not pry, but operations of law for us to watch. Here, too, is the explanation of the differences in character in the members of one family, differences of "talents" or capacities. This conception removes the idea of someone else punishing us or rewarding us and we see the truth that, "Ye suffer from yourselves. None else compels."

If we were sure that our actions would undoubtedly bring lawful reactions, *i.e.*, reactions in terms of the action, then we could begin to build our life on a scientific basis.

For this, let us take into consideration a further division of our nature, and see that the lower part of us includes our physical body, our feelings and desires, and our ordinary thinking, all that we call the personality. It lives in an environment in which other personalities also live, all brought together by previous actions, thoughts and feelings, and therefore the present interaction between these personalities is either pleasant or unpleasant. It is important to remember that, pleasant or unpleasant, it is the result of previous actions of us all, however remote from the present.

The first result of this line of thinking is that very many of our bad tendencies fall away. Revenge, for instance, which is a canker in the mind and heart, can no longer be felt, for nothing can happen to us which is not our own doing in the past returned to us as an effect. If law brings us the result of our dealings, then who is

blame but ourselves? If, for example, we touch a hot plate and burn our fingers, we do not seek revenge on the plate. If we bend a bough forcibly and it rebounds with corresponding vigour, hitting us in the process, we do not feel revenge towards the tree. Logically, therefore, we cannot feel revenge towards any human being who merely serves as an agent to bring our own back to us.

We cannot feel anger, nor jealousy; we cannot retaliate. There is no necessity to steal or feel resentful because others have money and position, for at some period they must have earned it, while we did not. In other lives we will see the result of riches well spent or misspent, opportunities used or misused. We can, indeed, "trust the law." In any case nothing that we can do by way of revenge will fit the case, for the *suitable* revenge lies concealed in the original cause, and hence the saying, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord [Law]." Shakespeare pointed to this fact when he wrote in *Richard III*: "He [God] needs no indirect or lawless course to cut off those that hath offended him." All we do in wreaking our vengeance is to sow new causes, the effects of which will turn and hit us.

If we feel tempted to ask, Is there no such thing as evil, and what is evil? we learn that apart from the universal laws of ethics and harmony, there is no set programme of good or of evil which will last for centuries, because humanity is progressing towards a greater understanding of the meaning and purpose of life, however much at the moment we seem to be in a dark cycle. We can take heart when we realize how the conscience of the world was stirred by much that went on during the last War; how we are beginning to take an interest, as individuals, as to whether racial discrimination, capital punishment, flogging, etc., are right or wrong. But we have a long way to go yet, since we so often think that expediency is more important than ethical action.

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BLESSED is the generation in which the old listen to the young; and doubly blessed is the generation in which the young listen to the old.

—The Talmud

## FRAGMENTS

### I

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### I

IF you have patience and devotion you will understand these things, especially if you think much of them and meditate on them, for you have no conception of the *power of meditation*.

### II

Beware of anger, beware of vanity, beware too of self-depreciation; these are all lions in your path. Live each day, and each moment in the day, by the light within, fixing your gaze upon it with faith and love. When the hours of darkness come and you see it not, wait in patience and contentment, knowing it still burns and that when morning dawns, if your watch has been constant, you will see it burning, perchance more brightly than before. "The darkest hour is before the dawn"; grieve not therefore nor feel one moment's disquietude. Your lamp is lit, tend it faithfully; it matters not that the outer eyes do not behold it. Those who know and love you can always see it, and it may also be shining in some other heart which as yet has no light of its own.

The Lodge waits and watches ever, and ever, ever works — think you not we have patience? — and those who serve us must do the same. You are right, no detail is overlooked. Life is made up of details, each a step in the ladder, therefore who shall dare say they are "small"!

We are closer than you know, and love and thought bring us still nearer.

Kill out doubt which rises within; that is not yourself, *you know!* The doubt is a *maya*, cast it aside, listen not to its voice which whispers low, working on your lack of self-confidence. Therefore I say, have neither vanity nor self-depreciation. If you are the Higher Self, you are all that is great, but since your daily consciousness is far, far below, look at the matter frankly and impartially. Vex yourself not with contradictions. You know that you must stand alone: *stand* therefore!

Keep yourself *high*, and strengthen your faith.

*By your own supreme act of faith, you must claim and hold these things.*

## III

Let not Humility, that tender presence, become a stumbling block. In so doing you sin against the Higher Self.

## IV

Closer insight gives heavier responsibility — do not forget that — and a responsibility which affects others more than it does yourself. See to it then that the outer does not obscure the inner, for your lamp must be carried aloft for others to see, or not seeing it, to continually feel.

