

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychological powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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WHITE LOTUS DAY

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THE NUMBER of devotees of H.P.B. is on the increase. As her Anniversary Day approaches we like to take stock and to draw up a balance sheet of profit and loss. Not only is a greater number of devotees all over the world endeavouring to live her Teachings and to spread them, but the sale of her books outside the Theosophical circle is also greatly on the increase.

This monthly makes its appeal especially to students, aspirants and devotees. Twenty-one days from the date of this issue all of them will participate in the celebration of White Lotus Day. They will be seeking guidance and co-operation; they will take counsel among themselves as brothers, about making the celebration of White Lotus Day a true success. For them individually that success would spell a deeper feeling of understanding, of peace which is strength, and of calm courage. Also they would like to see the day marked with a better and more correct appreciation, by a larger number of people, of genuine Theosophy as recorded in the writings of H.P.B. and W. Q. Judge.

In her *Five Messages to the American Theosophists* all devotees of H.P.B. will find good nourishment for the special labour of these twenty-one days.

The world at this hour is strangely afflicted. Almost everyone admits that what has been called Western civilization has proved a failure. Its modes and methods of progress are competitive, engendering greed and hate, and are contrary to the ideas

and ideals of the best minds of the ages, including those of that very civilization itself. Because everyone is aware of the affliction of humanity, there is a tremendous output of remedies—so many plans and schemes for the amelioration of agony and for increasing prosperity, peace and understanding between the clashing creeds. Theosophists eager to help naturally view sympathetically all such schemes. They are, however, apt to be misled by their very zeal and enthusiasm for service. The following words of H.P.B. will warm and guide us all at the present hour, which seems to be so fateful:

Theosophists are of necessity the friends of all movements in the world, whether intellectual or simply practical, for the amelioration of the condition of mankind. We are the friends of all those who fight against drunkenness, against cruelty to animals, against injustice to women, against corruption in society or in government, although we do not meddle in politics. We are the friends of those who exercise practical charity, who seek to lift a little of the tremendous weight of misery that is crushing down the poor. But in our quality of Theosophists, we cannot engage in any one of these great works in particular. As individuals we may do so, but as Theosophists we have a larger, more important, and much more difficult work to do.

What is this more important and more difficult special work which, as devotees of Theosophy, we have to undertake?

The function of Theosophists is to open men's hearts and understandings to charity, justice and generosity, attributes which belong specifically to the human kingdom and are natural to man when he has developed the qualities of a human being. Theosophy teaches the animal-man to be a human-man; and when people have learned to think and feel as truly human beings should feel and think, they will act humanely, and works of charity, justice and generosity will be done spontaneously by all.

The very misunderstanding which exists at present about what Theosophy is and the prejudice which unfortunately attaches to that name in the minds of some, due to the errors and mistakes of certain of the followers and colleagues of H.P.B. and Judge, are removable. What H.P.B. wrote then is equally true for today:

I am confident that, when the real nature of Theosophy is understood, the prejudice against it, now so unfortunately prevalent, will die out.

To make clear to the general public the true nature of Theosophy requires that students make clear their own minds and elevate their own hearts. What is demanded is

a true, hearty, earnest devotion to our cause which will lead each to help his brother to the utmost of his power to *work* for that cause.

The twenty-one days' preparation for White Lotus Day is not only for the 8th of May—it is to affect the weeks and months which follow. The Theosophical Movement exists to impress on the mind of humanity, age after age, the ideas which are true and therefore undying. The lower nature of men and women entangles civilizations and eras in fanciful and fictitious notions, which perish with the passage of time. The Sages ever bent on bringing the world to Duty put into motion a certain number of True Ideas in consonance with the Law of Necessity which includes Karma and Cycles. The Companions of the Sages and the aspirants to such Companionship try humbly to copy their Masters. So let us take advantage of the annual cycle and labour to make White Lotus Day a real pregnant success.

WORK and thou canst not escape the reward; whether thy work be fine or coarse, planting corn or writing epics, so only it be honest work, done to thine own approbation, it shall earn a reward to the senses as well as to the thought. No matter how often defeated, you are born to victory. The reward of a thing well done is to have done it.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

HELPING LAME DOGS OVER STILES

... thy Soul has to become as the ripe mango fruit: as soft and sweet as its bright golden pulp for others' woes, as hard as that fruit's stone for thine own throes and sorrows, O Conqueror of Weal and Woe.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

LIFE'S experience teaches us that no one can really help another unless he has the continuous urge and inclination to render help, not emotionally, but as the discharge of an obligatory duty. It is only after the wearing away of the first flush of enthusiasm that doubt steadily trickles in as to whether all the effort and the pain was worth it; especially when the help is not recognized but is scoffed at and greatly belittled. To the harassed soul the lure of abandoning the effort becomes tempting in the extreme and unless it is firmly fixed in its initial resolve, it may like the tortoise draw back into its carapace of selfhood and refuse to budge.

One good example of help to the needy is that of a teacher ministering to his pupils. However, though today we have an abundance of "qualified" teachers, we find that the noble objective of imparting education is often turned into an almost mechanistic formula of churning out degree-holders. Where one expects devotion and loving care that act and react between the teacher and the taught, we find none of these virtues, which the Ancients expected from their institution of Teachers. Today the teacher barter his wares, and if in return for his efforts he feels himself not sufficiently remunerated, his grudging service gets reflected in the poor quality of that which he imparts. Teachers go on strikes, unmindful of the disastrous example they set their pupils. The teacher thus degrades his position to a mere vendor who will not sell what he has promised to offer unless he gets his enhanced price. Worse still, there are those who enter the teaching profession because in it they can create opportunities to inject their own political and partisan views into minds which at impressionable ages are unable to discriminate—to reject that which is propaganda and retain only that which is knowledge, universal and therefore true.

Ancient ideals no longer dominate the minds of men, and even if there be the sincere desire to help, the teaching is restricted to knowledge relating to the physical and sensuous planes of life to the exclusion of the psychic and the spiritual. The present-day teacher fails to recognize that whether it be infants or grownups, the best way of deepening their understanding and thereby rendering real help is to disencumber their minds of superfluous knowledge and all such mental images as are likely to become darkening agents that blur the windows of the soul. The erasing of such images and the obliteration of that knowledge which carries its own curse is a difficult task in itself and the expertise of the Guru is taxed to the utmost as he proceeds to realign the pupil's mind to the wider outlook and the deeper understanding. It is the Guru's responsibility to bring to the surface the roots of the peculiar psychic defects that delay his ward's progress, and to prescribe suitable remedial measures. The pupil in such cases becomes a patient who requires special treatment and often expert nursing. The roots of moral diseases usually lie under a veneer of respectability, and it is these which, acting behind the scenes, drag the man away from the true knowledge and its universal application.

He who renders help, surrounds that help with an invisible aura which reflects his knowledge, motive and behaviour, and therefore injects into the person helped either manna from heaven or its lethal opposite. Whatever has been said of the teacher applies with equal force to him who helps through the medium of money or effort or the propagation of beliefs. The last includes those who are sincere in their desire to help through their chosen medium of the arts and sciences. The medical healer and the mesmerist, the poet and the dramatist can in their own ways spread their help far and wide if they do not meander into the dangerous path of errors that partial knowledge and wrong philosophies have thrown wide open.

Help has to be kindly, but it has to be judicious also. You do not help a rabid dog over stiles, neither would you help a drunkard or a gambler by financing his projects. You *have* to judge the man's past, his training and behaviour, his humility or

his pugnacity, his selfishness or his self-effacement, and in this no terrestrial knowledge will be of any great value. He who desires to help in such manner that the results of that help shall overflow from this life to the next and the next must himself believe in and understand the true meaning and purpose of reincarnation. Here, a parenthesis has to be opened. Quite a large number of books on reincarnation have been appearing in the West, several of them based on communications given under hypnosis induced by a hypnotizer, or given by persons whose psychic memories are aroused during a state of trance induced by artificial means. These communications purportedly relate to memories of previous lives on earth, and even though in some cases these do get verified, still they are no proofs of reincarnation, because reincarnation is of the Soul and not of its evanescent personalities. The psychic data gathered by such means is limited entirely to those memories of the ex-personality, which are the rejects left in the terrene atmosphere by the Soul as being unfit to be taken by it to its heaven of bliss. These memories are merely the stray discards from the now defunct personality and are of the earth earthy. The real Soul-memory was never at the beck and call either of the hypnotist or of the misguided dabbler in psychism.

