

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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H.P.B. AND HER PUPILS

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Those will honour my memory truly, who live in accordance with the Way I have taught.

—GAUTAMA BUDDHA

DURING the coming month students of Theosophy everywhere will commemorate White Lotus Day. On the 8th of May 1891 H.P.B. cast off the body born in 1831 and which she had used in the service of humanity. It was not an ordinary kind of service, such as feeding the hungry, or educating the young, or working for social amelioration. She fed the hungry souls, enlightened the minds of young and old alike, and showed right ways and means for redressing social wrongs and rendering social justice. The philosophy she promulgated helped its students to help the race. Her highest service, however, consisted in enthusing and instructing the few to live lives of self-discipline leading to Self-Knowledge.

Those few, through their practice of Theosophical Wisdom, their sincere effort at soul-discipline, have made the Cause of H.P.B. their own. They have not her knowledge, her insight, her tact, her dispassion, but they have unfolded within themselves Faith rooted in study of her Message, exoteric and esoteric, and have learnt, by experience, to rely on that Message. They and their work thrive not so much on their own strength as on the pupils' leaning on the strength of that Message. They have learnt to sink their personalities, to an ever-increasing extent, in the Work to start which H.P.B. came to this world.

In fighting their own personality, in submerging their own inclina-

tions and views, in taking refuge in their own Divine Nature, expressing in different ways the Wisdom of the Message, these few so identify themselves with the Cause of Theosophy that they are also identified by the public with Theosophy. This is a tremendous responsibility, inasmuch as by their conduct Theosophy is judged by that public.

A servant and devotee of Theosophy should take care not to unsettle the minds of people—be they doubters or inquirers, be they new enthusiasts or old aspirants. One sure way is to keep one's own personality in the background and to treat with Theosophical consideration and propriety the personalities of others; in promulgating Theosophy the U.L.T. advocates and observes the principle of Impersonality which is wholly derived from the Teachings of Theosophy. If in private life the student-server continued to act as he acts on the U.L.T. platform, further progress would be attained. On the other hand, if there is continual breaking of the discipline of the Impersonality principle in private life, very likely in his platform work and manner also the student will slip up.

Our private and public conduct affects the Cause of Theosophy for weal or woe in proportion as we are earnest, devoted and strenuous in our service of that Cause, as we are assiduous in observing our soul-discipline—or the contrary. As our century progresses the number of her Chelas is bound to increase. It is appropriate, on the Anniversary of the Day of her return Home to that Lodge of Brothers from which, out of compassion, she came as an exile to serve the world by unstinted self-sacrifice, for all such to remind themselves of the responsibility that rests on them.

IF any of you have learned aught from my teachings, or have gained by my help a glimpse of the True Light, I ask you, in return, to strengthen the Cause by the triumph of which that True Light, made still brighter and more glorious through your individual and collective efforts, will lighten the world.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE LOTUS SYMBOL

Nature speaks in symbols and signs.

—WHITTIER

THE STUDY of the hidden meaning in every religious and profane legend, of whatsoever nation, large or small — pre-eminently the traditions of the East — occupied the greater portion of the life of H. P. Blavatsky. She was one of those who remain convinced that no mythological story, no traditional event in the folklore of a people has ever been, at any time, pure fiction, but that every one of such narratives has an actual historical lining to it. She held that the religious and esoteric history of every nation was embedded in symbols. A parable is a spoken symbol: a fiction or a fable as some think; an allegorical representation of life realities, events and facts, according to the Esoteric Philosophy. Even fairy tales do not exclusively belong to the nursery; and though few, there have been those who have comprehended their hidden meaning and tried to explain it. "The Myths," says Horace in his *Ars Poetica*, "have been invented by wise men to strengthen the laws and teach moral truths"; therefore Horace endeavoured to make clear the very spirit and essence of the ancient myths. Plutarch tells us that he was initiated into the secret mysteries of Dionysus, and writing to a colleague on the state of the soul after death he said that "the mystic symbols are well known to us who belong to the 'brotherhood.'"

H. P. Blavatsky took pains to explain many parables, myths and symbols in her writings — among them the symbol of the Lotus. As we approach White Lotus Day, as the death anniversary of H.P.B. has come to be known, students of Theosophy cannot but think of the Lotus as the flower that best symbolized her life and mission. In her *Secret Doctrine* she devotes a whole section to the exposition of symbols, including that of the Lotus. She has turned the key of interpretation several times; below we select two passages for study and reflection:

There are no ancient symbols, without a deep and philosophical meaning attached to them; their importance and significance increasing with their antiquity. Such is the Lotus. It is the flower sacred to nature and her Gods, and represents the abstract and the Concrete Universes, standing as the emblem of the

productive powers of both spiritual and physical nature. It was held sacred from the remotest antiquity by the Aryan Hindus, the Egyptians, and the Buddhists after them; revered in China and Japan, and adopted as a Christian emblem by the Greek and Latin Churches, who made of it a messenger as the Christians do now, who replace it with the water lily. It had, and still has, its mystic meaning which is identical with every nation on the earth. (*S.D.*, I. 379)

The Lotus, or Padma, is a very ancient and favourite simile for the Kosmos itself, and also for man. The popular reasons given are, firstly, the fact just mentioned, that the Lotus-seed contains within itself a perfect miniature of the future plant, which typifies the fact that the spiritual prototypes of all things exist in the immaterial world before those things become materialized on Earth. Secondly, the fact that the Lotus plant grows up through the water, having its root in the Ilus, or mud, and spreading its flower in the air above. The Lotus thus typifies the life of man and also that of the Kosmos; for the Secret Doctrine teaches that the elements of both are the same, and that both are developing in the same direction. The root of the Lotus sunk in the mud represents material life, the stalk passing up through the water typifies existence in the astral world, and the flower floating on the water and opening to the sky is emblematical of spiritual being. (*Ibid.*, I. 57-58)

In the temples and tombs of ancient Egypt, the Lotus appears as an offering upon the altars and as an oblation to the *manes* of the dead. Garlands and necklaces were fashioned from the blossoms, and wreaths of Lotuses were laid on unwrapped corpses. The Lotus was so highly revered by the Egyptians that not a monument in the Valley of the Nile, not a single papyrus failed to place it in a position of honour. It adorned the capitals of the Egyptian pillars, decorated the thrones and head-dresses of the ancient King-Initiates, and appeared in close association with the creative gods and goddesses of every period.

The god Khnoom, who represented the Great Deep or Primordial Space, and Thoth, the god of Wisdom, are both pictured as sitting upon a Lotus. Isis, the immaculate Virgin-Mother of the Egyptians, who symbolized both mystical and material Nature, appears with a Lotus in one hand and a *crux ansata* in the other. Osiris is shown in the papyrus of Hunefer with a Lotus growing from a

pool at his feet, and is pictured upon the wall of the Temple of Dar-el-Medeenah with four genii standing upon a fully opened Lotus blossom. Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris, is said to have sprung from the Lotus of the Celestial Nile, and in the Museum at Cairo there is a lovely image of him rising from the bosom of the heavenly flower. In Chapter LXIII of the *Ritual of the Dead*, called "Transformation into the Lotus," the god exclaims:

I am the pure Lotus, emerging from the Luminous one. . . . I carry the message of Horus. I am the pure Lotus which comes from the Solar Fields.

The constant association of the Lotus with all the gods and goddesses connected with creation gives a clear indication of the meaning of this symbol. It was a flower sacred to Nature, and was used to symbolize the Universe in its abstract and concrete forms. Whenever it appears, it signifies the emanation of the objective from the subjective, the eternal thought of the ever-invisible Deity passing from the abstract to the concrete or visible.

It would be impossible to imagine a more graphic description of the Universe emerging from the waters of Chaos than that contained within this lovely flower. The Lotus is the product of Fire (or heat) and Water. In every philosophical and religious system Fire stands for the active male generative principle, while Water represents the passive female principle from which everything in the universe has sprung.

The Lotus grows upon the surface of the water, extending its roots down into the mud beneath and expanding its perfect blossom into the blue above. In like manner does the universe itself exist. Cradled in the bosom of Infinite Space, its roots are embedded in the slime of matter, while its fully opened blossom expands in the light of Spirit. So also is the life of man, for man is one with the Universe, and both follow the same line of development. Like the Lotus, each human soul is temporarily rooted in the mud of material existence, while the expanding bud of his spiritual nature unfolds into the perfect blossom of Wisdom.

The seed of the Lotus contains within itself a perfect miniature of the plant to be. Each embryonic leaf is delicately folded within the womb of the Lotus seed, patiently awaiting the hour of its expansion. Thus did all the spiritual prototypes of existing things once rest

within the womb of subjectivity before they assumed concrete shape and visible form. In the words of an ancient Commentary:

Like the Lotus, whose external shape assumes gradually the form of the model within itself, so did the form of man in the beginning evolve from within without.

