

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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SACRIFICE and devotion were the hallmarks of H.P.B.'s life and work. She offered herself in sacrifice so that Theosophy might live and the discerning be benefited, and for this she was reviled and persecuted by the short-sighted who could not understand her and her mission. It was her devotion to her Masters and what They presented that stood her in good stead on the narrow and arduous path of the Elect where many others had failed.

H.P.B. opened the door of our hearts which alone can take us to the Hall of Wisdom, the Home of the Great Masters. Her Message is a vital and living reality and should be used as the key to open the hearts which are closed, in some cases tightly locked. Let us unlock our hearts, we say, but let us not mistake our personal feelings and personal affections for our kith and kin and friends to be of that Real Heart. The heart of the man of flesh is not the Heart of the divine aspirant. H.P.B. came not to help us to strengthen our human love, but to purify it, to elevate it, to make it divine, which means to make it impersonal. So let us open our Hidden Heart, and from within its core the Soul who we are will shine forth for the benefit of all. It is that Soul who is our God, and his shrine is that Sacred Heart, which knows no distinctions of caste or creed, religion or race, circumstance or condition.

Theosophy has to do with the Soul, with the Heart, with Brotherhood. H.P.B. teaches us how to awaken the sleeping soul, how to unlock the closed Heart, how to practise Universal

Brotherhood. By study of Theosophy one awakens the Soul, by practice one opens the Heart, by promulgation one realizes the strength, the truth, the blessing of true Brotherhood.

H.P.B. was not an ordinary person. What kind of an Adept or high Chela she was, who can say? That is her own secret and reverence forbids our prying into that secret. But we must learn to know and admire the Power or *Shakti* that was H.P.B. She was Argus-eyed, and she flooded with her vast knowledge the fields of the civilization to which she came. Wisdom, the power to remove mental doubts, the power to enlighten the intellect—that she certainly possessed. And what a storehouse of Knowledge she opened for us! There is hardly a subject on which she has not shed light.

Anyone can contact her through her teachings, but to know her in a real sense is another story. She is like Light, and is there a person who is not touched by Light? Yet how many among us know the nature of Light? It is the Light of Power, of Knowledge, of Love, of Sacrifice, which hides the Glory and the Mystery of the Great and True Gurus.

Among all the teachings H.P.B. gave, all the ideals she held forth for our consideration, there is one for which we are specially indebted to her. The West did not know, and the East had clearly forgotten, the Ideal of Gurus, of the real *Guruparampara* Chain. False, ambitious, fraudulent and ignorant men passed off as Gurus, and many had come to believe that in this Dark Age, *Kali Yuga*, real Gurus cannot be found, nay, have ceased to exist. H.P.B. restored the Ideal. In her Philosophy and Message, the ancient glories are well explained—not easy to grasp, but not impossible to know for the sincere mind and the earnest heart. If one wants to understand the affairs of Soul, Mind and Heart, one can find that knowledge in her writings, which are full of the Light of Wisdom. But her greatest service is that she is the key, and the door, to the Temple of the Great Teachers.

The work of all sincere Theosophists is twofold, if they recognize the dual power of H.P.B.'s Message: (1) to impart knowledge to satisfy all men and women; and (2) to help them

open the door with the aid of the key she left behind. She it was who opened for many the Path to the Masters. Some have succeeded, many have failed, but the Path is not closed; her instructions are still available, still continue to perform the miracle of Life in the hearts of the true aspirants.

She said: "Follow the path I show, the Masters that are behind—and do not follow me or my Path." She is the Light, and she throws it on our paths of life so that we may know and overcome the obstacles. She showed the Path to Divine Immortality so that mortals may overcome death—not death of body, but death of mind, death of intellect, death of soul. Let us follow the Path she showed, nay, still shows, for the Light is there, and only those who are blinded perceive it not.

The Path of H.P.B. is the Path of the Heart Doctrine. Just as the physical heart is hidden within the body, so the Spiritual Heart is mysteriously hidden by our ideas and our ideals. As on stoppage of the heartbeats the body dies, so also on stoppage of the Divine Heart the human being is no more. The Heart Doctrine which H.P.B. came to teach is the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery which is secret. Just as when we read a book we use our eyes and our mind, so in reading the message of H.P.B.'s Heart Doctrine we need not only the eye of intellect but the understanding which is of the Heart. What is the chief mark or characteristic of that Heart understanding? Balance, equipoise, equilibrium. Not restlessness but repose, not curiosity but search, not feeling and emotion but the Fire of Devotion.

H.P.B. was a devotee—she was devoted to human service, devoted to the Divine Science, devoted above all to her Masters. Students of Theosophy need to learn devotion—devotion to the Message of Theosophy, *Brahma Vidya*, the soul of every religion; devotion to the Messenger, H.P.B., and her illustrious predecessors; devotion to the Great Ones, the true Leaders of the World. When the breeze of devotion arises in our hearts, then and not till then shall we inhale the sweet fragrance that spreads all over the world from Them. The odours of earthiness and worldliness so overpower us that the fragrance of the Occult World is not inhaled by us. The

glamour of the world so dazzles us that we are not able to glimpse the Light of the *Jivan-Muktas*, the Mahatmas. Let us open our hearts so that we may catch a glimpse of the Divine Light, inhale the Divine Fragrance, hear the Divine Voice, and pass on from death to Spiritual Birth. May the blessings of H.P.B. and her Masters be upon us all!