Do not confuse the outer with the inner therefore. Though the outer be full and rich remember it is so because of the inner *shining through*, and look ever back to that which shines. No sorrow, no disappointment lie there, but a fullness or realization of which you have no conception and a power and strength which shall lift you above these confusions to a sure place of your own. You have been too harsh with your lower nature, that leads to dangerous reactions. Quiet, steady effort is far better, casting aside all thought of results. Treat your mind as a child, lead it firmly but gently and in all ways and at all times strengthen your faith.

## V

Your instrument must not be like another's instrument — no need to duplicate these. It is your special kind which is needed and wherein you differ from others is not where you fail but where, if perfected, you may do your own special work which they cannot do.

## VI

Through these tears of blood you will learn; through this suffering you will gain the power to aid your fellows. What to you is the approbation or disapprobation of anyone? Work and wait on and all will be well.

## VII

Sink into the very depths of your being, you will find all there. Be a follower of no man, follow the inner voice.

—Cavé

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“To give more knowledge to a man than he is yet fitted to receive is a dangerous experiment,” warned a Master of Wisdom as far back as 1881. The phenomenal rise of science as an intellectual activity and as a major influence in the shaping of people’s lives has created social and moral problems of the first magnitude, and consequently the question, “What is the responsibility of the scientist?” has been the subject of much discussion on the part of both scientists and non-scientists. The lessons of the past few years have been so terrible that there is a growing feeling that the scientist’s responsibility should not end with the announcement of his discovery. In an article first published in *Science for the People* and reprinted in *Free Press Journal* (Bombay) for February 1, four U.S. professors of science argue that it is time for scientists to mount a counter-attack against the abuse of their profession, and they outline the ways in which this strategy may effectively be launched. The authors, Bill Zimmerman, Len Radinsky, Mel Rothenberg and Bart Meyers, write specifically of the American scientific scene, but the implications of their paper are evidently not only for the Americans.

By and large, resistance on the part of scientists to the misuse of their research has been very sporadic and, as such, it has been ineffective. The authors argue that “science is inevitably political,” and in the context of the contemporary world it largely contributes to the exploitation and oppression of the people. They write:

Today basic research is closely followed by those in a position to reap the benefits of its application—the government and the corporations.... The result is that in many ways discovery and application, scientific research and engineering, can no longer be distinguished from each other. Our technological society has brought them so close together that today they can only be considered part of the same process. Consequently, while most scientific workers are motivated by humane considerations, or a detached pursuit of truth for truth’s sake, their discoveries cannot be separated from applications which all too frequently destroy or debase human life.

Theoretical and experimental physicists, working on problems of esoteric intellectual interest, provided the knowledge that eventually was pulled together to make the H-bomb, while mathematicians, geophysicists, and metallurgists, wittingly or unwittingly,

tingly, made the discoveries necessary to construct intercontinental ballistic missiles. Physicists doing basic work in optics and infra-red spectroscopy may have been shocked to find that their research would help government and corporate engineers build detection surveillance devices for use in Indo-China. Anthropologists studying social systems of mountain tribes in Indo-China were surprised when the CIA collected their information for use in counter-insurgency operations. Psychologists exploring the parameters of human intelligence for "purely scientific" reasons unintentionally created intelligence testing instruments which, once developed, passed out of their hands and helped the draft boards conscript men for Vietnam and the U.S. Army allocate manpower more effectively.

If we are to take seriously the observation that discovery and application are practically inseparable, it follows that basic researchers have more than a casual responsibility for the applications of their work. The possible consequences of research in progress or planned for the future must be subjected to careful scrutiny. This is not always easy, as the following examples might indicate.

Basic research in meteorology and geophysics gives rise to the hope that man might one day be capable of exerting a high level of control over the weather. However, such techniques might be used to steer destructive typhoons or droughts into "enemy" countries. . . .

Neurophysiologists are developing a technique called Electric Brain Stimulation, in which microelectrodes capable of receiving radio signals are permanently implanted in areas of the brain known to control certain gross behaviours. Thus radio signals selectively transmitted to electrodes in various parts of the brain are capable of eliciting behaviours like rage or fear, or of stimulating appetites for food or sex. The possibility of implanting these electrodes in the brains of mental patients or prisoners (or professional soldiers) should not be underestimated, especially since such uses might be proposed for the most humane and ennobling reasons. Again, the list of examples could be extended greatly. . . .

The attitude of Oppenheimer and others, justified by the slogan of truth for truth's sake, is fostered in our society and has prevailed. It is tolerated by those who control power because it furthers their aims and does not challenge their uses of science. This attitude was advanced centuries ago by people who as-

sumed that an increase in available knowledge would automatically lead to a better world. . . . We believe it should be lame indeed to continue to argue that the possible unforeseen benefits which may arise from scientific research in our society will inevitably outweigh the clearly foreseeable harm. The slogan of "truth for truth's sake" is defunct, simply because science is no longer, and can never again be, the private affair of scientists. . . .

Traditional attempts to reform scientific activity to disentangle it from its more malevolent and vicious applications, have failed. What is needed now is not liberal reform or withdrawal, but a radical attack, a strategy of opposition. Scientific workers must develop ways to put their skills at the service of the people. . . .