Reverting to the subject under consideration, it is pre-eminently the task of the teacher to draw out whatever soul powers and memories the student may have brought from all his pasts. However, before this can be done, these have to be sensed and then the mind and body prepared and made congenial for their reception. The way to their ultimate efflorescence has to be cleared by inculcating such ideas and aspirations as can facilitate their emergence. While this is being attempted, it has also to be recognized and suitably provided for that the pupil, young or old, may be carrying from his past and present associations a heavy burden of false beliefs, equally false knowledge and a bundle of superstitions that may emerge at their appropriate times under karmic and universal laws. These too have to be provided for and prevented from emergence by making the mind and emotions impervious to their influence. It is a truism that when one drop of poisoned stuff is removed from either the bodily system

or the mind, room is made for one new drop of elixir to take its place. A new drop of the vitalizing elixir has to be painstakingly built up and garnered to take the place of the eliminated one upon the instant. Thus is progress made.

The student of Theosophy starts his act of service as a teacher at the comparatively lower levels of enlightenment which he may have reached. At such a time, he has no deep insight into character nor has he a ready access to his own intuitive faculty. These will doubtless come later and will be in proportion to the tenacity with which he persists in his attempts at enlightening others. How then is he to enter upon his task with the very limited powers he has at his disposal? For his own safety as well as for the safety of the pupil, *The Voice of the Silence* advises that a diligent search for the right pupil should be made to seek out the one who is without hope or consolation and who is not under the guidance or instruction of another teacher. There can be no stepping across those limits, no trespassing into "no entry" zones till the Teacher's own developing powers mark him out for more extensive service. Further, it has to be kept in mind that "lame dogs" are usually highly strung creatures who shy away at the slightest indication, however erroneous, that they are being imposed upon, and therefore the approach has to be modulated accordingly. Cautiously and in judicious doses the would-be server has to present to the ailing, starving soul the reasonableness and authenticity of the impersonal Law to which all human acts should and must conform.

In her *Key to Theosophy* Madame Blavatsky mentions Universal Unity and Causation, Human Solidarity, the Law of Karma, and Reincarnation as the four links of the golden chain that should bind humanity into one family, one Universal Brotherhood. In them is the quintessence of the Law that must govern all human endeavour. These Laws are the ethical counterparts of the three basic metaphysical propositions of God or Deity, Law, and Evolution. It is through these metaphysico-ethical concepts that the hungry, questing Soul has to be nursed back to normalcy; for it is in them that can be found all the nourishment required to awaken and rejuvenate the languishing soul. Has the

would-be teacher felt the glow of the Law, recognized its intelligence and felt the throb and thrill of its powers to restore broken or disturbed harmony? If not, then has his learning been faulty and his qualification at rendering soul-service stands at very low and even dangerous levels. For, if he has not placed himself under the beneficent rays of the Good Law, then he can offer only chaff and not corn to him who needs his help.

To him who is starving, you do not give heavy food lest the misplaced aid give rise to complications instead of restoring the body to its normal state of health. So, too, when one gives out soul-wisdom to those who hesitantly and for perhaps the first time come to centres where Theosophy is expounded. It is the rational explanation of the basics that can attract their greater attention. Discourses, however eloquent and learned they may be, on such subjects as Rounds and Races, the Stanzas of Dzyan, or the Kundalini and Kriya Shaktis, give but rich food which only strong stomachs can digest. In such cases, it is as if students in preparatory classes are introduced by an over-enthusiastic teacher to higher mathematics or to the mysteries of heat, light, colour and sound. The higher knowledge and the kingly mystery of the ancient teachings have to be given only to those Souls who progress to austerity and devotion. A premature revealing of these entails great damage to the revealer as also to the student unprepared for its reception. The Gospel according to St. Matthew speaks of both these dangers. Chapter VII gives the instruction: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." The danger to the neophyte or to the casual dabbler in Occultism is set out in Chapter IX: "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish; but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved."

In the centuries and millennia that antedated the birth of Christ, Sri Krishna as the great Avatar who came to prepare men for the Kali Yuga enjoined a strict discipline to his followers of the missionary zeal: "Thou must never reveal this to one who doth not practise mortification, who is without devotion, who

careth not to hear it, nor unto him who despiseth me" (*Bhagavad-Gita*, xviii. 67). It follows that seeds of holiness have to be planted in clean places and therefore it becomes the primary duty of the aspiring teacher to prepare the soil of his chosen pupil. He will be failing in compassion if he says to himself, "I will choose only him in whom the soil has already been tilled and tended for my sowing." He cannot escape his duty to prepare the soil; and the best cleanser of the weeds that infest the fallow lands of life is the LAW. Unless the Good Law is given time to work its magical transformation, no divine light can dawn upon the needy and indigent soul. With patient care and an abounding compassion the teacher-helper has to wean his ward away from the ignorance that breeds bigotry, prejudice, and the selfish, uncharitable attitudes that beset people of the present age. If any of these, even if it be in germ, lie dormant in the teacher, they may pounce upon the object of his service through the constant osmosis that goes on between teacher and pupil or between the would-be philanthropist and the object of his bounty.

Though it is most desirable that as soon as practicable the aspirant enter upon his duty of serving the best interest of his neighbour, it is much more desirable that he heal himself before venturing upon creating bonds between himself and one or more individuals who are eager to imbibe the real wisdom of the ages. It is therefore always advisable that during the period of his self-orientation the aspiring teacher seek and enter upon avenues of impersonal service. Such avenues are provided by Lodges at all U.L.T. centres of activity. There, the one who expounds the Law does so in the presence and with the sympathy and encouragement of his co-workers. The lay public that attend meetings become symbolic of the great mass of humanity, and help is given through active participation and the spoken word. To preserve the same spirit of impersonality the answering of a question from the floor requires that the answer be to the question and not to the questioner. Thus is the work of helping undertaken.

One more precautionary step. Before volunteering as a recruit in the army of those who are ready to offer help, the would-be volunteer has to ask himself whether he himself has remained

a lame dog in need of outside assistance to jump over the stiles that will be met during his progress onward. It is hardly possible that efficient and safe help can come from one who is himself lame and in need of succour. Some cure themselves soon; others take a longer time, and it is always wise to wait till one is strong enough to take up a burden which in the beginning may be too heavy to shoulder. He who rushes to render help when he is least qualified to do so becomes an agent who precipitates the fall of the one who puts his reliance on him, thus sowing the heavy karma of disservice.

He who lays his patience and submission to the Law as a sweet flower at the feet of his Great Guru becomes eligible to enter the stream that invests him with the power required for the greater service of humanity. It is when the stream is entered that the blessing of the Guru comes and transforms life, making it rich and worthy of being offered on the altar of a service that is saturated through and through with the aroma of a loving sacrifice.

THE SECRET of contentment is the discovery by every man of his own powers and limitations, finding satisfaction in a line of activity which he can do well, plus the wisdom to know that his place, no matter how important or successful he is, never counts very much in the universe. A man may, very well be so successful in carving a name for himself in his field that he begins to imagine himself indispensable or omnipotent. He is eaten up by some secret ambition, and then good-bye to all contentment. Sometimes it is more important to discover what one cannot do than what one can do. So much restlessness is due to the fact that a man does not know what he wants, or he wants too many things, or perhaps he wants to be somebody else, to be anybody except himself. The courage of being one's genuine self, of standing alone and of not wanting to be somebody else!

—LIN YUTANG

TWO LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF THE N.Y. TIMES

[Reprinted from *Lucifer*, March 1892.—EDS.]

EDITOR, TIMES:

Will you permit me to correct the statement of Mr. J. R. Perry in your issue of the 3rd that Madame Blavatsky appointed as her "successor" Mr. Henry B. Foulke, and "guaranteed" to him the "allegiance" of the "higher spiritual intelligences and forces"? As one of Madame Blavatsky's oldest and most intimate friends, connected with her most closely in the foundation and work of the Theosophical Society, and familiar with her teachings, purposes, ideas, forecasts, I am in a position to assure both Mr. Perry and the public that there is not an atom of foundation for the statement quoted.