My chief and only object was to bring into prominence that the basic and fundamental principles of every exoteric religion and philosophy, old or new, were from first to last but the echoes of the primeval "Wisdom-Religion." ...This object, I believe I have carried out as far as it could be carried, in the first two volumes of the *Secret Doctrine*. It was not the occult philosophy of the esoteric teachings that I undertook to explain to the world at large...but simply to give that which could be given out, and to parallel it with the beliefs and dogmas of the past and present nations, thus showing the original source of the latter and how disfigured they had become. If my work is, at this day of materialistic assumptions and universal iconoclasm, too premature for the masses of the profane—so much the worse for the masses. But it was not too premature for the earnest students of theosophy—except those, perhaps, who had hoped that a treatise on such intricate correspondences as exist between the religions and philosophies of the almost forgotten Past, and those of the modern day, could be as simple as a shilling "shocker" from a railway stall. Even one system of philosophy at a time, whether that of Kant or of Herbert Spencer, of Spinoza or of Hartmann, requires more than a study of several years. Does it not, therefore, stand to reason that a work which compares several dozens of philosophies and over half-a-dozen of world-religions, a work which has to unveil the roots with the greatest precautions, as it can only *hint* at the secret blossoms here and there—cannot be comprehended at a first reading, nor even after several, unless the reader elaborates for himself a system for it?

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THUS TEACH THE BUDDHAS

BUDDHA Poornima is the full-moon day in the Hindu-Buddhist month of Vaisakh, and it falls this year on April 30. It is the day on which Buddhists all over the world as also many students of Theosophy pay homage to Gautama the Buddha. It marks the triple anniversary of his birth as Prince Siddhartha, his Enlightenment—the day on which he attained to Supreme Wisdom under the Bodhi tree at Gaya—and also the day on which he dropped his mortal coil.

Gautama the Buddha occupies a special place in the Hierarchy of Exalted Beings. H. P. Blavatsky's *Paraguru*, i.e., her Master's Master, in a letter refers to himself and his peers as the "devoted followers of that spirit incarnate of absolute self-sacrifice, of philanthropy, divine kindness, as of all the highest virtues attainable on this earth of sorrow, the man of men, Gautama Buddha." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 33*)

As Sangharakshita points out in his *Survey of Buddhism*:

The use of the indefinite article before the appellation "Buddha" indicates the important fact that there is not one Buddha but many....When speaking of "the King" or "the Queen," we refer to the reigning monarch of England without our words being understood as a denial of the existence of previous wearers of St. Edward's crown. And just as even the most junior English schoolboy knows, when the monarch's birthday is being celebrated, that he or she is only the latest of the long line of kings and queens of England, just so...even the least instructed Buddhist knows that Gautama the Buddha, though historically a unique being, cosmologically speaking is but the latest scion of the Dynasty of the Buddhas....Theravadins in their daily worship of the Triple Gem (*Tiratana-vandana*)...offer their homage to the Buddhas of the past, the present and the future....

Despite the assurance of many Mahayana texts that the Buddhas are in number "incalculable as the sands of the Ganges," the number of world-systems is so immense, and the duration of even a single *kalpa* so unthinkably long, that the appearance of a Buddha, a Tathagata, is, from the merely human point of view, an extremely rare event.

In the same book we are also told that the Pali texts reveal the names of 27 Buddhas who preceded Gautama, and the one to appear next is named Maitreya Buddha. This line of descent of the Buddhas has its own significance.

On his return to Kapilavastu after attaining Enlightenment, wearing a yellow robe and with a begging-bowl in hand, when the Buddha comes face to face with his earthly father, King Suddhodhana, the latter is astounded and asks why he is not dressed like a Prince that he is; and the Buddha replies, "My Father! it is the custom of my race." But the father retorts, "Thy race counteth a hundred thrones from Maha Sammat, but no deed like this." Then the Buddha replies, "Not of a mortal line I spake, but of descent invisible, the Buddhas who have been and who shall be, of these am I, and what they did I do..." (*The Light of Asia*, Book the Seventh). Hence he is called *Tathagata*, one who follows in the steps of his predecessors.

The *Dhamma* or the Wisdom-Doctrine taught by the Buddha is termed in Pali *sanatana* (eternal) and *akalika* (timeless). It is a formulation of principles which are true at all times and in all places. The teachings are not just handed down from one Buddha to another, but each rediscovers them for himself. This is in keeping with spiritual tradition. If the teachings are true, they have to be universal, and a true teacher never puts them forward as a revelation, but always says, "Thus have I heard."