The Hindu stories of creation which revolve around the Lotus as a central figure are among the loveliest legends in the world. In that period of cosmic quiescence before the hour of creation has struck, the Heavenly Lotus of the Universe is said to rest passively upon the bosom of Space, still unfructified by the Fire of creative energy, the ideal forms folded like embryonic Lotus-leaves within the seed of Eternal Ideation. During this period, Vishnu, the *ideal* creator of the universe, floats upon the Waters of Space reclining upon a Lotus blossom. Lakshmi, the female aspect of Vishnu, is likewise shown as floating on a Lotus, and during the churning of the Ocean of Space she springs from the froth like Venus-Aphrodite, borne upon a Lotus and holding another Lotus in her hand.

Then seated on a Lotus,
Beauty's bright goddess, peerless Sri, arose
Out of the waves . . .

The ideal Universe appears as a Lotus growing out of Vishnu's navel, and from this Lotus Brahma, the architect, comes forth. Although Brahma is considered as the creator of the Universe, he is never pictured as a Being outside and above his creation. Brahma and the Universe are one Being. Brahma is the Universe, and every atom in Cosmos is part and parcel of Brahma.

Although Gautama Buddha has never been deified by those who follow his teachings, the Lotus is not absent from his pictured and sculptured representations. In his case, the Lotus stands for the Universe as he conceived it, and shows that he was among those who have been able to wrest the secrets of the Universe from the grim Sphinx of life. Gautama's birth was announced to his mother by Bodhisat, who appeared before her couch with a Lotus in his hand. This same idea appears in pictures of the Annunciation, where the Archangel Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary holding a spray of water-lilies. The Christian dogma of resurrection is a branch engrafted upon an even older tree than the Buddhistic. The Egyptian frog-goddess Hiquet, who is particularly connected with the doc-

trine of resurrection, sits upon a Lotus, and the church lamps of the early Christians were made in the shape of a frog enshrined in a Lotus, and were engraved with the words: "I am the Resurrection and the Life."

There is still another kind of Lotus than those we have been considering. This is the Zisypus which, when eaten, makes a man forget his fatherland and all those dear to him. Tennyson's poem "The Lotus Eaters" tells the tale of those who, after eating the Lotus, were content to bask in the deceptive light of earth-life and so completely lost the memory of their true spiritual home.

The *real* Lotus of the ancients stimulated this memory and directed their thoughts towards the spiritual source of their being. The fragrance of this sacred flower lingers to this day, permeating the atmosphere of thought with its redolence and quickening the spiritual senses of those who have not yet forgotten.

As the Lotus is symbolic of human evolution, human progression and perfection, in the highest aspect the Sacred Lotus represents the Holy of Holies — the Heart of Man. To this the true Buddhist is taught to direct his mind when he repeats: "Aum Mani Padme Hum" — "O! the Jewel in the Lotus." The true esotericist is one who penetrates into the very kernel of matter and regards the soul of things where the profane but perceives the external work of form.

THE MAN who elevates himself makes himself simpler and more integral, and at the same time more solid and strong; he strips his life of a thousand secondary and non-essential appearances and activities, freeing himself from the superfluous and useless vegetation, like a fruit tree whose productive capacity is increased by a wise pruning.

—VITTORINO VEZZANI

LIVING THE LIFE

MANY are the men and women in the East as in the West who are desirous of changing and improving their own mode of living. Some may not confess that they are trying to seek some meaning of life that would endow it with greater interest and especially with greater usefulness. If we put aside prejudices and predilections and begin to examine the various ideas that ordinary people of the world have about the Higher Life of the Soul, we find that there are many misconceptions and some of them are not only erroneous but really dangerous. For many a crank tries to justify his own queer mode of living by saying he is different, he is extraordinary, he happens to be under training, trying to achieve something not within the reach of ordinary mortals. So it becomes necessary to begin by looking into some of the widespread misconceptions about the higher life, and then to examine the true ideal in the light of the ancient and immemorial philosophy of Theosophy.

We find that there is a notion which regards the religious life as the higher life; it is said that an orthodox man who observes the rites and ceremonies of his own particular religion is a pious and devoted man; he is sometimes even called an evolved soul. Is the orthodox religious life the same as the life of the soul? To begin with, we find that in all religions there are good men and evil men, unselfish people and selfish people, and that sometimes the very ones who follow strictly and dogmatically their own orthodox creed are not the most unselfish ones. Then we find another peculiar fact: every particular orthodoxy indicates different ceremonies, different rituals and observances. It would therefore appear that if the higher life is one of observance of a particular religion then it is not within the reach of all men and women. We find that exactly opposite ideas are taught to the various worshippers of the many creeds throughout the world. We find, for instance, in India that the worshippers of Vishnu have their own prescribed rites and they are different from those of their brother who is worshipping Shiva. If we go to the West, we find that the Roman Catholic has rites and ceremonies that his brothers of other denominations consider wrong; furthermore, the rites of Christianity differ from those of Eastern creeds. The Christian worships the Cross, the Mohammedan worships the Crescent, while the Zoroastrian worships Fire. Further, we find that all these worshippers of different symbols worship without much

understanding of what the Cross or the Crescent or the Fire signifies. History shows that these various worshippers in orthodox and separate creeds have fought against one another. We know that the worshippers of the Cross pursued the worshippers of the Crescent, and that in turn the latter tried to drive at the point of the sword the worshippers of the Fire. We are all familiar with the struggles and strifes that have separated men in the name of religion.

So how could these orthodox religions that separate form the basis of the higher life of the Soul, which would bind in peace all men and women, irrespective of creed, race, nationality? If we want to understand the meaning of the higher life we have to begin by seeking its universal basis. No law of nature, no process in nature acts capriciously. Nature is uniform and takes no account of human views or human conditions. The sun shines for all; gravitation pulls all; water wets and fire burns all. The Soul is in all men and women and its process of growth cannot but be uniform for all. That being so, the preliminary step for the living of the higher life is to disregard the narrow, erroneous notions of religions which divide human beings instead of uniting them. And that can be done by discarding the sectarian and orthodox interpretations of religions. Jesus did not come to establish a church nor to found an orthodox religion. If we go to the real spirit of Christianity, we find that Jesus, like all other great Teachers of the world and Saviours of humanity, tried to show a way of life. That was the mission of Krishna, Buddha, Zarathushtra, Pythagoras, Jesus, H. P. Blavatsky. Any and all great Teachers of the world have tried to show men and women how to get away from orthodox sectarianism, how to begin to live the higher or spiritual life. But this injunction of all great Teachers, to come out and be separate, to pursue the higher path, has been misinterpreted.

That brings us to a second erroneous conception about the higher life. People believe that the higher life means going into the jungle or to the top of a mountain, learning worldly interests and becoming separated from their mundane lives, their woes, their sufferings. This is entirely wrong. It is true that we have to be separate and isolated, but it is a very different type of isolation, for it means a separation from the lowest tendencies, within our own devilish natures. People complain, "How can we have simplicity in the midst of all the turmoil and struggle of present-day civilization?" We must

retire, give up our worldly possessions, and enter into monasteries or nunneries, *ashram* or *maths*. Simplicity of life is a very different thing from that which is generally understood. If it is true, as it has been again and again proven, that the nearer a man is to the orthodox church, the further he is from God, it is equally and as certainly true that in monasteries and nunneries corruptions — deep spiritual corruptions — spring up. This going away, then, does not mean a change of location, but a transformation of inner attitude. But even then being separate from men and women does not mean that we should neglect the service of others. As *The Voice of the Silence* puts it:

The selfish devotee lives to no purpose. The man who does not go through his appointed work in life — has lived in vain.

Follow the wheel of life; follow the wheel of duty to race and kin, to friend and foe, and close thy mind to pleasures as to pain. Exhaust the law of Karmic retribution. Gain Siddhis for thy future birth.

Another great misconception about the higher life: It is believed that certain outer observances and peculiar habits of life, adopting physiological practices and so forth, imply the leading of the Spiritual life. Theosophy tries to show better ways of life to its students and devotees and it is but natural that those who know nothing about the teachings of Theosophy pass judgment on it by observing the ways of those who call themselves 'Theosophists'. This is logical. People cannot help judging a philosophy by the acts and practices of those who call themselves devotees of that particular system of thought. It will be useful for us to try to answer some of the objections and queries that are put by critics regarding certain practices which are identified with the teachings of Theosophy. Wherever we go, questions arise constantly as to certain practices of life. People ask, Is vegetarianism necessary for living the higher life? Must all students of Theosophy become vegetarians? Why is it necessary to give up all alcoholic drinks? And what does Theosophy teach in reference to marriage and marital relations? These are the most common questions asked.