Madame Blavatsky has no "successor," could have none, never contemplated, selected, or notified one. Her work and her status were unique. Whether or not her genuineness as a spiritual teacher be admitted matters not: she *believed* it to be so, and all who enjoyed her confidence will unite with me in the assertion that she never even hinted at "succession," "allegiance," or "guarantee." Even if a successor was possible, Mr. Foulke could not be he. He is not a member of the Theosophical Society, does not accept its and her teachings, had a very slight and brief acquaintance with her, and pretends to no interest in her views, life, or mission. Of her actual estimate of him I have ample knowledge.

But anyhow, no "guaranteeing of allegiance of spiritual forces" is practicable by anyone. Knowledge of and control over the higher potencies in Nature comes only by individual attainment through long discipline and conquest. It can no more be transferred than can a knowledge of Greek, of chemistry, psychology, or of medicine. If a person moves on a lofty level, it is because he worked his way there. This is as true in spiritual things as in mental. When Mr. Foulke produces a work like *Isis Unveiled* or *The Secret Doctrine*, he may be cited as H.P.B.'s intellectual

peer; when he imparts such impulsions as does *The Voice of the Silence*, he may be recognized as her spiritual equal; when he adds to these an utter consecration to the work of the T.S. as his life-long mission, he may participate in such "succession" as the case admits. But it will not be through alleged precipitated pictures and imagined astral shapes. The effect of these on Theosophy, whereof Mr. Perry inquires, may be stated in one word—nothing.

Yours truly,
WILLIAM Q. JUDGE
Gen. Sec'y, American Sec.

EDITOR, TIMES:

Will you allow a word—my last—respecting the Foulke claim to succeed Mme. Blavatsky, as I see Mr. Perry is perhaps labouring under a misapprehension as to the position assumed by me about this ludicrous affair.

First. If Mr. Foulke or Mr. Perry, or either, has precipitated pictures of Mme. Blavatsky produced since her demise, they are welcome to them, and, it being no concern of ours, Theosophists will hardly deny the assertions of these gentlemen in that regard. Precipitations are not uncommon, but are no evidence of anything whatever save the power to precipitate and the fact of precipitation. Spiritualists have always asserted that their mediums could procure these things. Chemists also can precipitate substances out of the air. So this point is wide of the Society and its work.

Second. As I said in my previous letter, when Mr. Foulke, or anyone, indeed, proves by his work and attainments that he is as great as Mme. Blavatsky, everyone will at once recognize that fact. But irresponsible mediumship, or what we call astral intoxication, will not prove those attainments nor constitute that work.

Third. Mme. Blavatsky was Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society, and its Constitution years ago provided that that office, out of compliment to her, should become extinct upon her death. She has passed away from this sphere, and hence the office of Corresponding Secretary is extinct. The Society will

hardly hurry to revive it for the sake of one who is not a member of the body and who has never thrown any particular glory upon it. Scarcely either because he is a medium—and not even a good one—who prates of receiving messages from beyond the grave assumed to be from Mme. Blavatsky. He may assert that he has baskets full of letters from Mme. Blavatsky written before her death, and we are not interested either to deny the assertion or to desire to see the documents.

Fourth. The Theosophical Society is a body governed by Rules embodied in its Constitution. Its officers are elected by votes, and not by the production of precipitated letters or pictures of any sort. It generally elects those who do its work, and not outsiders who masquerade as recipients of directions from the abode of departed souls. It is not likely to request proposed officers to produce documents, whether in ink, in oils, or in pastel, brought forth at mediumistic séances before the wondering eyes of untrained witnesses. And as it now has Branches in every country on this earth, Mr. Foulke, an ex-member wholly untrained in its executive work and out of sympathy with its true mission, will evince more effrontery than he ever has before if he shall present himself for the suffrages of the members of a Society in which he is not even enrolled.

Fifth. Mr. Foulke's possession of any number of letters written to him by Mme. Blavatsky prior to her demise, offering him "leadership" or "succession," might please and interest himself, but can have no other effect on the corporate body of the Society. Let him preserve them or otherwise as he may see fit; they are utterly without bearing or even authority, and if in existence would only serve to show that she in her lifetime may have given him a chance to do earnest sincere work for a Society she had at heart, and that he neglected the opportunity, passing his time in idle, fantastic day-dreams.

Yours truly,
WILLIAM Q. JUDGE
Gen. Sec'y, American Sec.

CONSECRATED LEADERSHIP

ON THE NINTH DAY of the bright fortnight of the Hindu lunar month of Chaitra, Rama, the first king of the divine dynasty of the early Aryans, is believed to have been born in untold antiquity. This year the day falls on the 21st of April. To observe any festival in fitting manner, one needs to understand its true significance.

Rama-rajya (Rama's reign) has come to mean that ideal rule in which none harmed another and which was based on the principle that the King himself was only a regent of *Dharma* which was enthroned as the sovereign ruler—an ideal that Gandhi, in modern times, continually held before the Indian nation. Rama declares in a significant context in the epic, "I shun that military ideal which is unrighteousness masquerading as virtuous principle, and is followed by low and cruel persons indulging in evil actions." Many doubt the historical authenticity of the descriptions to be found in the *Ramayana* of a State in which Truth and Righteousness triumphed over evil and wickedness, and in which the people led happy and prosperous lives. Be that as it may, myth and tradition are not worthless and in the stories and songs of old we do glimpse useful and valuable ideas and ideals on which to build our individual and national lives.

Is it possible in our day and age to reproduce a government and an administration built after the pattern of *Rama-rajya* in Ayodhya?

One of the teachings of the Hindu tradition is that when wickedness gathers force it stirs into activity the slumbering righteousness of the passive good. Ordinary decent people fear the strength of wickedness when the latter has grown to huge proportions. Then the decent but weak folk long for aid to put down evil and injustice. They send up a cry to high heaven for some relief to burdened, groaning earth. One such prayerful cry was for a righteous ruler who would destroy the evil represented by Ravana and his cohorts, the last remnants of the Atlantean Race which, having chosen the Left Path, had doomed itself.

When a sufficient number of people range themselves on the side of truth and justice a response comes. Rites of sacrifice or *yagna* were performed in olden days to draw the attention and the benediction of the *Gnyanis* and *Tapasvis* who live in the infinitudes of space. Dasaratha, the royal father of Rama, secured the divine heir for the throne of Ayodhya by such a *Yagna*—the *Asvamedha* sacrifice, which, truly understood, is the sacrifice of the animal-man of prides and passions on the altar of human service. This is the preparation needed for the kind of rule that we vision in our hearts as *Rama-rajya*.

Would not then the preparation for right leadership be an appropriate subject for consideration in relation to the festival of Rama-Navmi? Suppose that leaders, and especially would-be leaders, were to celebrate that day by an act of right resolve and consecration to serve the nation as Rama did; to see that rules of righteousness are honoured; to deal justly and bravely, and yet chivalrously, with inimical Ravana; not to strike the fallen foe; to be impersonal in applying justice to oneself and to one's own dear ones as Rama was in his banishment of Sita—there are a thousand incidents which may be taken as precedents in the daily routine of government and administration.

Under Karma we have the rule deserve. There is truth in the saying that a nation deserves the government it has. But that does not mean that no efforts are to be made in the present to better our lot. By aspiring and endeavouring to deserve a better government we are bound to obtain it. A nation's fate lies in its own hands. By riot and revolution, or by penance and prayer—such have always been the two ways open to a people when anarchy prevails.

India has chosen her way to *Svaraj* or self-rule, which means not only political freedom but also the attainment of that Peace and that Knowledge which manifest as the radiant Rule of the Great Self. The way to that Goal shown by Gāndhi is that of Penance and Prayer. There is confusion about both the Way and the Goal. Too often is *Svaraj* conceived merely as political freedom from alien domination—which, in reality, is but one phase, but a single aspect of real *Sva-Raj*. From what we read in the

Ramayana, the government and administration of Lanka by Ravana, the giant Rakshasa, was not bad for the people of that island; prosperity and order seem to have prevailed there, and Ravana was served with devotion by courtiers and people alike. What then was the difference between the Lanka of Ravana and the Ayodhya of Rama? In Lanka there was political freedom, economic prosperity—the same as in Ayodhya. But in the Aryan capital there was something more—moral order, intellectual prosperity rooted in Soul-freedom. In short, there was real *Sva-Raj* in Rama's Ayodhya.