It is well known that Buddha himself wrote nothing, but communicated his teachings orally. The complete *Buddha Vachana* is referred to as the *Tripitaka*, i.e., the three "baskets" or collections of the Buddha's words. *Vinaya Pitaka* comprises the collection of monastic discipline. *Sutta Pitaka* is the collection of discourses by the Buddha and is the principal source of our knowledge of his teachings. *Abhidharma Pitaka* is the collection of highly scholastic treatises that explain technical terms and give a metaphysical and philosophical exposition of the teachings.

The keystone of the whole arch of Buddhist doctrine comprises the three characteristics of all phenomena, all conditioned existence:

"Impermanent are all conditioned things." All that has been put

together must one day be taken apart. That alone is eternal which is uncompounded. Every state and form of phenomenal existence is perishable and must one day end. The SELF alone endures. As he dwells on the transitoriness of all phenomena, the disciple becomes free from desire for and attachment to any created thing.

"Full of pain are all conditioned things." The nature of things is such that the objects of enjoyment disintegrate in our very grasp like ice in the furnace. So happiness becomes possible only if we become free from attachment to any created thing. It is not the impermanent nature of things that causes suffering; the cause is desire.

"Unsubstantial are all conditioned things." All component things in this manifested world do not have a permanent identity or unchanging selfhood. Each is made up of component parts. This has been misunderstood. People feel that the Buddha taught that there is no *Atman*, no Self, and no permanent individuality. What he taught is that in the constituents of the personality, *i.e.*, the physical body, mind, feeling nature, etc., there is no permanent element.

The Buddha also taught the Four Noble Truths which reveal the secret of bondage and therefore also the secret of liberation:

(1) Sorrow is: Nothing that is earthly and mundane can give lasting happiness.

(2) The origin of sorrow or suffering: It is craving, *Trishna*—hunger and thirst for excitement, the fever of longing, the flame of desire that burns unsatisfied from birth to birth.

(3) The cessation of suffering: Where there is no craving, there is no suffering either. The cessation of desire is the cessation of pain, and desire is extinguished once and for all when one attains Perfection and becomes a Buddha.

(4) The Truth of the Way—the Noble Eightfold Path—leading to the cessation of suffering. The eight stages of the Way are: Right Understanding, Right Aspiration, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Exertion, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration.

Related to the Fourth Truth, the Truth of the Way, there are the

ten items of good character (*dasa-sila*) and the five items of ethical behaviour (*pancha-sila*) which all Buddhists are expected to make strenuous efforts to put into practice. A true Buddhist is one who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, and one who tries to observe the five precepts: (a) Abstinence from killing or harming living beings, which implies love for all. (b) Abstinence from taking what is not given. (c) Abstinence from sexual misconduct and any kind of indulgence. (d) Abstinence from untruthful and harsh speech, from slander and frivolous talk. (e) Abstinence from taking intoxicants.

Buddhism is not concerned with the mere removal of suffering. The aim should be the attainment of perfection. To become spiritually whole and healthy we have first to adjust our unbalanced psychosomatic condition. Suffering indicates that we are not living as we ought to live. Mahayana Buddhism teaches the "Bodhisattva Ideal," the essence of which consists in the vow to attain Enlightenment not for oneself alone, but for the sake of liberating all sentient beings. This element of sacrifice must be developed life after life. In one of the *Jataka* tales, which recount the Buddha's prior lives as a Bodhisattva, he is said to have sacrificed his body for the sake of a starving tigress who was unable to nourish her young cubs. In one of his essays, Lama Angarika Govinda points out that to the modern man it might appear that to save the life of some beast it is not worth sacrificing a human life. But from the Buddhist viewpoint the important thing is that in that life the Bodhisattva experienced within himself the tigress and her cubs' suffering and despair in all its terrible reality, and proved by his sacrifice that for him there was no difference between his suffering and the suffering of others.

The highest sacrifice is that of a Perfected One who renounces the bliss of *Nirvana*, not just once but cycle after cycle—"Nirvanas gained and lost from boundless pity and compassion for the world of deluded mortals," as *The Voice of the Silence* puts it.

THE INNER TRANSFORMATION

ALTHOUGH "Man, Know Thyself" has been the cry of all the great Teachers down the ages, yet his own nature is the one thing that man in general has failed to understand. He tries to unveil the mysteries of heaven and earth, but remains ignorant of his own nature. He hardly questions the purpose of life—whence he came, whither he is going, what his goal is, and how he has become what he is today. A mere glance around shows us the vast differences in human traits and tendencies, physical, mental and moral, so that no two human beings are exactly alike. Adherents of orthodox religions would answer that God has made them the way they are. But why? What about the operation of Law? Unless and until the twin doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma are understood and the unity of the One Life realized, it is not possible to account for the wide diversity in human character and human make-up. Madame Blavatsky has stressed this point in her *Secret Doctrine* (I, 189) where she says, quoting Shakespeare, that Karma and evolution have

"...centred in our make such strange extremes!
From different Natures marvellously mixed...."