This requires consulting with and relying on the experience of the community and taking seriously the criticisms and suggestions they put forth. Scientists must succeed in redirecting their professional activities away from services to the forces and institutions they oppose and toward a moment they wish to build. Short of this, no matter how much they desire to contribute to the solution, they remain part of the problem.

The science that the world has need of is a science that shoulders its ethical responsibility and recognizes moral issues as paramount in its discoveries. There is an immense responsibility that attaches to the attainment of knowledge. The dangers attending on the misapplication of knowledge for selfish purposes are grave indeed

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Present-day astronomers are discovering what the student of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* knew a hundred years ago that our Universe is only one of an infinite number of Universes all of them links in the great Cosmic chain of Universes.

According to a UPI dispatch from Berkeley printed in *The Times of India* for March 3, astronomers at the University of California have reported the discovery of several previously unknown galaxies 10 billion light years away from the Earth — the farthest part of the universe yet seen. It was through mysterious radio signals from distant points in the universe that astronomers first guessed they might be galaxies out there. The new findings show the signals were indeed coming from galaxies, but the cause of the radio waves is still unknown.

“Evidence from these farthest galaxies,” an announcement from the University says, “strongly supports a theory suggesting that a primordial explosion or ‘big bang’ occurred about 18 billion years ago and was followed by the formation of stars and galaxies from the expanding gases within about two billion years.”

The size of the distant galaxies was measured by both radio and optical readings in which astronomers in various parts of the world co-operated with the Berkeley scientists. The report on the discovery says that these most distant galaxies are much larger than our Milky Way galaxy and that it would require “a thousand billion stars like our sun” to give the light they must have had. The light observed and measured by the scientists has been travelling through space at the speed of six trillion miles a year for about 10 billion years.

Truly, Life takes on a new meaning when viewed from the perspective of the vast expanses of space teeming with Universes. It is generally agreed that statistics overwhelmingly indicate the existence of many millions of planets capable of supporting life, in solar systems throughout the vastnesses of space. No doubt the possibility exists that forms of life on them may exist in many stages of evolution, some of them being inferior to ours and others far in advance.

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This year marks the centenary of the death of Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky, and a full programme of events and projects is under way in the Soviet Union. His masterpieces — *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, etc., — helped to shape the 20th-century novel in the West. An article on this “Father of the Psychological Novel” (*The Times of India*, March 8) recalls Ilya Ehrenburg’s words that Dostoevsky told “the whole truth” about human nature, “a truth which is undeniable and deadly.” As one of his critics remarked, the great truths uttered by him were felt by all classes so vividly and so strongly that people whose views were diametrically opposed to his own could not but feel the warmest sympathy for his bold writer.

In his editorial on “Dostoevsky’s Legacy” in *Saturday Review* of December 1980, Norman Cousins calls him ‘a giant among giants,’ who remained unsurpassed in his times “in terms of ability to see inside the human soul.”

More than any of his contemporaries, perhaps [Norman Cousins writes], Dostoevsky was able to depict the drama of man's inner life; the pursuit by bitter dreams; the interlacing of hopes, longings, apprehensions. One hundred years after Dostoevsky's death he can be seen as the master of the psychological novel who anticipated modern fiction and, indeed, became its greatest teacher.

H.P.B. recognized in 1889 Europe's need for "a dozen writers such as Dostoevsky," who spoke "boldly and fearlessly, the most welcome truths to the higher and *even to the official classes* — the latter a far more dangerous proceeding than the former." She credited to the "silent and *unwelcome* influence of his pen" most of the administrative reforms in Russia during the preceding 20 years, and added

It is writers of this kind that are needed in our day of re-awakening; not authors writing for wealth or fame, but fearless apostles of the living Word of Truth, moral healers of the pustulous sores of our century. . . . To write novels with a moral sense in them deep enough to stir Society, requires a great literary talent and a *born* theosophist as was Dostoevsky. . . . But such talents are rare in all countries. Yet, even in the absence of such great gifts one may do good in a smaller and humbler way by taking note and exposing in impersonal narratives the crying vices and evils of the day. (*She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*, p. 24)

Reports of children born with psychic powers are pouring from all quarters. Young Wei Ruoyang of China is said to have added another chapter to the history of that country's "wonder boys," ever since his parents discovered that he had X-ray eyes. They found that he could not only see through brick walls, identify objects on the other side, but even diagnose tumours in all patients. (*The Times of India*, March 10)

It is also reported that children in several Chinese provinces can "read" with their ears. It is a well observed fact that in case of some human beings the senses are interchangeable in astonishing manners. Attention is invited to H.P.B.'s article, "Occult or Act Science" (*THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, July, August, September 1964), in which she deals at some length with the subject of the merging of the senses into one another.