The Natal Day of the Divine King, Rama the Righteous, is a fit occasion for leaders and would-be leaders in every sphere of Indian life to review their thoughts and then to renew their resolves about both the Way and the Goal, to consider what Prayer and Penance mean, and what *Sva-Raj* really implies. It would be a good thing if some attempt were made every year to reserve the celebration of Rama-Navmi for such a stocktaking and plan-making ritual.

In the *Ayodhya Kanda* of the *Ramayana* is the pregnant sentence: "Where is Rama, there is no defeat or fear." There are fear and defeat of a dozen kinds in politically free and economically prosperous nations, so it is clear that the spirit of righteousness symbolized by Rama is not there. The basic philosophical principles of the Way of Prayer and Penance, of the Goal of Self-Rule, are often overlooked.

The weakness of modern nations consists in their unsound morality. Knowledge is not lacking, but the guiding principles of morality are lacking. Not that books of true morality do not exist; but the value attached to the practicality of the high moral principles contained in them (*e.g.*, in the Sermon on the Mount) is low. High moral principles are not even considered fit and practical for exercise in the day-to-day business of government and administration. One of the main reasons for this is that political and economic issues are overvalued, are given a prominence and an importance they do not deserve.

Rama is worshipped for the morality which shines forth in every incident of his life. The feature that is overlooked is that

in every important event he applied the moral principles involved. It was a moral principle that made him accept the fiat of his father, trapped by the ambitions of his step-mother Kaikeyi, and go into banishment for fourteen long years; it was a moral principle that made him agree to Sita's and Lakshmana's following him on his banishment; it was a moral principle that made him go to war; it was a moral principle by which he bestowed the kingdom of Lanka, after the war, on Vibhishan of the Rakshasa clan (Rama did not annex Lanka, as a colony, to Ayodhya); it was a moral principle—as an example to his people—that made him consent to banish the peerless Sita whose innocence he knew; every time it was morality which guided him, not political expediency, not economic gain, not militaristic victories.

This aspect of mental integrity and intellectual rectitude comes out forcefully in his answers to Jabali, the learned logician, who was among those who accompanied Bharata when he visited Rama, Lakshmana and Sita during their exile at Chitra-kuta. Jabali was a sceptic who did not believe in the immortality of the Soul or in the existence of another world. He says to Rama, trying to persuade him to be practical, to return to Ayodhya, to accept the generous offer of Bharata and seat himself on the throne that is his by right:

“Wherefore, Rama, idle maxims cloud thy heart and warp thy mind,
Maxims which mislead the simple and the thoughtless human kind?

Love nor friendship doth a mortal to his kith or kindred own,
Entering on his wide earth friendless, and departing all alone,

Foolishly upon the father and the mother dotes the son,
Kinship is an idle fancy—save thyself thy kith is none!

In the wayside inn he halteth who in distant lands doth roam,
Leaves it with the dawning daylight for another transient home,

Thus on earth are kin and kindred, home and country, wealth and
store,

We but meet them on our journey, leave them as we pass before! . . .

Dasaratha is departed, gone where all the mortals go,
For a dead man's idle mandate wherefore lead this life of woe?

Ah! I weep for erring mortals who on erring duty bent
Sacrifice their dear enjoyment till their barren life is spent

There is no Hereafter, Rama, vain the hope and creed of men,
Seek the pleasures of the present, spurn illusions poor and vain,

Take the course of sense and wisdom, cast all idle faith aside,
Take the kingdom Bharat offers, rule Ayodhya in thy pride!"

Here was a practical politician more learned than most political logicians of today! How does Rama answer him? Rama says that Jabali is led away by false reasoning; that tortuous wisdom profits not and that virtue always and ever shuns the way that is crooked. Romesh Dutt's verse-translation is worth quoting:

"... the deed proclaims the hero from the man of spacious lies,
Marks the true and upright *Arya* from the scheming worldly-
wise! . . .

Sweep aside thy crafty reasoning, Truth is still our ancient way,
Truth sustains the earth and nations and a monarch's righteous
sway,

Mighty Gods and holy sages find in Truth their haven shore,
Scorning death and dark destruction, Truth survives for
evermore! . . .

Vain were gifts and sacrifices, rigid penances were vain,
Profitless the holy *Vedas* but for Truth which they sustain,

Gifts and rites and rigid penances have no aim or purpose high,
Save in Truth which rules the wide earth and the regions of the
sky!

I have plighted truth and promise and my word may not unsay.
Fourteen years in pathless forests father's mandate I obey.

And I seek no spacious reason my relinquished throne to win,
Gods nor Fathers nor the *Vedas* counsel tortuous paths of sin!

Pardon, *rishi*, still unchanging shall remain my promise given
To my mother Queen Kaikeyi, to my father now in heaven"

It is educating ourselves in observing and applying *moral* principles, irrespective of political or economic gain, of selfish temp-

tation to obtain for our own country something by injustice or by bringing harm to another—it is that which we ought to resolve about on Rama-Navmi Day. To be strong to fight but without righteousness—that is what many nations are privately planning while they speak of Brotherhood and Peace. Let us follow the pattern of Rama—our trade and commerce, our law-courts and hospitals, our schools and colleges, all, everything, should be infused with righteousness, with moral principles, with virtue. That day will dawn only if leaders, ministers, parliamentarians, traders, shopkeepers, doctors, lawyers, etc., vow to be righteous—to practise chivalry towards the poor and the weak, reverence towards the holy and the learned, and friendliness not only towards equals, but towards all.

AND YET AGAIN—SEEK STILLNESS

Seek stillness, foolish one, for only so
 Can'st thou upon life's journey safely go;
 Seek stillness—nay, no contradiction here;
 Thus only comes release from haste and fear.

Seek stillness, weary one, and thus renew
 Thine inward self, as with refreshing dew;
 In it alone find thy true power to BE,
 Which aimless acts can but withhold from thee.

Seek stillness, troubled one, and find the calm
 That stillness brought thee once like healing balm;
 Seek stillness, only stillness, and rejoice
 That thou therein may'st hear the Voiceless Voice.

WHAT IS REINCARNATION?

THE SHACKLES of materialism, which modern science has strapped upon the giant arms of mankind, are beginning to break. The fetters of superstition and of blind belief with which religion has for so long manacled not merely our bodies but also our minds, our conscience, our will, are beginning to rust. There was a time, and that within the memory of men and women now living, when to question the arbitrary and arrogant statements of narrow and bigoted doctrinaires was to invite here and now that punishment that the orthodox Christian reserves for unbelievers after death. We owe our freedom to modern science, not to religion. But the minds set free by the teaching of facts accumulated by modern science would have developed into utter irresponsibility and lawlessness had it not been for the restraining influence of the universal ethics and morality inculcated into us. Modern science has accumulated enough facts to drown a man, but one may search every one of its textbooks and find no ethics or morality or ideas of responsibility whatever in them.

The whole search of mankind now for more than a century has been in the direction of gaining power—power over the forces of nature. That power gained, men have taken it to mean power over their fellow men, and the whole of our modern civilization shows that the more a man has power, the less he has the sense of responsibility. We think we have abolished feudalism, abolished “privileges” that ran Europe bloody and starving through a thousand years. Our Lords and Princes of the Middle Ages have become our bankers, our business magnates, our statesmen, our politicians. The great bulk of mankind finds life just as precarious as it ever did, and that not despite our religion and our science, but because of them. Science preaches power without responsibility and religion preaches responsibility without power. It is difficult to say which is the worse evil of the two.

Endlessly upon the scroll of time, as we look back we find that great Teachers have appeared on earth to teach among other

things that our purpose here is to learn; that the processes and experiences of life are one vast school of education. Every one of these great Teachers has taught the same identical fundamental verities; every one of them has discoursed upon the mysteries—what were mysteries to the greatest religionists and scientists then, and what are just as much mysteries to our greatest theologians and men of learning today—the mysteries of good and evil, of inequalities and inequities manifest everywhere in life. Having fulfilled their mission, these Teachers went away, leaving it to those who listened to them to think out these problems, to go to work on them, to study life's events as lessons and apply the great principles of conduct to them and to their relation with the flow of events. But after they had left, other men set up religions and sects in their names, began to interpret and misinterpret their teachings, until finally a physically, morally and mentally starved world, slave-driven and tormented, had grown so confused that it could not distinguish between the Teacher who came and the religion set up in his name, could not distinguish between the pure teachings and the interpretations presented to them generation after generation.