She explains in a footnote: "The *Natures* of the seven hierarchies or classes of Pitris and Dhyan Chohans which compose our nature and bodies are here meant." So man is made up of seven different forces and powers, and the laws of Karma and evolution have combined them in different ways, producing varieties in human nature. Man is not on the stage of life for the first or the last time; he has played many parts in the past and will play many more in the future, until he fulfils his divine mission on earth. And so, naturally, during his long, long journey from the plane of divinity to materiality and back to that prime source through his contacts with various grades of matter, he has acquired many powers, unfolded many faculties, gained self-consciousness, and each expresses himself along his own line, different from any other. The question arises: How did he start and what is his origin?

Theosophy considers humanity as an emanation from divinity on its return path thereto, says H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*. This statement at once indicates not only our divine origin but also the stage we have reached at present and whither we are proceeding. The word "emanation" rules out creation and therefore a personal creator, a personal God believed in by many. The correct concept of God gives us a true understanding of man and his make-up. It is stated in *The Secret Doctrine*: "An *extra-cosmic* god is fatal to philosophy, an *intra-cosmic* Deity—*i.e.*, Spirit and matter inseparable from each other—is a philosophical necessity." At the dawn of a new manifestation, the *intra-cosmic* Deity, that is, the substance-principle, reawakens, becomes active once more after the night of *Pralaya*, and differentiates into myriads of sparks, each spark starting its pilgrimage on that divine plane. It is both Spirit and Matter. The Spirit represents the conscious, thrilling, throbbing, animating aspect of Life, and Matter provides the vehicle; combined together, they bring about various forms of life on different planes. Thus each weaves his fabric according to his own need on every plane and becomes the most vivifying agent in the whole universe.

Not only is man more than an animal because there is the god in him, but he is more than a god because there is the animal in him....

The god in man, degraded, is a thing unspeakable in its infamous power of production.

The animal in man, elevated, is a thing unimaginable in its great power of service and of strength. (*Through the Gates of Gold*, pp. 81, 82)

So man is both a god and an animal, and therefore both kinds of natures, both characteristics and tendencies, the high and the low, the divine and the demoniac, exist in him to a lesser or greater extent. All the struggles of life are the result of this duality in man's nature, and eternal conflict goes on between the two. At the present moment the divine nature cannot shine forth because the Manasic aspect, the thinker, is enslaved by the animal. The reflecting surface of the mind can mirror both poles, the spiritual and the material;

hence the advice given in *The Voice of the Silence*:

For mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul. (p. 28)

The mirror of the mind is to be polished after brushing away the dust of our illusions; for the accomplishment of this, Soul-Wisdom is needed. It cannot be done in any other way. The mind was a gift earned after long, long ages of pilgrimage when the divine spark had reached the midway point of evolution, and spirit and matter were equilibrated. Prior to that, man was only man in form. When the time was ripe, divine intelligences came down on earth; some actually took their abode in human bodies and thus gave the light of mind to the mindless monads. Since then man has become a self-conscious thinker, and the mind is a link between the divine spark that he is and his personal form made up of different types of lives which are constantly changing. Hence the duality of mind, higher and lower—the higher attracted to the divine, the lower victimized by the personal or the gross aspect.

"Manas is dual—*lunar* in the lower, *solar* in its upper portion," says a commentary. That is to say, it is attracted in its higher aspect towards Buddhi, and in its lower descends into, and listens to the voice of its *animal* soul full of selfish and sensual desires; and herein is contained the mystery of an adept's as of a profane man's life, as also that of the *post-mortem* separation of the divine from the animal man. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 495-6)

Everything in nature is conscious; kingdoms below man show forth consciousness in different degrees, according to the stage of evolution of each kingdom and of the species belonging to that kingdom; therefore every moment of choice takes man nearer to the divine in him or further away. We are now on the return path to divinity, but this is not known to most human beings at the present time; and so they take a wrong direction, succumb to outside forces impulsively, and bring misery and suffering upon themselves and

those around.

Only Soul-Wisdom can bring about a transformation in human nature. Discipline, moderation, detachment in everyday living, reflection on metaphysical principles, practice of the divine virtues, would bring about a change, but this discipline is to be continued day after day till the two selves in man, the lower and the higher, become friends. Then the two working in unison and harmony can overcome all obstacles and difficulties on the lower plane and reflect the power and the glory of the higher.

Man is the owner of his senses and sense-organs, *Karma-* and *Gnana-Indriyas*, the real centres of which are in the astral body. He has his emotional or kamic nature comprising desires of a higher order known as aspirations, and those of a lower kind which drag him down. His energy is either frittered away or used in creative and constructive activities. His thoughts either keep him in bondage or liberate him. In crossing the ocean of *sansara*, they are to be used as proper instruments, working harmoniously, so as to reach the other shore safely and triumphantly. Man is not navigating without a chart and a compass. These have been provided by all the great Teachers in Their living Records. Their noble lives give us assurance of success. Each one of us is *becoming* every day and every hour. He is turning his wheel of life moment by moment, but it is important to be fully aware of each move, to be vigilant and watchful all the time, so that the motion of the wheel is harmonious and rhythmic till human nature is transformed into divine nature, and man becomes a super-man.