Is vegetarianism essential to the living of the higher life? And the answer of Theosophy is — "not at all." To begin with, Theosophy as an impersonal and universal philosophy and science never imposes hard and fast rules in a cut and dried manner upon its

students and devotees. If Soul development were a matter of vegetarianism, if it were as simple as that, there would be many more spiritual Adepts in the world. And remember, every horse and cow is a strict vegetarian! Nowhere in truly Theosophical books is there the absolute injunction that we must become vegetarians. Let us examine the issues involved, and when we are convinced that vegetarianism is better, only then adopt the practice. Let us not begin in the wrong fashion, by adopting physiological practices, and then pose that we are superior to common mortals. That is an entirely wrong conception, and as Madame Blavatsky explained in *The Key to Theosophy*, physiological practices are far less important than what a man feels. Let us take care of our thoughts and feelings first, and when a certain amount of purity has resulted within our own thinking minds and our own emotional natures, only then should we think of ascetic rules in our outside living. *Begin from within, reform the inner man, and do not believe that mere habits of physical life and outer practices can give spirituality or enlightenment. Evolution proceeds from within without, and unless we are self-energized and understand what we are trying to do, it is better to leave ALL outer practices and observances alone.* There is much misunderstanding: ethical and moral living is confounded with diet and food and such outer shows. We should try to eradicate this wrong notion and liberate people from the fetters of such erroneous conceptions. One can eat meat and still be spiritual.

What about the use of alcoholic drinks? Theosophy gives certain definite scientific reasons as to why all alcoholic drinks are harmful. It says, first study the question, investigate the propositions presented, and then you will see for yourself why the use of alcohol has to be given up if you wish to think higher thoughts, feel nobler aspirations. Alcohol is injurious for the brain, for all men and all women. We have to discriminate and to understand these things, and not obey passively because it is a Theosophical teaching, or because a Theosophical expounder gives certain ideas. To try to understand — that is the great quest.

How about marriage? It is entirely a wrong conception that Theosophy discourages marriage and marital life. Theosophy does advocate, most strongly, purity of sex life. Sex force is a force that should be used for its own purpose, and for nothing else; and its own purpose, as we very well know, is procreation. Theosophy

does not discourage marriage; on the contrary, it encourages the building of homes, for the use of home-life is an important step in living the higher life. But it does discourage all practices that tend to tamper or play with sex. Since sex force is only for procreation, and never for anything else, Theosophy is strongly against all practices and methods of birth-control and birth-prevention. Therefore does it condemn any and all abnormal sex practices; therefore does it also condemn promiscuous living. Theosophy has two ideals in reference to this particular purity: one is the ideal of *Brahmacharya*, or celibacy; the other is the ideal of pure married life. Celibacy is wrong if it implicates any tampering or playing with sex. Because the life of *Brahmacharya*, of absolute purity and celibacy, is very difficult for ordinary men and women, Theosophy advocates that other ideal — of a pure married life. Once again do not believe the nonsense that a Theosophist, if he wants to progress, must *not* marry, or if married he must leave his wife and home! That is not Theosophical, and those who say or do so are not Theosophists. As a matter of fact, Theosophy shows that, for men and women of the 20th century, the beginning of the higher life is in the home.

This may appear as a digression, but it is most important and the points involved are significant. One of the very aims and purposes of the work carried on by U.L.T. is to expose the corrupt ideas prevailing about spiritual principles, to show the public that dirt and mud have accumulated on the sacred name of Theosophy. It is our task to try to clean the name and restore it to its pristine purity. And so in looking at these many misconceptions, we have achieved something. It is very useful, for in understanding from the negative point of view what higher life according to Theosophy is not, we have clarified our minds to understand what that life is.

Theosophy is not a system of diet, or a system of breathing, or a system of healing suffering bodies. What is Theosophy? It is a system of metaphysics and ethics which tries to bring about a change in the *minds* of men and women, thereby raising them to a higher type of thought. *When high and noble thoughts have been generated from within ourselves, actions will take care of themselves. Right and pure thoughts invariably will produce right and pure actions.* We see that the higher life is not the orthodox religious life, not the life away from the world in monasteries or convents; nor is it the life of adopting physiological practices and ascetic rules pertaining

solely to the body. We see that the higher life is the life of the home — there is our starting point. Every one of us was born in a home, we have all been brought up in homes, most of us today live in homes. It is there, where we find ourselves, that we can begin living the higher life. We can begin to educate ourselves by discharging our duties and obligations in the home; that is the beginning of soul-life.

There are many who are desirous of finding some way to change their own lives. What does Theosophy say to them?

Most people describe the higher life as a better, more useful and noble life; but unless we add something to that description, we shall fall into dangerous paths. The higher life is not only the better life — it is the *wiser* life. It is the better life founded on greater knowledge, greater wisdom, greater perception and understanding. People think that to be good is sufficient; but to be good is one thing, to be wise is another. From the spiritual point of view, understanding and knowledge must go hand in hand with goodness, unselfishness and purity. Try as we will, we shall not succeed in being good, unselfish and pure unless our *mind* has really become enlightened through true knowledge. Wisdom is necessary. What do we mean, then, when we refer to high thinking? Why are our lives not high? Why are they low, mean, petty and selfish? Because our thoughts are selfish and petty and mean. The great axiomatic truth is — As we think, so we speak, so we act, so we become. *The starting point is the change in the mental attitude. The higher life begins with thought and ideation. The starting point is within ourselves.* But thoughts have subjects and objects, and as we are not to run away from the world, our mental attitude must be towards men and things. With the inner attitude as the starting point, we have then to take into account the outer circumstances. The spiritual life begins with change of thought, with right ideation, naturally founded on right knowledge, and it begins in the home.

PEOPLE are happy who have no need of locks.

—DOSTOEVSKY

PROBLEMS OF LIFE

FROM "THE DIARY OF AN OLD PHYSICIAN"

BY N. I. PIROGOFF*

VI

ON LIFE, THE MEANING OF TRUTH AND THE EGO

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WHILE taking my morning walk, I suddenly remembered that in my diary I had treated the famous *cogito, ergo sum* perhaps in a too one-sided way, by maintaining that it ought to be replaced by *sentio, ergo sum*. Turning to some object, identifying itself with it, and, so to say, transforming itself entirely into sight or hearing, our *I*, directed in this way to the external Universe — towards its *non-I* — thus continues, perhaps imperceptibly (owing to the intense attention it bestows upon the external object) to sense its being. And this feeling accompanies it from the cradle, from the moment when it learns to discern its *non-I* from itself, down to the grave; even during the loss of our consciousness during delirium or sleep, this sensation cannot discontinue, though it may change its form. Besides this at times to us imperceptible sensation of being, it can become so — as all our other sensations — through our habit of being. Our *I* becomes raised from a simple sensation to the plane of thought in cases when, upon the reception of impressions external (universal) and organic (conveyed by the organs), it connects them with its own feeling of sensing in itself the presence of its mental faculties, of attention, perception, memory, imagination and thought. Then our *I* becomes fully conscious, rational and sensible. Condillion said that a man without external senses was a statue. This is not so: breathing must impart to him the sensation of being, without any participation of external senses, simply by supporting his connection with the external world. The sensation of being would certainly exist in this case, only whether or not it would be conscious and rational without the participation of external senses is another question. Consciousness of one's memory, thought and imagination is

* Translated from the Russian, by H.P.B.

without doubt stimulated and supported by the external and organic senses; but there is no cause, I think, to reject the possibility of such consciousness even in the absence of external and organic senses.

Everything manifested in us by life, is manifested through sensations, *i.e.*, through a connecting link with the external world. Nevertheless, the consequences and the products of our impressions are varied in the extreme. Some of them generate in us one feeling of life, others stimulate an unconscious cerebration and every kind of reflex action. But there is also a class of impressions — representations might do better, perhaps — which, notwithstanding their primal origin from sensuous perceptions, stimulate to action only our conscious mental faculties, memory, cerebration and fancy (or imagination, the faculty of combining and creating new representations). Though we remember, think and imagine at every act of the organs of our senses, yet this sensuous, and generally unconscious process of recollection, cerebration and representation (imagination) is ended as soon as this or some other sense ceases to act; while another process — markedly distinct from the first — the process of recollection, cerebration and imagination, an always conscious process, takes place without any direct participation of our senses.

Thus, while every fact has to be the product of sensuous perceptions and of impressions acting on us externally, our internal sensations, present in us without any direct participation of external impressions, are capable of not only representing to us facts from various standpoints but also of discovering to us truths. Though a fact is generally regarded as if it were a truth, yet no one would refer to mathematical axioms as truths. Why? Is it not apparent that such a fact, for instance, as the presence of the sun in the sky is as undeniable and as true as any mathematical axiom? Yes, indeed; these are real facts and self-evident truths; still a fact is not always the truth, and truth is not a fact. The sun in the sky is an evident fact, because everyone can have it demonstrated to him by his own senses; but such a mathematical (astronomical) truth, that the sun will rise and set in certain determined spots on the horizon, requires no verification by our senses; this is based not only on the theory of probabilities, but on knowledge and science, with the participation of all our other mental faculties (memory and fancy, etc.). True, the basis of this knowledge is resting on fact; had we never seen the sun and the stars, the construction of our planetary system would

have never entered our heads; but mathematical calculations differ so widely from sense-observations that they determine *a priori* the place of a planet not yet discovered by observation. The mathematical axiom that two magnitudes that are severally equal to the same magnitude are equal to one another, though evident, *i.e.*, susceptible of being explained by a physical demonstration, is in reality based on consideration, not on experiment; in order to comprehend it, there need not be before our eyes three magnitudes of equal size. Fact differs then from truth, in that its properties are different, whereas the essence of truth, even when unknown to us, is ever one and the same. Only that fact which was, is, and will be, would be truth. But we are acquainted with no such fact; and if we feel convinced of the necessity or possibility of the existence of something which ever was and ever will be — even when not real to the physical senses — then this conviction is TRUTH for us, although it cannot be called a fact. It is evident also that to arrive at a conviction of such a truth, reason alone is insufficient — the potent participation of fancy (ideation) is necessary.