That was the condition of the world when H. P. Blavatsky came with the teachings of Theosophy, and of these teachings two intimately concern our past, our present and our future, and they are the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation. But let us beware lest we put the commonly accepted, worldly interpretation on her teaching of this twin doctrine. We, therefore, can only at best restate the fundamental principles and axioms of the Wisdom-Religion of all times, and its postulates placed before mankind. We have but to think and apply these fundamental statements to the very problems and experiences that confront us and we will see for ourselves their meaning and their relation, and therein is the proof of Theosophy, the proof of the teachings of Karma and Reincarnation.

Many regard life as contingent upon form, and, more, as contingent upon the duration of the physical body; and thence arises a vast brood of errors. We see precisely upside down. It is our coming here from the invisible that caused this body

to grow; it is our presence in this body that holds it together, and when we leave the body it goes to pieces. The body depends on the Soul for its existence. The Soul depends on the body for what it can do in the world. That is very hard for men to see, because already they have fixed beliefs. Some have the fixed belief that their Soul was created to fit their body. They regard themselves as one thing, whatever that may be, regard their Soul as something else, and regard the body as a third thing. Others have the fixed belief that there is nothing but the body. Nothing so blinds a person to knowledge as belief of any kind. Believing is not *knowing*, even though it be the true, and the fact that the power of belief is active in the person, and unregulated, makes it certain that he will be satisfied with belief. Being satisfied with belief and not knowing truth of itself, all one has to do is to slip a new negative in front of the picture he has been looking at, and he will believe that.

Let us turn first to the fact presented by Theosophy that the reality is Life; that it is forms which change; states which change; conditions which change; that Life goes on forever. There never was a time past, nor will there come a time future when Life was not or will cease to be. If we think it over we will see that for ourselves. From that universal perception, that always there has been Life, that there now is Life and that always there will be Life, we have but to turn to the other pole: *We are Life*. We always have been as Life, we always will be as Life, and the fact—not the belief—the *fact* of immortality is self-seen.

Then arises the question: "If I am an undying, a beginningless and endless portion of the one eternal Life, how comes it that I am unable to maintain my life consciously and continuously?" The answer is, that is the very thing we are in process of learning. A person cannot make the right use of wealth if he has none. He can learn the right use of it only by having some money and losing it and being spurred as well as stung by the memory of his loss to make a new effort, until after a while he learns the meaning of possessions, and how not to lose

them. Apply the same thing to mental wealth: Some men have mental powers; others have them not. There is only one way to know the meaning and value of a mental treasury; that is to suffer the stings and deprivations of losing what we have and going to work to gain fresh knowledge, until in time we realize that to misuse, to abuse, or to neglect to make use of anything is to lose it. There is the answer to death and destruction, unbalance and loss, which are everywhere manifest in life.

So, if we take the fundamental proposition that all is Life, we can see what is meant by immortality, the unbroken prevalence and continuity of Life itself; and then we can understand our own immortality by the fact that every one of us, regardless of our state, form or condition, is an integral portion of the One Life, and, therefore, we are in fact immortal. What we wish to do is to become immortal in *consciousness* as well as in fact; immortal in understanding as well as in consciousness; immortal in power as well as in understanding.

The presence of anything finite demonstrates of itself that there must be something infinite of which it is a part; the presence of anything that is conditioned or limited in any way at once implies the invisible presence of the unconditioned and unlimited; the presence of ignorance implies a universe of knowledge, just as the prevalence of universal Life implies the continuity of individual Life. Regard our forms. They are composite, compound. How *could* they be immortal? There was a time when our body did not exist as a body. We know full well there will come a time when this body will cease to exist as a body, because it is a compound. Mortal, perishable, unenduring things, then, refer to compounds. But we have a basic form, as we shall come to see.

Regard our feelings: they are a compound of pleasure and pain, of good and evil, of happiness and unhappiness, so that our psychic nature is just as much of a compound as our body. Being a compound, there was a time when we did not have it; there will come a time when it will die, dissolve.

Go now to our minds. Look at them! It is not a pleasant sight, we will have to admit. Did we ever see such a discordant,

heterogeneous, warring compound of ideas as make up our minds? We see our bodies constantly changing before our eyes. from birth to old age and death as well as after death. We know that we are constantly changing our minds, sometimes in the direction of greater wisdom, sometimes in the direction of still augmented foolishness, but we do change them.

But there is that in us which does not change of itself and which cannot be changed, because it is no compound—that which we call “myself,” “my self-consciousness,” “my Ego.” There is that in us which sees things physical, which experiences sensations, which entertains and rejects thoughts, desires and feelings, which believes and disbelieves, but itself is not physical, itself is not anything seen, felt, or thought; it is the Seer, the Experiencer, the Witness, the Knower, and that is One. So that which lives on in us is not our body, is not our feelings, nor our mind. Our bodies, feelings and minds are component, heterogeneous, discordant, their parts and members mutually antagonistic; the Soul it is which moves on, and the word reincarnation does *not* apply to the changing in us.

Reincarnation means that this Self-Consciousness, this Soul, this Ego, this Learner and Knower, this Experiencer of good and evil, passes from this mind and this body to another state of consciousness and another condition of life unknown to us while in the body; another kind of form having altogether different functions, powers and relations from the form we use here; and then in time he leaves that higher state and form and returns here to a new body of matter in order to gain further experience in matter. Just as there is an alternation of day and night, both of which are essential to physical growth, physical life, physical well-being, so there is the alternation of earthly experience and spiritual experience over and over again. As we have the waking state followed by the sleeping state while occupying the same body and the same mind, so we have the alternation from human life to divine life and back to human life. As a matter of fact we re-enter divine or spiritual life every night when we go to sleep; we return to this body and this mind every morning when we wake. The only dif-

ference between waking and sleeping and between death and reincarnation is that whereas in the alternation of waking and sleeping we return to the same body and the same mind, upon reincarnation we return to a new body and new mind of matter. It is because our theologians and our scientists, blinded as they are, the one by their theology and the other by their materialism, do not understand what is meant by reincarnation that they reject it.

For a moment let us regard the theory of reincarnation through purely physical eyes: This body is composed of matter, and being a compound, dissolves at death, is extinguished, annihilated, like a light blown out. Is the candle annihilated when we blow out the light? Is matter annihilated when the person dies and his body goes to pieces? Does not that matter, every atom and molecule of it, go to other forms, enter new combinations? Is there not a ceaseless flow of atoms through our body even while it rests—a ceaseless, molecular river flowing through us? *There* is reincarnation physically considered. These atoms and molecules in our body have been in countless other bodies, and when they leave our body they will still remain atoms and molecules. It makes no difference what body they are in or whose, because their life is molecular or atomic, not organic. These bodies are instruments of action, not of perception. We require a compound form in order to act externally, a homogeneous form in order to act internally and be free from external interruptions.

If we turn to our mind we find that although it is inconstant and changeable, the ideas do not perish. They fly to other minds. Every idea we have has come to us from some other mind. And have we ever considered the infinite multiplicity of a single idea? Look at the law of mind as compared with the law that is the limitation of action; of ideas as contrasted with matter. A molecule remains a molecule. It may enter other combinations, but it cannot multiply itself; it can only reproduce itself. But take an idea: A Buddha or a Christ comes to earth with a new idea; he imports it with him; he imparts it to us. Suddenly a dozen minds see what he sees;

they have the same idea. Everyone is the gainer, and nobody the loser. Those dozen men go out and tell a thousand. Each of those thousand men has the idea. It is his; he sees it for himself, knows it for himself, independently of the original bringer. That idea can multiply itself to infinity and the original idea be in no way lessened. So when our minds go to pieces the ideas undergo metempsychosis, transmutation. Our base ideas fly down; our noble ideas fly up. They seek their own affinities just as we do. The chemical elements seek their own affinities; they have their loves and hates, their marriages and progeny, but they have no divorces like we do; there are no "companionate marriages" among the chemical elements any more than among the Gods.