It would be well if you would be more serious and sober in thought; don't joke about persons, or disparage in any way; don't joke about serious things—there is a deep undercurrent of life that is utterly lost to one who swims only on the surface. Always consider the bearing and effect of what you are about to say or do, and think of others first, last, and all the time.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

MAN, A CO-WORKER WITH NATURE

VERY early in its instructions to the disciple, *The Voice of the Silence* requires of him that he help Nature and work on with her. That work has as its aim the accomplishment of the great mission which has to be fulfilled during the entire life-cycle of the *Mahamanvantara*. *The Secret Doctrine* informs us that Nature has many facets, in each of which the evolutionary work goes on by measured stages. Each of these facets, we are told, has its reflection in man, who in his perfection becomes the crown of all evolution. Therefore, if he so desires, man can actively participate in one or the other aspect of Nature's evolutionary activities. Since these embrace all life manifesting within the Universe, the scope for voluntary effort is great indeed.

Theosophy admits of there being a collective "Creator" of the Universe in the sense implied when one speaks of an architect as the "creator" of an edifice, when that architect has never touched one stone of it, but, while furnishing the plan, left all the manual labour to the masons. The Great Architect of the Universe busies himself in the task which when executed will transform the Archetypes existing in the Ideation of the Universe into ideas, and thence from ethereal to gross manifestations. This "Creator" is no personal deity, but is the sum-total and aggregate of entities called Dhyān Chohans. They are conscious, intelligent powers and form a vast Host of sentient beings grouped into Hierarchies. Within each such Hierarchy, personal consciousness of the units forming that Hierarchy is lost and even their individuality is merged in the group individuality of the Hierarchy. This unison or fusion of aim and purpose along a common line of endeavour becomes the basis for their effort. It is the mission of man to consciously reflect on earth the method and manner of work being carried on in celestial realms. Invested with a personality and a divine nature (the two attributes which alone could make his contact with matter meaningful), he has now to make these entirely subservient to his high purpose. He has the task of reproducing on earth the work of the Hierarchies and of becoming of one mind and one heart with all those whom he joins

in the great and holy effort.

U.L.T. exists to afford such an opportunity. Does personality obtrude in the work and produce bickering where Brotherhood should have been? Does one unit say that he is despondent when he views his incompetency, and another unit say that he is on the way to Adeptship and therefore has the right to a premier place? Both are being intensely personal and both are hindering the joint effort which must wither and die unless it has the rejuvenating input of an all-understanding, all-encompassing Brotherhood.

Man is an emanation, no doubt remote, but still an emanation, and therefore an extension of the Universal Mind. His past evolution—not necessarily on this planet earth—his past deeds and misdeeds tend to either clear or becloud his perceptions. This beclouding comes through a close proximity with the material and mortal aspects of Nature. Enmeshed by the lure of easy pleasure, enamoured of that possession which is readily obtainable, man loses his faculty to discriminate between that which divides and separates from that which binds and unites. This tendency which generates antagonism and rivalry leaves the man discontented in the midst of plenty. He becomes a tyrant and a sycophant by turns so that he may amass still more of earthly niceties. The world may call him successful, but in the realms of soul and spirit his record will mark his incarnation a failure.

When an individual enters upon a course of conduct to live his life in accordance with the principles of Theosophy, he, in one way or another, makes known his resolve to other kindred Souls, and on the instant, as it were, force follows his proclamation. His aspirations may be high and his desires altruistic, but unless he plans his future with deliberation, he may find that his best intentions may hinder where they are meant to help. For the new orientation, his vision has to be used in manners not previously considered. His insight into matter and material things has now to take note of their psychic and spiritual polarities. In matter as we know it, either the centrifugal or the centripetal force may be predominant, and it follows that the wrong type of matter, like the wrong type of food, may throw the entire living system out of gear.

There are, for instance, certain types of matter where a touch or even a close proximity may defile. Since the individual has to work with and on matter, he has to discriminate between the matter which he must avoid and that which he may use. It is not in all cases that he can evaluate and choose. With some knowledge of their inner properties, he may know what foods and drinks to reject, what polluted air to avoid, what places and groups of people to shun. But, for the most part, matter comes to him because he invites it through the power of attraction. It is his thought and desire that exert the magnetic pull which draws the type of matter that will suit the mood and the desire. When he draws unto himself matter of a particular kind, matter moreover which is deleterious to the efforts of his fellow-aspirants, he sets up an atmosphere of inner turmoil, so that haze and storm surround the group which in such atmosphere may tend to break the laws of Brotherhood. Theosophy is not merely printed words upon a page. It is alive, and if invited to take root in the disciple's life, is a hard taskmaster to those who voluntarily submit to its discipline.