Everything that is high and beautiful in our life, in science and art, was created by intellect with the help of fancy, and much by fancy helped by intellect. It can be boldly maintained that neither Copernicus nor Newton would have ever acquired such importance in science as they now have, had they not been helped by fancy. Meanwhile we often hear in life, in science and even in art, recriminations against fancy, not only against its exaggerations, but against its normal function. There is no greater reproach for a modern realist and naturalist than to say that he uses his fancy. But, in reality, only that realist and empiricist merits the reproach of inconsistency who allows himself to abandon for one moment the guidance of sense-experience¹ directed and governed by intellect and fancy. Speaking in general, the doctrine which divides by artificial compartments the functions of our mental faculties one from the other, leads us finally to make as strong distinctions between their respective manifestations in all our productions, as though it were possible to cerebration without imagining, or imagine without reflection! It is enough for us to remember that we are unable to make the simplest summation

¹ That is to say, a scientific experiment based on the evidence of our senses, as in the inductive method.—[TRANSL.]

up of figures, without calling into action the functions of our memory, our imagination and our reason, although it may seem to us that our mind is all absorbed in figures during the process.

January 14th, 1880

I am still seeking to prove to myself that I must not regard my world-theories and speculations as simply the product of idle fancy, only because they are not based upon direct and immediate experiment. It would never do for me, after having devoted my life — in fact, the best part of my life — to rational induction, to deny the all importance of experiment; but it is not for me, equally, to question the wisdom of this first Hippocratic aphorism: *experientia fallax, judicium difficile*.

When age is no longer conducive to fascination (*entraînement*), then one begins to realize how easy it is to be carried away, not merely by dreams but even by such exact and sober things as facts and experiments. There are things in this world to which even such safe means as experiment is inapplicable. Meanwhile these things are life-questions, without solving which to oneself one would not like to die; otherwise we should be inclined to address life reproachfully, asking it in the deeply thought-out words of our poet²:

Thou useless gift, thou gift of chance,
Life, why to me hast thou been given?

Verily, orgies of lust, the grossest means for obtaining self-oblivion and finally suicide, are in store for one who would seek to solve the riddle of life by scientific experiment, and will unavoidably lead to perdition. It is quite true that some strong, healthy and positive minds may live and act very well, having laid aside every attempt toward the solution of the excruciating question of life. But no voice to him who in his pride will dream that he is just that kind of *esprit fort* who requires no such solutions. The ascetic Philaretus was well answered from his standpoint when objecting to Pushkin's reproach to life; and his answer was to the point, precisely because he (Philaretus) had not unriddled to himself the problem of life by means of scientific experiment; and however one-sided such a solution, it is stronger, and what is more important — more humane than helpless complaints against life for its refusal to unveil its

² Alexander Pushkin

secret in the way we would like to see it divulged. No doubt one would like life to do this as palpably and as evidently as it does with regard to its sensuous manifestations.

It seems to me that all of us, followers of the Verulam Bacon, attach too much importance to his inductive method of investigation.³ This method is not in the least any new discovery of some special activity of our minds. In daily life, and before the day of Bacon, people have ever investigated facts inductively; yet no one — not even Bacon himself, I think — has ever regarded this method as the only possible means for the discovery of truth. The chief merit of Bacon is *noli jurare in verba magistri*. And even this has ceased to be in our day a merit, as there could not be found now even a schoolboy who would have an opportunity of repeating this rule. The mediaeval faith in authorities is now replaced by mistrust. We have all lost confidence even in ourselves; our children on the school benches mistrust their masters every time they look at them. This can hardly escape being regarded as a consequence of the one-sided exercise of our minds according to the inductive method; yet, may heaven preserve us from that deductive process which taught us *jurare in verba magistri!*

Therefore, I say, that if we would make our philosophical views of the universe influence our moral life — to me, at any rate, this has become a necessity — then we must not base these views on the exact, purely demonstrable data of sensuous perceptions. We must not blind ourselves with an apparent and fundamental evidence there, where a mere representation is concerned, or — what is still more correct — where only a possibility of a representation which would make it clear to us, is in question. Here we can demand no more than that the representation or conception should contain no evident contradictions and that it should be in the least possible degree incongruous; in other words, that it should conform as far as it can be made to, with our exact sciences, and should not include in itself more fallacies and contradictions than there are in these sciences.

³ No doubt many of the British F.R.S.'s and M.D.'s who read this will have a scornful smile for such a conclusion of Dr. Pirogoff; and probably, forgetting the great scientific achievements of our eminent surgeon and physician, they will attribute his very *unscientific* ideas to heredity and superstition and the fact of his belonging to an "inferior" race — [TRANSL.]

January 15th, 1880

Yesterday afternoon I was driving home from inland. The weather was frosty and clear. I was sitting in the sleigh with my back toward the setting sun. The fields, covered with a thick layer of snow, as smooth as a tablecloth, were lighted as far as eye could see, with a soft rosy glow, deepening hither and thither into a light violet hue; the full moon was rising from behind the forest, its light silvery disc strongly outlined on the greenish, dark-blue horizon. This play of opalescent colours on the sky, passing from green to light yellow, and from rosy to light violet, and shining like diamond sparks on the immaculate snow — quite fascinated me. I breathed the pure cold air with such ease and delight that I caught myself making unconsciously a paraphrase of Pushkin's *Reproach to Life*, and whispering:

No useless gift, no gift of chance,
A gift mysterious, full of meaning,
Life, with an object thou wert given.

And is it because no one could hitherto unriddle thee, O divine gift called Life, that we should reproach thee with being an absurd gift of chance, desecrate and vulgarize thee and play with, instead of appreciating thee! We feel mad at the thought of our inability to make bare the mystery of the gift, and out of pure spite we are ready to maintain that it contains neither secret, nor object; that like the fabulist Kryloff's box of life, there is no lock to it; and that life simply opens *per vaginam*, and closes as easily — with the grave.

From our very cradle we get into the habit of life, and therefore view life and the universe as we do ordinary everyday objects; this is fortunate for us, though such fortune in truth is superficial and vulgar enough. But what would become of all of us, were our mind to be constantly trying to penetrate and fathom ourselves and everything surrounding us? Every moment we should meet face to face with an impenetrable, crushing mystery; at every step perplexity and doubt would be weighing heavily on our thoughts. What is this strange motion and whirling in infinite space of mutually gravitating bodies, of globular masses? What is this incomprehensible existence of numberless worlds, formed of the same substantial atoms and separated for eternity from each other, by distances

hardly conceivable owing to their magnitude? What is the meaning of this infinite variety of forms? And cohesion, gravitation, affinity, the incessant vibration of atoms — are not all these daily and hourly manifestations so many mysteries concealed under scientific terms? And the so-called simple bodies, again; these indecomposable elements accumulated in the gigantic planetary masses — are they, indeed, primordial elements? Whence could they appear, whence planetary life, if other primordial, and to us unknown, elements were not contained in the universal and, to the mortal, unreachable source — the chaos of ether? What is it, this source and container, the vehicle of unknown principles?

What wonder if there exists in each of us, surrounded as we are from cradle to grave by such universal mysteries, a leaning toward mysticism: if some of us owing to certain characteristics, become very easily mystics, and end by seeing and discovering hidden secrets there, where other men who circle without rest or break in the whirlpool of life — find everything very plain and simple? And how can it be expected of the inhabitants of this planet, of those who are endowed with the faculty of vividly representing to themselves the unseen and the impalpable, that they should always remain in a vegetative frame of mind and feel reconciled to the evils of the day? When fate, after endowing them with an aspiration to foresight and a certain force of imagination, prohibits them from leaving their terrestrial abode any further than the airy spaces that directly surround it, transforming mockingly for him who attempts to soar higher, the azure of the sky into the darkest night. But if every leaf, every seed, every bit of crystal reminds us of the existence outside of and within us of a mysterious laboratory in which all works incessantly for itself and that which surrounds it, with an evident design and thought, then our own consciousness must be for us a still deeper and at the same time uncomfortable mystery. There is, however, a still more sacred mystery, this time originating from that very unconsciousness of ours — and that is — truth. There was a mocking satire in the indiscreet query of the Roman proconsul; and, perchance, this is why he received no answer. Verily and indeed curiosity alone will not lead us to learn — *what is truth?*