Go a step inward to that which does reincarnate and which is the Man. Our Self-Consciousness goes intact from any kind of a body to any other kind of a body, from any kind of mind to any other kind of a mind. A person with physical eyes can see reincarnation as the law of physical nature. A person who is able to regard ideas can see that reincarnation is the law of mental life. It is not minds that reincarnate, it is ideas. It is not bodies that reincarnate, it is their elemental constituents, whether we call them molecular, atomic, or what not. It is not beliefs nor knowledge that reincarnate, it is Self-Consciousness, the Knower. It is a great mystery to us—why we cannot bring our knowledge through. Well, why cannot a beginner in geometry solve the celebrated Pythagorean problem that the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides? It is because he has not learned the definitions and fundamental axioms until he sees for himself that they are true, nor has he applied what he has seen and learned.

That which survives and which is the Man, is the Knower. We know that we know some things. Contrast that, say, with the chemical elements; we know they are a form of Life because they will respond to impressions. That is the proof of Life everywhere and at all times: everything that will react to impression is alive. But that is as far as their life, knowledge and

evolution go. These minor souls which we call atoms, molecules, forces of nature, chemical elements, what not—they are Life; they know what they like and will unite with it if it is offered to them; they know what they do not like and will refuse to unite with it if it is offered to them; but they do not know that they know. Man alone knows that he knows; he knows he is the Knower. It is this Knower that reincarnates.

When we recognize what our real nature is, then we can begin to study life, not from the standpoint of things seen outside or of things seen inside, but from the standpoint that since all is Life, all Life is a Knower; and we will then begin to get acquainted with the Soul, whether it is the Soul of an atom, the Soul of a molecule, the Soul of a man, or the Soul of a higher being than man, and we will know that all these Souls are in evolution. Not all have reached the stage we have—self-consciousness—and we have not yet reached the stage of a Christ or a Buddha. The difference between them and us is that whereas our sense of Self is limited to this body and this mind and what we can see and experience in and through these vehicles of ours, their sense of Self is limited by nothing whatever. They can see through any body, experience in any body, look out mentally through any mind, enter into union with any Soul. Just as chemical elements enter into the union of matter, just as the forces of nature enter into the union of energy, just as ideas enter into union with what we call mind, so the fully self-conscious and truly divine man in us can enter into union with Souls, and it is he who is the reincarnating, eternal Ego. We are so blinded by matter, by materialistic science, by superstitious religion, above all by our own failure to face the facts of life and study them as lessons, that we do not fully realize what we are—immortal, divine beings, half Gods, because our education is half completed. Hence our failure to perceive that the lives past, the life that is, and the lives that are to come, are all like beads on a string—the immortal Ego the ever-moving string.

H. P. B. "METAPHORICALLY"

WE students of Theosophy are so accustomed to reading the words of H.P.B. for the sake of the teaching they convey to us, which is indeed their primal purpose, that we may overlook something well worthy of our attention, namely her gift of choice usage of the words themselves, notably her selection and presentation of metaphors.

A metaphor, we might say, puts a fact or statement before the reader *pictorially*. It gives pleasure in itself besides conveying what the writer is wishful to express. And time and again, if effective, it comes back to us, conveying its meaning and thereby fulfilling its purpose afresh, all the more likely to do so because, gemlike, it has been given an appropriate setting.

Take, for instance, her reference to Theosophy itself, which "in its practical work," she says, "is the alembic of the Mediaeval alchemist. It transmutes the apparently base metal of every ritualistic and dogmatic creed (Christianity included) into the gold of fact and truth, and thus truly produces a universal panacea for the ills of mankind."¹

She again makes use of the gold symbol when expressing her regret that "there remains of the Gnostics—the legitimate offspring of the Archaic Wisdom-Religion—but a few unrecognizable shreds. But a particle of genuine gold will glitter for ever,"² and in these few last words we have a memorable metaphor. Not only has a fact been conveyed to our mind—it has been presented almost visibly.

Another fine metaphor occurs when she is speaking of the great variety of religions, all of which she sees as "more or less broken rays of the same Sun of Truth."³ Such imagery of brightness, as found in gold or jewels or fire, seems to be her choice, perhaps arising instinctively from her love of India. Referring to the "series of Hierarchies of sentient Beings," by which the Kosmos is controlled and guided, she conjures up, *in eight words*, a

¹ H.P.B. Series, No. 5, p. 25.

² *Ibid.*, No. 7, p. 38.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 7, p. 32.

radiant vision of these and the units that compose them. They are "the immortal sparks reflecting the universal divine flame."⁴

In a reference to "countless generations of initiated seers and prophets" she again makes vivid use of the element of light. "The flashing gaze of those seers," she writes, "has penetrated into the very kernel of matter, and recorded the soul of things there." And in contrast to the "broken rays" already mentioned she finds splendid words for "the great Central Sun that radiates on the shores of the river of Life,"⁵ all phrases metaphorically depicting forces which could not otherwise be defined.

Yet, with all her power of language, she does not scorn to use those others that come readily from ourselves when speaking or writing—"the light of knowledge," "the darkness of ignorance," etc.—to seek to replace which would, quite frankly, be needless, each being simply an accurate portrayal of what could not otherwise be worded. Let the reader note, too, what she can do with but five words—five words of but one syllable each. We cannot read these five, namely, "Will, the child of light," and not be carried into infinite fields of thought, for entry into that light which we seek in this our present incarnation is indeed dependent on that essential mechanism, our Will.

That all these metaphors evolve so naturally from the subject in hand adds greatly to their beauty and effectiveness. There is nothing enforced about any one of them, no suggestion of H.P.B. "burning the midnight oil" in conscious search for them. All, in the main, drive from Nature, e.g., "the old and trodden highway of routine," "the solitary path of independent thought,"⁶ the latter suggestive of the quiet country stroll of a musing thinker, while it is the *strength* of Nature, as seen in its rocks and trees, that others portray with equal effect.

Referring to the writing of *The Secret Doctrine*, "I sought," she says, "to show that the TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, like Truth itself, was *One*; and that, however differing in form and colour, the foliage of the twigs, the trunk and its many branches, were still those of the same old Tree, in the shadow of which had de-

⁴ U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 2, p. 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 9.

⁶ H.P.B. Series, No. 5, p. 18.

veloped and grown the (now) esoteric religious philosophy of the races that preceded our present mankind on earth.”⁷ And again, speaking of humanity’s need of ideals, she urges those which are “unassailable because *universal* and built on the rock of eternal truth instead of the shifting sands of human fancy.”

Equally apt are her words of sterner measure when alluding to “false prophets and pseudo-apostles (of Christ).” She speaks of them as having “split the one divine Truth into fragments, and broken, in the camp of the Protestants alone, the rock of the Eternal Verity into three hundred and fifty odd pieces, which now represent the bulk of their dissenting sects.” She says further that “the great majority of their respective followers daily put Christ to death on the cruciform tree of matter.”⁸

Voicing her scorn of “the cheap satires and flings at our great Philosophy by some European and American ‘Freethinkers,’ ” she writes: “More than ever do they appear to us like the frightened discordant cry of the night-owl hurrying to hide in the dark recess before the light of the morning sun.”⁹

Thus far the metaphors we have noted have been fairly brief. Such can flash, unsought, upon a writer’s mind in a moment. Others, lengthier, more fully worked out, will fascinate the appreciative reader by their exactitude, one such filling almost half a page as it describes “the real ‘Path’ to esoteric knowledge.” a Path whose “entrance is overgrown with the brambles of neglect,” but whose “narrow way” over “forbidding mountain heights” leads eventually to “the cloud-capped summit.”

What a gift for language, for the right phrase, we think, reading the examples given! Many come close to being poetry. Others can evoke a vivid mental picture, as when H.P.B. tells how Theosophy “opens new vistas beyond the old horizons of crystallized, motionless and despotic faiths,”¹⁰ which brings before us a picture of snow-bound peaks, with, beyond them, a fertile region awaiting the traveller who presses on to it. Incidentally, in contrast to the above we have another, when she speaks of “the

⁷ H.P.B. Series, No. 10, p. 13.

⁹ *Ibid.*, No. 14, p. 8.

⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 7, p. 6.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 5, p. 26.

multi-coloured dogmas of the churches,"¹¹ thereby evoking a discordant medley of clashing hues, each endeavouring to gain priority over the other.