The evolutionary processes require that the individual himself—the dweller within the body—must make his choices. It is on him that depends the success of the triple evolutionary impulses that mix and mingle in him. His Spirit dwells like a star apart. It is a Ray, a breath of the Absolute. And since the Absolute can have no relations with the conditioned and the finite (the earthy aspects of the person), the Spirit remains unconscious on our plane. The matter with which his coat of skin and its ethereal counterpart are made, is senseless though living matter. These two—the Monad (Atma-Buddhi) on the one hand and the three lower principles (Body, Astral Body, Prana) can find no basis for producing self-consciousness in him unless they are cemented by Kama (the sentient life of the irrational animal) and Manas (the human Soul). In other words, Atma and Buddhi can have no individuality on Earth unless Manas, cognizing itself through links with its false personality, succeeds in transmuting the lead of its terrestrial experiences into gold—the only offering which the Monad can accept because it would be consubstantial with it. It is therefore on

Manas (the mind) that the future state and karmic destiny of each depend. For, Manas can gravitate downward to Kama (the seat of animal passions), or it can soar upward towards Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul. If by its personal exertion it neutralizes the pull of earthly longings, it can with its higher aspirations reach up to Buddhi.

To explain this in yet another way, the motion of Buddhi can be said to be centrifugal and that of the Soul (Manas), centripetal. It is man only, if he so wills, who can regulate the centripetal to move in harmony with the centrifugal and so reproduce on earth the reflection of the motion of the One Reality—the Great Breath. To produce lasting and beneficial results, these two forces have to be in perfect accord and harmony one with the other. If the centripetal motion of Manas (tending towards the centre which attracts it) is arrested by the person, clogging it with a heavier weight of matter than it can bear, then the harmony of the whole will be destroyed. He can plan and execute his bolder dreams only if they are sustained by the twofold force of his Manas and Buddhi working in harmony. There is no other way.

It is around these basic tenets—the science of life—that the art of living must be made to revolve. The true basis of service—any service—lies in the servile copying of Nature, the reproducing in dense and denser matter of the ideas existing in the Divine Mind and made manifest through the Dhyān Chohanīc hosts.

That there is no easy way, no highroad along which we can reach our destination, is apparent to the person of ordinary intellect. That which leads to frustration is non-recognition of the fact that perfection to be fully such has to be born out of imperfection and that the incorruptible must grow out of the corruptible. In fact, this same corruptible becomes the vehicle, basis and contrast for the incorruptible. Matter has to be moulded to the plastic potency of the indwelling Soul. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 96):

Good and Evil are twins, the progeny of space and time under the sway of Maya. Separate them, by cutting off one from the other, and they will both die. Neither exists *per se*, since each has to be generated and created out of the other in order to come into

being; both must be known and appreciated before becoming objects of perception, hence, in mortal mind, they must be divided.

A bankrupt is hardly in a position to distribute largess. A student who is himself in need of help and fears to offer help to others can hardly be expected to have the strength and persistence to qualify for the task of helping Nature. He may not be ready now, but he can certainly make the necessary advance in knowledge and application and aspire for the time when he will be fit enough to be recognized and accepted. Before him is the glorious example of the great Lodge of White Adepts—those Perfected Ones who are of one Mind and one Heart. Before him are the instances of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. who faced all, braved all—calumny, laughter, insinuations, accusations, slanders—and went on with their work which is enabling this generation of seekers to find their way to the Path.

Rushing into Occultism is as dangerous as swimming beyond one's depth is to him who has no knowledge of the laws governing the matter. To him who would seek entrance into the Hall of Wisdom, *The Light of Asia* gives the following advice:

Manifold tracks lead to yon sister-peaks
 Around whose snows the gilded clouds are curled;
 By steep or gentle slopes the climber comes
 Where breaks the other world.

Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,
 Soaring and perilous, the mountain's breast;
 The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge,
 With many a place of rest.

For the aspirant, the best training ground is the forum of the U.L.T. where kindred souls try to form themselves into a well-knit body compact in Aim and Purpose and firmly fixed in the Teaching. It is here, in company with others, that the aspirant may succeed in lighting the spark which may make all unite into one solid, impartite whole that will be strong and vital enough to withstand the onrush of any disruptive force. When unity is to some extent achieved and sustained through good and evil report, then the Souls

who have thus won through may offer themselves as servants in the greatest of all tasks, a task which the Great Ones adopt as their very own, namely, that of becoming Elder Brothers of the great orphan, Humanity.

Matthew Arnold had the poet's vision when he spoke of those whom he called "Servants of God":

Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

THE complex structure that we call "Man" is made up of a congeries of almost innumerable "lives." Not only every microscopic cell of which the tissues are composed, but the molecules and atoms of which these cells are composed, are permeated with the essence of the "One Life." Every so-called organic cell is known to have its nucleus, a centre of finer or more sensitive matter. The nutritive, all the formative and functional processes consist of flux and re-flux, of inspiration and expiration, to and from the nucleus.

The nucleus is therefore in its own degree and after its kind a "monad" imprisoned in a "form." Every microscopic cell, therefore, has a consciousness and an intelligence of its own, and man thus consists of innumerable "lives." This is but physiological synthesis, logically deduced no less from the known facts in physiology and histology than the logical sequence of the philosophy of occultism. Health of the body as a whole depends on the integrity of all its parts, and more especially upon their harmonious association and co-operation. A diseased tissue is one in which a group of individual cells refuse to co-operate, and wherein is set up discordant action, using less or claiming more than their due share of food or energy.