Of course I do not speak here of the so-called scientific truths. All these — historical and historico-natural, the mathematical and the judicial — are no more than facts, or more or less correct con-

clusions and hypotheses, obtained by logical analysis and synthesis: or formulae, dictated by life, customs and the exigencies of society. Of such "truths" we have many. But there is a truth — one, integral, and the highest — which serves as the foundation of all our moral and ethical life. It is wrong to assert, as such historians as Buckle do, and along with him the majority of our modern younger generations, that humanity is chiefly indebted to the progress of scientific truths in society, while moral truths have done nothing towards its success, *i.e.*, its progress, happiness and welfare. I think, on the contrary, that the unity and the integrity of the truth I speak of becomes more and more evident with the progress of humanity, though it may be very hard to determine how far it has become any better. Truth can only be one; it is without and at the same time within us, in our consciousness; of course not as bright as the physical sun for us, but like a far distant light-wave throwing radiance on our moral being. What would become of our ethical principle had not the eternal and one Truth served it as a foundation? Without it, without this foundation, no scientific truths could exist for us, for there would have been no moral aspiration toward the discovery of truth. Every man, even one who is most steeped in crime, seeks involuntarily to find truth in himself, attempting to find an excuse for these misdeeds before himself as before other men. It is true that, during such attempts at justification, in attempting to *appear* instead of *being*, we get entangled in lies; but this is no proof to the contrary, no evidence that this arbitrary aspiration toward truth is absent from us. All this — to appear and not to lie, and the whole edifice of lies raised by us in justification of our deeds — is only a disfigured aspiration toward truth, following which we get further and further away from truth, only because we are on a false track. Finally, then, comes a day when we find it impossible to discern truth from falsehood. It is then that is generated the mocking query of the Roman proconsul: What is truth, how can we learn it, how shall we discern it, and where is it? And how, indeed, shall we understand the most ideal of all the Ideals! Truth! Don't you see that it is the Deity, the Absolute! We ought not even to dare to attempt a hope of ever reaching it.

But the impossibility of ever solving it is no denial of an aspiration towards it. This aspiration that we have received from on high is our most precious possession. Deeply buried in us lies, if not the

conviction, at any rate the feeling, reminding us that without an aspiration to the truth, there can be no real happiness. See how this aspiration, silenced by our passions and misfortunes, by that which is called destiny and chance, and false tendencies, see how it manifests itself under another form, having apparently nothing in common with the aspiration that lurks in the very foundation of our moral being. An irrepressible longing toward the pursuit of objects, based on error, does not for all that annihilate in us the aspiration toward the discovery of true and real facts or scientific truths; and thus it happens that, while satisfying on one hand our longing for truth, we neglect occasionally to fully satisfy its other higher side. We see just in the same way grand but immoral geniuses, conquerors and sovereigns, while trampling truth under their feet, trying to convince themselves of the righteousness and justice of their deeds; because with them the aspiration toward the true finds its satisfaction in the grand results reached by them: and these results cooperate indeed toward the discovery and the propagation of various actual truths. All these are illusions inseparable from our existence. Truth is so radiant that without such illusions our aspiration toward it alone would blind us, and therefore, falsehood, in view of this insurmountable drawing of men toward truth — has become inevitable. Ignorant of what it really is, drawn nevertheless irrepressibly according to a law inherent in us, to search after it, we have (fortunately and unfortunately) to live constantly under an illusion and amidst a series of hallucinations. This inevitable destiny serves us as a *circonstance atténuante* before the tribunal of our conscience, but it does not, any more than the other, destroy in us entirely the faculty of coming back to our senses and of discerning our illusions and hallucinations. We may hallucinate ourselves to a degree of seeing snakes in our boots, but this does not give us the right of saying that therefore there is no such one and integral truth; or that only that which is acquired by observation and experiment and the facts resulting therefrom, are truths; while every other truth is only a relative conception, for the time being, binding *pro domo sua*. Thinking thus, we would change our illusions from a screen, preserving our sight from the unbearable radiance of Truth, into a dark and everlasting night.

(To be continued)

PRESENT AFFAIRS

“I have used the present affairs.”

—*Letters That Have Helped Me*

THOSE DAILY CONTACTS

Is it possible for any of us to go through the day without coming in contact with someone else? Yes, certainly, if we limit the word “contact” to its literal meaning of touching. Not, however, if we use it in a wider sense. Even a letter or a telephone can put us in contact then. Which is why it is impossible to live and not make contacts innumerable, some from choice, some (apparently) accidental, with the result that, as we read in *Echoes from the Orient*, “the members of the whole human family reciprocally act on one another.” (p. 46)

This being so, Mr. Judge may well urge us to “be patient, kindly, and wise,” three vital qualities in the maintenance of good relationships, alike in our home, at work, and throughout life generally. Yes, we know this—know the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood—but do we know how to put it into practice? Or knowing it, do we try to, even on the small scale that may be all that lies within our power?

Here is a simple example given us by Mr. Judge. “Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once with a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as if something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbour or friend, obey the suggestion without delay. If the wish to turn over a new leaf comes into the lower consciousness, don’t wait till next New Year’s before actually turning it over; turn it now” (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 29-30). Such acts are humble, but in daily life they are basic, and if we feel the urge to do more Mr. Judge goes deeper and tells us how. Over and above “acts of charity,” he says, each Theosophist should “also strive to so understand Theosophical philosophy as to be able to expound it in a practical and easily understood manner, so that he may be a wider philanthropist by ministering to the needs of the inner man.” (*Ibid.*, p. 53)

Daily contacts (keeping to that phrase) are, for most of us, our nearest obvious sphere of action, and since, as from a pebble dropped in a pool ripple after ripple spreads outwards, we can feel their

effect even in a future incarnation, Mr. Judge is moved to ask, "Shall those whom we now know, or whom we are destined to know before this life ends, be our friends or enemies, our aiders or obstructors in that coming life? And what will make them hostile or friendly to us then?" (*Ibid.*, p. 13)

Let that solemn thought sink in. Let it influence our attitude to those about us, for Mr. Judge shows this attitude to be of vital importance in our daily contacts. He gives an instance of it when he tells one of his correspondents, "The reason that you have had help is that in other lives you gave it to others. In every effort you made to lighten another mind and open it to Truth, you were helped yourself. Those pearls you found for another and gave to him, you really retained for yourself in the act of benevolence." (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 1)

Does Benevolence, that fine old word, play any part in our own daily contacts? Benevolence, that is to say, as an attitude, a frame of mind, a disposition, not simply as a giving of material help? "We are all human," Mr. Judge reminds us, "and thus weak and sinful. If in one respect we are better than others, then in some other way they are better than we are. We would be self-righteous to judge others by our own standard." (*Ibid.*, p. 121)

Again, he warns us that we must not be so prone "to criticize others and forget the beam in our own eye" — warns further, even more solemnly, that as human beings we are "the instruments through which that called Good and Evil come to pass" (*Ibid.*, pp. 126 and 27). He gives us further a vital point to bear in mind, one which many of us in our childhood were often bidden remember, namely, the setting of a good example: "It is not what you say and do, but what you *are* that tells, and that will leave its ineffaceable mark upon each character you meet."

There is yet another reason beyond those already given for maintaining a right attitude towards fellow wayfarers on our earthly pilgrimage. "Our future friends and enemies," says Mr. Judge, "are those who are with us and to be with us in the present." Some we may find totally uncongenial. We may criticize, rebuke, even attack them with bitter words. Against such attitudes he warns us earnestly. "It is a mistake for us to so act. Could we but glance ahead to next life, we would see those for whom we now have but scant charity crossing the plain of that life with ourselves, and ever in our way,

always hiding the light from us. But change our present attitude, and that new life to come would show these bores and partial enemies and obstructors helping us, aiding our every effort. For Karma may give them then greater opportunities than ourselves and better capacity." (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 13 and 14)

This may seem a strange thought, but we should bear it in mind, for Mr. Judge was not a man to talk nonsense. Many of us, surely, can look back and recall some action or contact which, though seemingly unimportant at the time, we later perceived to have affected our life deeply. That effect we needs must carry on with us till in a future life it works itself out. How much thought, then, ought we to give to our contacts with and attitude towards others in our present incarnation! We surely do not want to inherit from it, so to speak, anything that defiles. And we need not, for, in the teachings of Theosophy, we have a powerful antidote upon which we can rely.

A strongly active element in all contacts is the force of example, as Mr. Judge demonstrated throughout his life, unfailingly acting upon his own precept that "the lamp must be carried aloft for others to see." Our own contacts may be limited, certainly in comparison with his, and we ourselves but moderately able to turn them to good account. But he would be the last to belittle their value, only looking hopefully towards their ultimate result. "We are all bound together," he tells us, "with a bond we cannot break, and that is the essential unity of the human family; it is the basis of universal brotherhood." (*Ibid.*, p. 244)

Always he stresses *unity*. At a Convention held in London in 1892 he told the Members of the then 17-year-old Theosophical Society that as every one of us is united with everyone else, each of us "is responsible for the progress of his brother" (*Ibid.*). To live on indifferent, or worse, unfriendly terms with those about us is not simply to waste the opportunity of a pleasant and helpful contact *now*. It is, says Mr. Judge, to ensure their hostility in a future life. "For no man becomes your friend in a present life by reason of present acts alone. He was your friend, or you his, before in a previous life. Your present acts but revive the old friendship." If, on the other hand, he was, and returns to be again your enemy, the "tendency to enmity will be one-third lessened in every life if we persist in kindness, in love, in charity now." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 13)

Can the importance of our daily contacts be put before us more

plainly? Do not the words of so wise a teacher carry weight?