Metaphors should not have to be sought for. They should instinctively present themselves, as is the case with three which occur in an article of hers entitled "The New Cycle" which appeared originally in French in the first issue of *La Revue Théosophique* (Paris), a monthly magazine founded by her in March 1889, a translation of it being included in due course in her *Collected Writings*.¹²

Here are the three metaphors referred to. "The golden threshold of truth," and, in sharp contrast, "the barren deserts of matter." Lastly, one in which she is looking ahead to the day "when the artificial and chilly flame of modern materialism is extinguished for lack of fuel," towards which extinction let us who are students of Theosophy do as much as lies within our power to contribute.

From the few examples given in this short article, H.P.B.'s rare gift for metaphors must be evident, metaphors that in many instances are little short of being miniature poems. We who read them might do well to store as many as possible in our memory so that they may recur to us when the plain fact of which they are the lovely transmutation presents itself either in thought or in actuality in daily life. Take only the simplest, "the fruit of Karma," and what does not it offer for the mind to ponder on? The sure ripening of the mango to sweet fulfilment, the equally sure ripening of the poison berry that can kill, are each compact in those four words which show what metaphor can accomplish when the gifted mind of H.P.B. is dealing with the subject.

¹¹ H.P.B. Series, No. 5, p. 30.

¹² THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, January 1978.

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE

VI

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

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WHEN sickened with the petty aims of the world around—when wearied and despairing in the quest of the ideal brotherhood, it is refreshing to recognize a kinship of spirit even across the gulf of centuries—to feel that the brotherhood of love we seek for is no vain dream, and that when we are worthy to enter its ranks, comrades such as Sidney will be there to welcome us.

On reading over the life of this paragon of the Elizabethan period, though his actual achievement seems at first sight scarcely to warrant the renown he won, the aroma of his character which so captivated his contemporaries is still felt to be the truest criterion by which to judge the man.

But the chief lesson to be learned by students of occultism from the life of Sidney is that in proportion as passion rises to intensity is its power to act as the true alcahest in the transmutation of the baser metals of our nature into the pure gold of the heart.

For the mass of men who stagnate through life without one intense passion to fire their nature, the formula of Eliphaz Levi, modified as follows, would indeed seem to be appropriate—though of course referring to the ultimate destiny, not to the result of any one earth-life. “The spiritual passion towards good and the spiritual passion towards evil are the two poles of the world of souls: between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.”

To see that Sidney was made in a more fiery mould, it needs but to read his “Astrophel and Stella.” Though the complete purging of his nature and the conquest of self is only made apparent in the concluding sonnets, the passionate outbursts of his love and the fiery path he had to tread are manifest throughout the poem, and naturally form a bond of union—all the closer

when the culmination of the desire has been identical—with those who have had analogous experience.

It is perhaps difficult at first to realize how the love of an actual living woman should have the same purging and purifying effect as a similar love idealized, but nature is not to be bound by rules of our making in her methods of drawing different souls towards perfection. Both may be taken as illustrations of the fact that whether emotion starts from a pleasurable or a painful source, on reaching a high enough degree of intensity it enters the region where pleasure and pain are merged in one, and then it is that it becomes the solvent of the man's lower nature.

It must indeed have been a fiery ordeal that Sidney passed through for the earthly love by its intensity so to burn itself clean out of the heart, and leave only the lofty aspirations expressed in the following sonnet, which truly seem to formulate the very sum and substance of Theosophic thought.

Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self-chosen snare,
 Fond fancies' scum, and dregs of scattered thought;
 Band of all evils; cradle of causeless care;
 Thou web of will whose end is never wrought!
 Desire, Desire! I have too dearly bought
 With price of mangled mind thy worthless ware;
 Too long, too long, asleep thou hast me brought,
 Who shouldst my mind to higher things prepare.
 But yet in vain thou hast my ruin sought;
 In vain thou mad'st me to vain things aspire;
 In vain thou kindlest all thy smoky fire:
 For virtue hath this better lesson taught—
 Within myself to seek my only hire,
 Desiring naught but how to kill desire.

—PILGRIM

THEY are never alone that are accompanied with noble thoughts.

—SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Dr. Karan Singh's lecture on "The Message of the *Gita*," delivered at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Bombay (printed in *Bhavan's Journal* for February 1, 1983), highlights the relevance of this ancient scripture at the present time when there is "a churning of consciousness" and a "quest for new certitudes" throughout the world. A need is felt for something that can satisfy the deepest strivings of the human spirit, and the *Gita*, Dr. Karan Singh submits, can fill that need.

He outlines three main reasons why the *Gita* is so relevant to the modern age:

The first reason is that the *Gita* is the scripture of conflict... a teaching which was given in a battlefield where the two armies were ranged, the conches had been sounded and the flight of missiles was about to begin. This, I think, is very significant because within each one of us is a Kurukshetra. Within the consciousness of each one of us the Daivic and Asuric forces, the forces of harmony and the forces of disharmony, are locked in mortal combat.... At this juncture today when man is in this turbulent era, when the past is dying and the new is struggling to be born, and when we find ourselves precariously poised between the past and the future, the teaching of the *Gita* is particularly significant because there is something in the human psyche which will not let it rest. It must push onwards to the next evolutionary step and therefore I think the first reason for the importance of the *Gita* is the setting in which it comes to us.

The second reason is the divine personality of the Acharya of the *Gita*.... Sri Krishna is looked upon, of course, as the highest, "that which shining, causes the entire cosmos to shine."... Here we have the Lord of the Three Worlds, the Brahmandanayaka, coming as a charioteer of Arjuna, and that, I think, gives the *Gita* its special authority. It is not just any Acharya who is speaking but the Lord himself in human form....

And the third reason as to why the *Gita* is so significant to us is the relationship in it between the Guru and the shishya. In all our Sastras, there is a very close relationship between the two. But in the *Gita* there is a relationship which you will find in no other Sastra in the world.... Yet Sri Krishna at the end of the entire teaching says, "I have given you the teaching; do as you like." He is not forcing even Arjuna. And that, I think, is one of

the greatest secrets of the *Gita's* relevance today. Modern man is not to be bullied into action, not to be frightened into action, not to be steamrolled into action. You must appeal to his heart and his mind.

Dr. Karan Singh goes on to consider some of the salient aspects of the teachings of the *Gita*: (1) It teaches the philosophy of right action flowing from a deeper level of our being; not action that binds, but action that liberates—"involvement without attachment and commitment without obsession." (2) It teaches an integral yoga; Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga and Raja Yoga are all integrated and a well-rounded approach to the problems of life is held before us. (3) It gives us repeated assurances—*e.g.*, the general assurance that whenever righteousness declines and the forces of disharmony become overpowering, Krishna incarnates on earth; and the specific assurance: "He who worships me never perisheth." There can be no room for despair; however fiercely the battle may rage, with Krishna as our charioteer we have nothing to fear. (4) And finally, the message of the *Gita* is one of complete surrender: "Forsake every other *dharma* and take refuge alone with me." We seek to base our life on outside supports—money and the things it can buy, fame and reputation, a good job, etc. In the end none of these can stand; the only thing that can stand is refuge in the Divine Will.

Dr. Karan Singh concludes:

The *Gita* places before us a powerful philosophy, one that appeals to the mind, to the heart, to the psyche, to the totality of the human experience.

There will of course be difficulties. But let us not forget that no achievement is possible unless we overcome these difficulties. If we do not go upstream we will drift downstream. You cannot stay where you are either in a stream or in your spiritual life The Voice of the Divine Charioteer can even today be heard if we have ears to hear And the *Gita*, if studied properly, can give us this capacity. Every time we read this great Sastra, something new comes up; whether you are in difficulty, whether you are in peace, whether you are in achievement or triumph, or in tragedy, the *Gita* is there as a beacon light of inspiration to us.