—W. Q. JUDGE

RESTING IN THE REAL

Desire peace fervently....The peace you shall desire is that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons.

—*Light on the Path*

AGAIN and again in Theosophical teachings the value, nay, the indispensability of calmness or tranquillity is stressed. One of the Masters wrote:

It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that the visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world....It is with jealous care that we have to guard our mind plane from all the adverse influences which daily arise in our passage through earth-life.

"The placid surface of the sea of spirit" is called by Mr. Judge "the only mirror in which can be caught undisturbed the reflections of spiritual things." And elsewhere he named calmness as "the one thing necessary for the spirit to be heard.

The Buddha tells us in the *Dhammapada* (verse 96):

Calm in thought, calm in speech, calm in actions is he who has obtained freedom through true knowledge. He has become tranquil. He is full of repose.

Chuang-Tse, the great Taoist philosopher in ancient China, described the repose of the Sage as "not what the world calls repose," adding:

All creation could not disturb his equilibrium: hence his repose. When water is still, it is like a mirror...and the philosopher makes it his model....The mind of the Sage, being in repose, becomes the mirror of the universe.

And he added further: "Only what is itself still can instil stillness into others."

Many centuries before Buddha and Chuang-Tse, Krishna had taught that

he who, free from attachment or repulsion for objects,

experienceth them through the senses and organs, with his heart obedient to his will, attains to tranquillity of thought. And this tranquil state attained, therefrom shall soon result a separation from all troubles; and his mind being thus at ease, fixed upon one object, it embraceth wisdom from all sides....who doth not practise reflection hath no calm; and how can a man without calm obtain happiness?

As Mr. Crosbie reminds us: "*Thy strength is in thy soul and thy soul's strength is in the calm* and not in storm revealed." And again he says that "we, who know that the universe exists for the purposes of Soul, can be but momentarily disturbed by anything that may come to pass." Mental and physical calmness have to be maintained to overcome disturbance, he writes, and he calls upon us to "be steadfast, calm and fearless, as becomes one who doth forevermore endure."

The Buddha names "that quietude of heart which springs from within" among the steps by which His Bhikkhus could attain to hearing "with clear and heavenly ear, surpassing that of men, sounds both human and celestial, whether far or near."

It is not difficult to recognize that, as a Master wrote, "great man is he who is strongest in the exercise of patience," or that "calmness ever present" is a mark of one who has attained to perfection. But for us who are only trying, however earnestly, to work towards that great consummation, how—to paraphrase a beautiful Christian hymn—are we to take from our minds the strain and stress, and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of true peace? How shall we gain that "balmy calmness which is the heart's eye" and which is needed to penetrate the mysteries of nature?

Where shall we turn to gain or regain or maintain tranquillity when outer circumstances and the actions or the attitude of those around us seem almost past enduring patiently? From ancient Greece comes one helpful reminder. "Where can man find a calmer, more restful haven than in his own soul?", Marcus Aurelius Antoninus asked himself; and within himself he found the answer, recognizing that it applied most of all to him "whose inner state is so ordered that he has only to penetrate thither to find himself in the

midst of a great peace."

What is this but the "retiring now and then to the quiet place," which Mr. Judge counsels for bringing up good currents and keeping back evil ones? How helpful too in times of stress and strain to keep in mind the gracious assurance of Krishna that He is not just "the goal, the Lord, the Witness," but also "the Comforter, the resting-place, the asylum and the Friend"! We can well believe the assurance implied in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad's* question:

Who knows the Soul, and sees himself as it, what should he long for, or desiring what should he fret for the fever of life?...

When a man gains the vision of the godlike Soul, the lord of what has been and what shall be, he fears no more.

It is futile to wait for the stress we feel to be relieved by the action of others, when the need is for us to change our attitude, which only we can do. The Masters Themselves could not act against Karma and the Law of Cycles to create conditions that would make of our world "an arcadia for lofty souls." But, as Mr. Crosbie writes, "there can be no cause for worrying over any future....There is need only that we hold all our powers in readiness to make good use of what is brought to us," to bow to the loss under Karma of loved ones and of possessions which we cherish, while performing calmly and confidently "what we are able to do, day by day, from day to day."

In this connection may be found helpful another of the thoughts of the second-century Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus: "Be as a cliff at whose foot the billows break, and break again; but it stands firm, and by and by the seething waters sink to rest."

Or, as Mr. Crosbie writes:

Calmness is like a rock; waves of irritation may dash at it, but cannot affect it; it can be attained by seeing the necessity for it, and by endeavour which is constant. It comes from "resting in the Real," which is never moved, but moves all things, sees all, without being involved....These things in themselves do not matter; it does matter that we are unshaken....there is always that place which is never moved, to rest on and in. So with confi-

dence in Them we go forward, and may Peace be ever ours.