Let us, then, act upon them *now* in our present circumstances, thus fulfilling "the aim of the Founders of the Society to arouse tendency to future friendship." For, to quote Mr. Judge again, "the fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life." (*Ibid.*, p. 12)

BUDDHISM in the East is known as the Buddha-Dharma. The word Dharma has a vast variety of meanings, one of which is "duty." But duty in English has the unpleasant connotation of compulsion. It is something which ought to be done but which, generally speaking, we do not wish to do. Yet in the Buddhist sense it is that which is the next thing to be done, and the emotional labels of dislike or like are not applied. One just does it. In a memorable passage Chuang Tzu begins, "To act by means of inaction is Tao. To speak by means of inaction is exemplification to Tao." It ends, "To follow Tao is to be prepared. . . . And not to run counter to the natural bias of things is perfect." This "natural bias of things" is the rhythm of nature, the rhythm of the Universe. "It connotes acting in harmony with the swing of the Universe — whether spiritually, intellectually or in the least movement of the body — from the physical movements of the dance of happy youth to the dance of the planets about the sun and the systems about the infinite." . . .

There is a harmony called Tao which blends all events in each moment of the Universe into a perfect chord. The whole situation in and around you at this instant is a harmony with which you have to find your own union if you are to be in accord with Tao. The right life, therefore, is the natural life, and he who has found and lives in Zen lives naturally. To what extent his new found harmony affects his outward life, to bring his outward mode of living into accord with his inner awareness, is a matter of time and the individual, but just as the direct drive of an engine is sweet and without discordant tension, so the right use of action, direct action, is sweet and frictionless. Only self, the desire of self for self, intervenes and pulls the machine out of alignment. Alignment becomes the operative word. From the "power-house of the Universe," as Trine calls it, to the individual self the power is direct, and the right means used in the right way at the right time and place makes up increasingly the perfect act.

—CHRISTMAS HUMPHREYS

WORLDS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

SPIRITUALISM

THEOSOPHY, Mediumship, and Psychism are terms which may serve to indicate the three paths of Occultism, as distinguished from those occasional experiences which occur to practically every human being. These last named experiences form the real substratum of popular belief in Magic, of which the three classes of practitioners are rather the outcome than the originators.

Always on the assumption that there are higher as well as lower worlds in Nature than known to us, it cannot be unreasonable to infer that all species of belief and practice in intercommunication probably have their actual origin outside the sphere of strictly human consciousness. What is experienced here is an effect, and not a cause. This can easily be seen on the reflection that although the phenomena are known, the explanation has to be sought either in the theory of miracles or else in the hypothesis of laws presently unknown to us, of factors in Nature only dimly guessed at, of forces operative in, on, and through our world by which we are affected, but which we do not know how to control. All this is the raw material for the theory and practice of Magic in any of its forms: that Intercommunication is possible from this side as well as from the other, and that its rationale may be learned.

Of the three, it is to be noted that Mediumship, on which the theories of Spiritualism rest, was the earliest in our times to attract attention. It is more than a century and a quarter since the phenomena of the Fox sisters opened wide a door; but Spiritualism today is decadent. There have not been for years mediums in any way comparable to the scores who excited a genuine revival of interest in intercommunications from 1850 to 1875. Mediumship has been replaced almost entirely by Psychism — something unrecognized during the palmy days of Spiritualism. In the excitement of each new thing under the sun the old is speedily forgotten, so that few now remember the great furore over Spiritualism, which endured for one generation only, but in that period commanded great interest, special and general. Mediumship and Spiritualism have never been philosophically considered, least of all by mediums and spiritualists themselves. They have recorded an immense array of facts, but who has studied those facts with a view to their classification, their co-

ordination, their rationale, in the same way that modern scientific students have pursued their researches into the phenomena of the world physical? There has been no more scientific study of Spiritualism than of Religion. Men have been content, first with the experiences, and then with this or that among the thousand and one "revealed" or speculatively suggested explanations. Without a Science of Spiritualism how can there be a Philosophy of the subject? Spiritualism then, has made no progress; and since nothing can stand still in any imaginable world, physical or metaphysical, it follows that there has been inevitable retrogression: Spiritualism has already returned to the world of the "spirits" from which it came, a premature death following a premature birth.

Nevertheless, Spiritualism did not die without issue. So far as known facts permit of deduction, Psychism is the legitimate offspring of Mediumship. Psychism is, in many quarters, as rampant now as was Mediumship a century ago. So some consideration of the ancestry of Psychism will throw, perhaps, a more understanding light on the present status of this branch of intercommunications. Certain important factors prevail in Mediumship as they prevail in Psychism. Their similarity is unmistakable.

The characteristic marks and essential conditions of Mediumship appear to be unvarying, for they are shown by the whole history of Spiritualism. First in order, perhaps, is the fact of passivity. The Medium does not in any case produce the phenomena. What the medium does is to throw himself into a condition of consciousness which makes possible the production of phenomena through him, the actual operators and active agents or agencies remaining invisible because incorporeal in our sense. All that any Spiritualist or so-called Psychical Researcher knows of the nature of these entities is what they themselves transmit through the body of the medium, using that body as their bridge into this world. Aside from the messages thus received on this side, all is inference and imagination. Not only are the theories propounded many and conflicting, as might be expected, but the messages themselves are equally confusing and irreconcilable. Those messages which relate to matters of this world are, when verified, often taken as conclusive proof of the nature of the "control" and of the statements transmitted as to the nature of the "other world." Hence the chaotic nature of Spiritualism.

The best that can be urged in behalf of Spiritualism is that the

messages obtained through Mediumship have demonstrated in our age the existence in and around us of more or less intelligent beings in states of matter and conditions of consciousness otherwise unknown to us, and by so much made it easier for many to believe in human survival after physical death. Nothing has been added to human knowledge in any scientific or philosophic sense. The mysteries of birth and death, of life here and hereafter, the problem of good and evil, are no nearer solution than before. The phenomena of Spiritualism have but added to the sum-total of facts already existing, for which no adequate, because no rational and moral, explanation has ever been found by mankind at large.

This brings one naturally to consider another characteristic of Mediumship. Not only must the Will of the medium be paralysed, but the Reason must undergo a complete metamorphosis. The reason of the normal human being is exercised on the basis provided by the experiences of waking consciousness. Waking human consciousness constantly involves the Will, the Reason, and the Moral Nature. Mediumship, to be successful, requires that the will shall be discarded, the reason inverted, the moral nature ignored. This is also the exact condition of insanity, of delirium, of drug addiction, intoxication, and hypnotism. In all these cases phenomena are exhibited which cannot be explained on any rational basis. The facts are there, but who understands them? And yet, on the theory that this is a universe of law and order, there must exist a rational explanation of the most irrational occurrences. The phenomena of hallucinations and the phenomena of Mediumship are the same; the mental, moral, and volitional constituents of normal human beings have suffered similar catastrophes in the various aberrations named. In all these cases something has happened by which the normal oscillation of human life has been so intensified that the *man* is no longer responsible for what he says and does. What does it all mean?

It is certain that no one cultivates or practises Mediumship to purify his motives, to strengthen his will, to exercise his reason, or to discipline his moral nature. The reverse effect on all these elements of the Medium's nature must be induced by this species of Occultism, if for no other reason than that the energies of the practitioner are more and more absorbed in a contrary direction of consciousness to that which constitutes the balanced human life. And

this, irrespective of the theorem of the possible influence on the nature of the medium through contamination by the nature of the "control." Is this latter to be seriously considered? Surely, all men are familiar with the fact of contagion, physical, moral and mental, from the intimate or even casual contact of living men and other beings. Granting that Mediumship is a path to intercommunication with beings of another world than our own, how could any Medium, or any who patronize Mediumship, hope to escape being affected by the contact? The price paid by the Medium is one that precludes his gaining any spiritual, moral, or intellectual benefit from the practice, but it certainly must lay him open without defence to infection. There is no record of any Medium who has become a better man as a result of his mediumship, but there is a truly dreadful list of those who have been made worse by their experiences. And in degree the same consequences must befall those who countenance and support the practice. These, for the most part, may be likened to those who would profit by the drink and drug traffic without themselves becoming addicts. In the end they must, on any theory of moral justice, fall victim to the same or worse evils. Those who defend Mediumship and its fruits and endeavour to profit by it at second hand are the very last to wish to become mediums themselves. If there were any possibility of good in Mediumship itself, surely everyone who believes in its messages would desire first and foremost himself to become a medium, so as to secure its benefits direct. That this is not the case is ample evidence that there is dullness of the moral nature, defective reasoning power, lack of right motive, *already* in those attracted to Spiritualism. Those breaches in their nature must be widened and deepened, if they yield to the attraction which Mediumship offers them as a door to the "unseen world."