All ecologically aware citizens will welcome the debate on pesticides initiated by Praful Bidwai in his series of articles in *The Times of India*. The writer deplores that even as country after country with environmental protection regulations bans hazardous pesticides, India continues to manufacture, import and use increasing quantities of the agrochemicals despite their proven harmful effects on human health and the ecosystem:

There are several substances whose application is strictly regulated or which are now under review in various countries for suspected carcinogenic, mutagenic (capable of causing changes in genetic patterns) and teratogenic (literally, monster-producing—causing deformations in foetuses) effects. They are freely available and used without restrictions in India Their annual consumption exceeds an astounding 51 million kilogrammes, probably the highest for a suspect group of pesticides in any country of the globe

The effects of the (basically indiscriminate) use of these toxic agrochemicals on the environment, on animals, plant life, and most importantly, on the health of those employed in pesticide manufacturing plants and of farm workers are nothing short of disastrous

Only slightly less deleterious are the effects of the indiscriminate use of pesticides on the general population, by their entry into the food chain. The level of pesticide residues found in vegetables, fruits, foodgrains, milk and milk products, oils and oilseeds, fish, meat and poultry, and even in water, is truly alarming. In all probability, there is very little that the Indian eats, Mr. Bidwai submits, that is not contaminated by harmful pesticides.

What is more, there is the problem of the "pesticides treadmill." It consists in the natural development of resistance to pesticides among pests; the rise of new pest species; the spraying of even larger quantities of pesticides to control these; a fresh growth of resistance; more pesticide spraying . . . and so on and on. The pesticides treadmill spells ruin for the cultivator and disaster for the economy.

Thus, unfettered by regulations [writes Praful Bidwai], the pesticides business carries on. But is there an alternative to the indis-

criminate use of toxic agrochemicals? In several countries of the world, an entirely new strategy called "Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is now being developed and tested....

IPM seeks to harmonize different techniques of pest control and minimize injury to crops, to human health and to the environment. ... Some of these techniques involve biological control (using organisms to reduce pest populations), the breeding of the pest-resistant seed varieties, cultural practices (*e.g.*, rotating crops or interspersing one crop with another), and plain sanitation (*e.g.*, clearing the fields of stalks and roots of pest-ridden plants once the crop has been harvested).

As experiments now in progress in several countries, including (on a smaller scale) in India at Pondicherry, have demonstrated, it is possible to reduce the use of chemical pesticides by a half or two-thirds or more and yet raise yields by two-fifths or more, while containing the human health and environmental hazards.

It is welcome news that there are those who are concerned about the problem, not only of the disastrous reactions of the indiscriminate use of pesticides on human health, but also of the detrimental effects of upsetting the balance of nature. Man has to learn to assume his rightful role as nature's ally and co-worker, or else nature has a way of striking back. In our greed for production by quick methods, we have sacrificed all the older wisdom; we have lost respect for life and produced discords which react on us.

Catherine Roberts' article in the Winter 1982 issue of the *Bulletin* of the National Anti-Vivisection Society, U.S.A., urges that the philosophy and ideology of contemporary animal welfare be supplemented with spiritual concepts and attitudes. True, the animal rights and liberation causes have helped to make academic circles and other sectors of society aware of man's outrageous treatment of animals, but with no consciousness of the evolutionary forces that motivate it, the movement sometimes flounders and jeopardizes its work. In Dr. Roberts' words:

Since vivisectors claim that the ends justify the means, especially their supremely desirable end of understanding life proc-

esses and giving aid to the living, the spiritual offensive can concentrate on the fact that many of the goals of the life sciences are already as ethically shoddy as their brutal methodology always has been

It is true, of course, that some goals of contemporary biomedicine seem desirable and that their desirability would be enhanced were they pursued without laboratory animals But animal welfarists are not yet generally aware that many other biomedical goals, far from being desirable, are inimical to the evolution of life. This is because the scientific conscience, openly dissociating itself from the spiritual aspect of human existence, is often quite unable to make ethical choices. It does not yet know what is "good" for man or evolution. Let no one imagine that all the white-hot activity of contemporary biology and medicine is due solely to altruistic desires to understand and protect evolving life. The current intent of most biologists is to manipulate, transform, and direct what they work with—and to do so on the basis of scientific criteria. So we already have such non-spiritual, unethical achievements as genetic recombination and engineering, heart and lung transplantation, manipulation of reproductive processes, cloning, parabiosis, disembodied brains kept alive and functioning, and the like. As the results could never be duplicated by unaided nature, the scientists are inordinately proud of their achievements. Quite apart from whether animal experimentation is necessary to attain them, such monstrously artificial goals violate the natural rhythm of life and death and evolution

In enthusiastically recommending that experimental biology and medicine everywhere adopt alternative methodologies, the animal welfare movement is giving tacit moral sanction to any and all research projects and goals that do not utilize animals. This is a short-sighted policy. Because of the inherent risks of unrestricted scientific-technological advance, the use of alternatives is an animal welfare objective that should be pursued with great discretion and discernment. The spiritual offensive, as here conceived, tolerates only those scientific goals that truly serve the needs of evolving animals and men. Can we ever know for sure what they are? Yes, when we better know who we are.

Animal welfarists need, I believe, to ask themselves a fundamental question: Who are we and why are we doing what we do? Awareness of our true identity will depend upon whether we can open ourselves to the idea that life is a spiritual process of purposeful evolution directed towards some transcendent Good.

Whether the Good is conceived as God, spirit, will, law, or light, it represents the ultimate reality of the universe. To be able to see that mankind is actually rising, however slowly, towards this Good suggests that the meaning of human life must be the progressive acquisition of goodness. Ethics thus becomes our superhuman link with the divine.

In other words, animals, men, and the reality that transcends them have to be placed in a truer evolutionary perspective. Anti-vivisection implies more than aid and justice for the animals. The philosophical approach to animal welfare requires insight into the underlying reality of life which is divine.

How the huge blocks of stone that go to make up the Egyptian pyramids and other ancient megaliths were moved and raised into place has evoked much wonderment and remained a mystery. Now, a French chemist, Joseph Davidovits, has come forward with "a bold new theory" that the building blocks for the great stone monuments of antiquity were not the product of gruelling drudgery and sweat, but were cast on the spot.

Douglas Starr's article in the February *Omni* assesses the claims made by Davidovits, who after laborious research at his industrial laboratory has rediscovered the art of turning rock into a mouldable form.

This accomplished polymer chemist [the article states] wants nothing less than to turn the archaeological world on its dignified ear. He wants to erase all our images of ancient people working like oxen, dragging huge stones to set monuments in place. He sees the early megalith builders as chemists—the original alchemists who intimately knew the nature of stone

His ancient workers understood stone chemistry well enough to transform stone into a plasticlike compound. Why would ancient craftsmen haul massive building blocks from miles away and painstakingly cut them when they could mould rock on the spot? The Egyptians, after all, knew enough food chemistry to make wine, beer, and vinegar. Their embalming technology is clear proof of their sophisticated knowledge of body chemistry. And judging from the fire glazes that adorn their pottery, they weren't novices to

materials chemistry, either. Couldn't they and others have mastered the few simple steps of agglomerating stone? . . .

The concept, if true, would completely revise the picture we have of our ancestors' life-style and the technology they developed. Of course, ancient people had to be highly intelligent, or they could never have engineered and finished the durable megaliths. They lived in complex societies; the Egyptians, for example, were brilliant administrators. But could they have understood mineral chemistry? . . .

Davidovits says yes "The Egyptians were geniuses at natural science . . . Ancient people were *Homo sapiens*," he says, stressing the word *sapiens*, meaning "knowing." "They had the faculty of intelligence. They were surprisingly like us."

The first pyramids of Egypt as also some of the other megaliths of antiquity, H.P.B. indicates, were built by the last remnants of the Atlanteans (*S.D.*, II. 429). It is evident that the techniques used in their construction could hardly have been anything known to present-day architects. For Theosophical references on the construction of the pyramids, those interested are referred to "In the Light of Theosophy," January 1971 and September 1981.

Recent studies confirm that laughter can indeed play a constructive role as a therapeutic agent. George Vaillant, a psychiatrist who charted the connection between the psychological well-being and physical susceptibility to disease of 185 Harvard men over a period of 40 years, found that the healthiest men relied on humour and stable relationships to tide them over crises. (*Mirror*, February 1983)

Laughter relieves stress and tension and helps the body's immune system to produce more antibodies when invaded by disease-causing organisms. Immune-deficient states can make the body vulnerable to a host of diseases, including infectious ailments (ranging from the common cold to tuberculosis) and disorders of the immune system itself when the body turns against itself.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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