Anyone so minded can easily investigate the subject of Mediumship from the records made by itself, and more than substantiate all that has here been indicated. Those records are such as to make the thoughtful man wish rather to close this door to the Occult than to open it, whether in others or in himself. As known and practised, its history shows it admits to unknown regions *below*, not above, human consciousness.

(To be continued)

RESPONSIBILITY FOR RIGHT AND WRONG ACTION

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Look not mournfully into the Past. It comes not back again.
Wisely improve the Present. It is thine. Go forth to meet the
shadowy Future, without fear, and with a manly heart.

—HYPERION

A FUNDAMENTAL TEACHING of Theosophy is man's responsibility to himself alone for his actions, good, bad, or indifferent. It is at once wise and truthful teaching, and calculated to inspire one with lofty thoughts and higher aspirations. It presupposes a positive knowledge on the part of man of the difference between good and evil in their relative capacities. Even the lower strata of humanity, surrounded by every form of vice and wickedness, *know* from observation and intuition that there is a higher degree or form of life in the plane of humanity, although they may choose to walk in the path of animalism and wrongdoing. The dulled life they lead is theirs from choice; it cannot be said, however, that by a superhuman effort the criminal, the debauchee, or the self-imposed outcast from society may not lift himself by degrees from his low station to one of truth, refinement, and spirituality.

Because of the teachings of Theosophy on this point, Theosophists are, perhaps more than any others, unusually receptive to the voice of the Higher Self. The study of Theosophy is well calculated to lend to the individual an enlargement of comprehension in respect to humanity that is unattainable through any other process of reasoning. Individual opinion as to what is right and what is wrong shall ever be the rule, and the *intention* the guide of judgment. A man may, with the hope of future reward, do right; a man may, because of some apparent timely advantage of right over wrong, do right; or he may be a passive doer of right for the sake of appearances and because right action is reputable and the aim of the majority. But the Theosophist, provided always that he is content, will look upon the question of right and wrong from a higher standpoint — from the standpoint of Universal Brotherhood. For the good of humanity; for an example; because right is right, not because it is customary, will the Theosophist walk in the higher round.

Now, because of this teaching of responsibility, the idea arises of a still equally important phase of the question, and that is, every man is a law unto himself. Taken as it stands, this conception is, it must be admitted, startling; but it is nevertheless true. The laws of Karma and Reincarnation demonstrate its truthfulness:

... each man's life

The outcome of his former living is;
The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes,
The bygone right breeds bliss.

That which ye sow ye reap. See yonder fields!
The sesamum was sesamum, the corn
Was corn. The Silence and the Darkness knew!
So is a man's fate born.

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.

If he shall labour rightly, rooting these,
And planting wholesome seedlings where they grew,
Fruitful and fair and clean the ground shall be,
And rich the harvest due.

If he who liveth, learning whence woe springs,
Endureth patiently, striving to pay
His utmost debt for ancient evils done
In Love and Truth alway;

If making none to lack, he thoroughly purge
The lie and lust of self forth from his blood;
Suffering all meekly, rendering for offence
Nothing but grace and good;

If he shall day by day dwell merciful,
Holy and just and kind and true; and rend
Desire from whence it clings with bleeding roots,
Till love of life have end;

He — dying — leaveth as the sum of him
A life-count closed, whose ills are dead and quit,
Whose good is quick and mighty, far and near,
So that fruits follow it.¹

¹ *The Light of Asia.*

To draw a line of demarcation between right and wrong will not be a difficult task for the student of Theosophy; and if the faculty of closely distinguishing the spurious from the true is latent in the student, the still smoking ember may be set aflame by a touch from the torch of Karma. The doer of good for the sake of good itself — he who sees wherein good may be evolved from presumptive evil (for the two are at times closely allied); he who, for the sake of the good that is embedded therein, walks boldly into the monster's lair, caring nothing for physical or mental scars and unheeding the scoffings of the super-holy in order to extract the true and put away the false, is surely working on the Theosophic plane.

When men are led to a conception of responsibility to self, when men come to see *by the light of future events* that he who sows shall surely reap — not a vicarious reward or punishment, but — a just proportion of praise or blame consistent with his present life, when will come *to him* the crowning day of theosophic effort. When the millions of rich and poor realize that man is *a law unto himself* in respect of spiritual things, then will Universal Brotherhood become a universal factor in the mundane sphere.

But the world moves. The progress of the past few years in the theosophic arena shows sense of increase an hundredfold before the cycle is ended. Man's spiritual nature is slowly but surely developing in a degree in proportion to the development of the race. It is with no pessimistic eye that the members of the Theosophical Society need view the future. Theosophy is an accepted fact, and the practice of altruism is forming a light in the background that will eventually envelop humanity in one grand brotherhood for the glorification of God and the deification of man.

—EXETER

WE have built a monumental world round about us, and have slaved for it with unequalled energy. But it is so imposing only because we have spent upon the outside all that is imposing in our natures — and what we find when we look within must necessarily be as it is, shabby and insufficient.

—C. G. JUNG

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The success of the Indian expedition to Antarctica has given fresh impetus to the theory that India and Antarctica were part of a single land mass millions of years ago. The members of the expedition are said to have gone close to the site where the continents were once joined, and have brought with them tonnes of Antarctic rock which may help establish the truth about the ancient links. The purpose of the expedition was to study the southern portion of the Antarctica, which included the Indian and Antarctic Oceans, from various angles — physics, chemistry, geology, geophysics and biology. The scientists have brought with them samples of air, ice, rocks, worms, lichen, moss and grass for investigation by different research laboratories. (*The Times of India*, February 22 and 26)

There is enough evidence that continental masses have shifted not once but many times and that lands anciently joined together have since separated. Says *The Secret Doctrine*:

“Lemuria,” as we have called the continent of the Third Race, was then a gigantic land. It covered the whole area of space from the foot of the Himalayas, which separated it from the inland sea rolling its waves over what is now Tibet, Mongolia, and the great desert of Schamo (Gobi); from Chittagong, westward to Hardwar, and eastward to Assam. From thence, it stretched South across what is known to us as Southern India, Ceylon, and Sumatra; then embracing on its way, as we go South, Madagascar on its right hand and Australia and Tasmania on its left, it ran down to within a few degrees of the Antarctic Circle; when, from Australia, an inland region on the Mother Continent in those ages, it extended far into the Pacific Ocean, not only beyond Rapa-nui (Teapy, or Easter Island) which now lies in latitude 26 S., and longitude 110 W. (II. 323-24)

“Back to Hippocrates.” Such is the call made by Norman Cousins in his editorial in *Saturday Review* for February. Holistic medicine so much spoken of today, is not a new concept. More than 2,000 years ago, Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, spoke of the healing resources of the individual human being, and the activation of these resources, in his view, was an essential process in the treatment of disease — a process which complemented and supplemented sy

tematic medicine. Since then, however, there has been a consistent gravitational shift away from the patient as the centre of the healing process, and increasingly the physician has come to the fore as the dominant force.

Today, there is again a shift in emphasis, and Norman Cousins refers to its implications:

The role of the patient in overcoming disease and maintaining good health is coming to the forefront. The perceptions of Hippocrates are given scientific substance by new knowledge about the ability of the human brain to exercise a measure of control over the autonomic nervous system. The end result, inevitably, is increased respect for the concept of the physician-patient partnership. Research about the functioning of the immunological system is bringing us back to the original Hippocratic concept of the patient not as a passive vessel into which the physician pours his therapeutic skills and his medicaments, but as a sovereign human being capable of generating powerful responses to disease.

To be sure, there is nothing new about knowledge concerning the effects of fear, panic, dread, despair, depression, hate, and rage on the total human organism. What is new is the growing knowledge concerning the biochemical effects of the will to live, hope, faith, confidence, cheerfulness, and laughter. The ancient idea that the healing system is connected to a belief system — that attitudes play a vital part in the recovery process — is finding systematic verification in current medical research. At the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas, and at dozens of other medical centres throughout the world, people are being treated for illnesses by mind-training that demolishes the notion that the brain is barred from any supervisory function over the autonomic nervous system. . . .

Does laughter have any beneficial effects? The evidence is mounting that it does. Dr. William Fry of Stanford University School of Medicine, who is one of the leading researchers in this field, points to the fact that laughter enhances respiration and stimulates the endocrine system. Drs. Jonathan Levine and Howard Fields of the University of California, San Francisco, have done research showing that laughter stimulates endorphin and enkephalin activity, thus accounting for the phenomenon frequently observed that hearty belly laughter sometimes sets the stage for pain-free sleep. Meanwhile, there seems to be little doubt that

the physical activity induced by laughter is a form of internal jogging that confers benefits of its own. . . .

It is clear that treatment of physical illness without corresponding attention to the emotional needs of the patient can only have a partial effect. Conversely, the physician who gives appropriate attention to the emotional needs of his patients not infrequently finds that he has helped clear the way for the effective use of his ministrations. . . .

There is little doubt about the fact that fear is the great accelerator of disease. Conversely, hope, faith, confidence, and the will to live set an auspicious stage for efforts toward recovery. The physician, therefore, must be an expert not just in chasing disease germs but in pursuing the connection between the human belief system and the healing system.

Snakes have become the subject of many myths and folk beliefs. One such belief, prevalent in some parts of India, is that venomous snake-bite cases can be cured by the power of *mantras*. In the magazine *Mirror* (Bombay) for January 1982, Raghavendra Rao recounts the remarkable cures achieved by some of the "poison kings" of India, as they have come to be known.

In the town of Thiruppurathurai in Tamil Nadu, an old retired stationmaster, M. S. Doraiswamy Iyer, is said to have cured more than 25,000 cases of snake bite by the power of the *Muruga mantra*. He charged no fees for his services as this would have gone against the instruction of the guru who had taught him the *mantra*. Doraiswamy Iyer's fame spread far and wide and it is said that there was no need for the victim to be brought to him in person. All that he required was a message to be conveyed to him at the earliest, with the name and address of the afflicted person. A special telegraph office was maintained for him and telegrams were received sometimes by the score, and delivered in a jiffy at his residence. No sooner was a case reported to him than he would tear a piece of cloth, tie knots in a thread and recite the *Muruga mantra*. At the end of this recitation, irrespective of how far the victim was and what species of poisonous snake had bitten him, the power of the *mantra* somehow neutralized the deadly venom and effected a cure. Doraiswamy Iyer is now no more, but he is said to have passed on the secret to his son and a few others, who are continuing with the self-

less task of curing snake-bite cases.

The article recalls Kenneth Anderson's book, *Jungles Long Ago*, one of the chapters of which contains the author's first-hand account about snake-bite cures through the power of *mantras*. Kenneth Anderson was an authority on the jungles of India and was himself once bitten by a cobra.

A *mantra* has been defined by W. Q. Judge in his "Conversations on Occultism" as "a collection of words which, when sounded in speech, induce certain vibrations not only in the air, but also in the finer ether, thereby producing certain effects" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 140). There are some men who can control the elementals with certain vocalizations and produce effects in the *Akasa* by means of which men and animals alike can be influenced. But it is a gift self-found or inherited, and those who possess it are often totally ignorant of the rules governing the principle.

In *The Theosophist* for August 1882 appeared an article entitled "Tharana, or Mesmerism," in which the writer claimed to have cured, generally within a few hours, acute sprains as also scorpion bites, by the power of *mantras*. To this, H.P.B. appended a Note from which the following is extracted:

A *mantram* is simply a recitation of certain verses held sacred among the Hindus. Yet, if repeated loudly and after a certain rule of phonetics, *i.e.*, chanted in a peculiar way, we do not know why the resultant sound could not possess as curative a power in itself as a mesmeric "force."... The forefathers of many Brahmans — if not the latter themselves — must have certainly known more of the mystery of sound than Professor Tyndall, even though that learned gentleman has succeeded in drawing musical sounds from fire and imponderable gases.... The ancient Greek mystics, equally with the Western occultists and the adept Brahmans, agreed all in teaching that sound emanated from the Astral Light, or *Akasa*, in its purest essence.... An adept knows that in the centre of the Astral Fire must be search in nature for the origin of every sound — and it is sound — the Vach — that is the curative agent in a *mantram*. ... If we say that nature has in reality *seven*, not five or even four, elements, some of our readers may laugh at our *ignorance*, but an initiate would never do so, since he knows very well what we mean. He knows that, in the case in point (the power of a *mantram*), it is through occult sounds that the adept commands

the elemental forces of nature.

In the magazine *Mystery* (Bombay) for February 1982, Ruskin Bond writes of the ill-effects of the "evil eye" — a belief prevalent throughout the world. In northern India it is called "nazar" — a glance of malice or envy — and it is held accountable for a wide variety of ailments and disasters. Whether it is the cow going dry, or an ailing child growing thinner day by day, or a woman remaining childless — it is all blamed on a malevolent glance. In the author's words:

Ill-will and evil intent cannot be shrugged off lightly. Hate has an aura which quickly permeates the surroundings. . . . In India, as in most countries, the popular explanation for the fairly widespread belief in the evil eye is that it is based on envy or covetousness. It is logical enough to suppose that a man with only one eye is almost certain to envy a man who has two; the weak and puny envy the good health and good looks of others; the childless woman covets the sons of more fortunate women. . . .

The belief that certain persons possess the power of discharging a glance so maleficent that it strikes like a dart at the person against whom it is directed is prevalent in many parts of the world. . . . This worldwide belief comes down from the remotest antiquity. The English word "fascination" is from the Latin "fascinatio," which is transliterated from the classical Greek word meaning "the mysterious bewitching power of the evil eye." The ancient Egyptians knew and feared the evil eye, carried mascots and muttered protective charms, as do the Bedouins and Moors even today. . . .

In Italy a "jettatore" is a man (a woman is a "jettatrice") with the evil eye; one whose mere presence, whose very shadow, is ill-omened and unlucky enough, but whose baleful glance brings sickness, sorrow and death.

In parts of rural England, sickly or deformed children are still spoken of as "wisht" — that is, "ill-wished" or "overlooked," injured by someone who has cast his or her malevolent gaze upon the sufferer.

Before scoffing at the power of the evil eye, ponder upon the feats of modern hypnotism. A powerful mind, using the intensifying apparatus of the eye, is able to influence a weaker or suggestible mind. A stronger will is imposed upon a weaker will.

Needless to say, many have been falsely accused of having the evil eye. Any condition of the eyes which appears abnormal or unusual has awakened fear of the fascinator. The magnetic emanation of each man, says Theosophy, is projected from his eyes, consciously or unconsciously, impregnated with good or evil influence according to the magnetic purity, or the reverse, of the individual. A sorcerer deliberately directs this invisible fluid, charged with malicious will and hatred, towards another with the intention of harming him. The same effect is produced, only less effectively, when a man who perhaps would not act deliberately to injure another yet indulges in thoughts of malice, envy or revenge.

In the article, "Men Karmic Agents," reprinted from *The Path* for March 1892 in the W. Q. Judge Pamphlet Series, No. 6, it is explained:

H.P.B. held that there are many people in the world, engaged in its affairs, who are, without knowing it, Karmic agents . . . and continually bring to others good and bad sudden effects which otherwise would have come slowly to pass, spread over many more days or years, and showing in a number of small events instead of in one.

If this theory be true, we have here also the explanation of the superstition of the evil eye, which is only a corrupt form of the knowledge that there are such Karmic agents among us who by looking at others draw together very quickly effects that without the presence of the Karmic agent might never have been noticed because of their taking more time to transpire.

A hint as to the rationale of the acquisition of the power of the evil eye may be found in a hypothetical account in Mr. Judge's article, "The Moral Law of Compensation" (Judge Pamphlet Series, No. 6). In the case described in that article, it was deeds of cruelty in a former life which had attracted hostile elementals to an individual; which elementals in this life precipitated themselves down his glance, to the undoing of his own efforts and even, perhaps, to the injury of others. Similarly, by the power of a man's thought along unwholesome lines he attracts to himself undesirable elementals and sets up currents which may precipitate themselves upon any individual on whom his glance may fall, provided that that man has any degree of consubstantiality with the evil force to give the opening.

The December 1981 issue of *Liberator*, the official publication of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV), publishes the text of an address by BUAV Campaigns Officer, Kim Stallwood, to the Mobilisation for Animal Rights Conference, 1981, in Ocean City, Maryland, U.S.A. The theme of the address was: "How Shall We Win Rights for Animals?" Referring to the attitudes we should adopt, the speaker stated:

I assume that all of us are concerned with the Rights of Animals and are fighting for Animal Liberation. But is it *enough* to know how animals are abused and demand that it all be stopped? I think not.

In order to achieve Rights for Animals, we need to know *what* Society has to change to make that Animal Liberation possible. It is no longer good enough to point at animal suffering and say: "It's jolly naughty. Stop it! So there!"

Animal Rights Activists have to know all about human liberation, too.

We have to acknowledge the link between the oppression and exploitation of humans and the oppression and exploitation of animals. Accordingly, we have to know how we can feed the World's population on vegetable foods — for human liberation; how we need to rebalance our life-styles so as to prevent disease rather than induce it through environmental causes — for human liberation. We have to know how we need to redistribute the World's wealth and resources more evenly and fairly — for human liberation.

I repeat, all this is for human liberation, but it is up to us to prove to the World that if we want to liberate humans, we've got to liberate animals at the same time. Their incarceration is our incarceration and their slavery is ours too....

Animal Liberation is about freeing humans, too, from the conditioning of bigoted prejudice which assumes the superiority of our own species. Therefore it follows that those who wish to achieve the Rights of Animals must recognize the logic and necessity of the Rights of Humans. The exploitation of animals is inextricably interwoven with the exploitation of humans.

We are talking in terms of an attitude, the attainment of a state of mind free from prejudice — a mental freedom. A mental freedom enabling physical liberation.