A *sine qua non* for maintaining tranquillity is, of course, detachment from pleasure and from pain. The means to such detachment is ceasing to identify Self with the body or with what is experienced. The moment the identification is cut off, the body is here if we choose to use it, and pleasure and pain are here if we choose to experience them; otherwise we are outside their sphere of influence. It is difficult for us to get this view, but that is the very purpose of our struggle on earth.

"He...is my beloved servant," says Krishna,

who is equal-minded to friend or foe, the same in honour and dishonour, in cold and heat, in pain and pleasure, and is unsolicitous about the event of things; to whom praise and blame are as one; who is of little speech, content with whatever cometh to pass...and whose heart, full of devotion, is firmly fixed.

"Calmness ever present" is the ideal. It demands acquiescence in whatever comes to us under Karma. Acquiescence does not mean helpless quiescence or passivity, but acceptance, while trying to turn to good account the seeming ill. "One could be confined in a prison and yet be a worker for the Cause."

The Voice of the Silence tells us: "Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake." Mr. Judge reminds us that "a steady mind and heart stands still and quiet until the muddy stream rolls clear." And Mr. Crosbie counsels: "Be like the great bed of the ocean that is never moved though storms may ruffle its surface....Whatever comes, all is well."

As we engage, then, in each duty as it comes, putting our best effort into each, but quietly and without strain, we shall find ourselves able to accomplish more, with a smaller expenditure of energy than if we rush from half-done task to half-done task, and without sacrifice of calmness.

Mr. Judge has written of "the calmness which comes from trying to exemplify Brotherhood," assuring us that, if we are trying to

alleviate the sorrows or sufferings of others, we shall find strength coming to us when we need it most. But we must never feel indifferent to others' pains and difficulties, though we must try to cultivate indifference towards our own. To the hard of heart the way is inexorably barred. The hardness of the mango's stone is advocated only for our own throes and sorrows; for others' woes we are enjoined to be "as soft and sweet as its bright golden pulp." The tears of others that we let fall upon our hearts and never brush off till the pain that caused them is removed, "these are the streams that irrigate the fields of charity immortal." And only on such soil can grow the "blossom of *Bodhisattva*," which means remaining "unselfish till the endless end." Nor is it only the sufferings of the chosen few that ought to move us to compassion. We have to try steadily to expand our circle of sympathy.

Mr. Judge wrote to a correspondent troubled about the woes of humanity:

The best stand to take is that it is all right as it is now, and when the time comes for it to be better it will be so. Meanwhile we have a duty to see that we do all we can *in our own place* as we see best, undisturbed and undismayed by aught...Your faith will know that *all* is provided for.

As far as the remediable sufferings of others are concerned, however, we may take that position and feel peace and calmness without hardness of heart only when heart, mind and hands are fully occupied with duties that we may not put aside, and when we are trying our best to help by our own life and example and, to the extent of our abilities and means, are handing on to others the life-giving Teachings to which we have had access and by the light of which we are attempting to regenerate ourselves.

On those conditions only may we hope to have a touch, at our very much lower level, of the consciousness which a Master named as the only possible reward for the task to which Their labours are devoted—the consciousness that They are doing Their duty to humanity.

STUDIES IN "NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA"

II

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THOUGH the *Gita* is the Book of Devotion, it is also the Book of Action. There is no escape from action for anyone—from the Self, Krishna, who says, "If I were not indefatigable in action, all men would presently follow my example, O son of Pritha. If I did not perform actions these creatures would perish," to man, whom the principles of his nature "will impel" to act, even if his personal will tries to remain inactive. Therefore it is important to bear in mind Krishna's command: "Act!"

The question is not, therefore, to act or not to act, but how to act. Though all actions must be willingly and will-fully performed, they are surrounded by the smoke of desire and it is difficult to know what is right action, and what is right-performance of action.

It is illuminating to find in the Eighteenth Discourse of the *Gita* that after Krishna has laid down the philosophy of right performance of right action, he gives the final injunction to Arjuna in these words:

Thus have I made known unto thee this knowledge which is a mystery more secret than secrecy itself; ponder it fully in thy mind; act as seemeth best unto thee.

Here is the key to the right performance of right action. Any action performed without study of the right principles of action will be wrongly performed and turn out to be wrong action. Each man must learn to act in terms of his ever-increasing knowledge of right principles. As Mr. Judge points out, the *Gita* is "indeed the book of the great mystery; but that problem was never solved for anyone; it must be settled and solved by each one for himself." Therefore all men are on the path of return when they consciously and wilfully act, even wrongly, if the action is in terms of their best knowledge, and if it is self-induced. Even Bhishma and Drona and the other enemies meet their end in Krishna's mouth; they are not plunged into outer darkness, wrong though their actions were. Both Arjuna

and Duryodhana had first consulted their higher natures, for they had both appealed to Krishna for help. Duryodhana did not trust the Self, but put his faith in men and arms; Arjuna put his faith in the help of the Self and only wanted Krishna by his side. But it is important to note that both combatants had approached the Self and put their difficulties before It; both had acted in terms of their existent knowledge and experience. Duryodhana must go through the experience again and again till he, too, learns to rely on the Self and not on arms and men.

Every man must, by repeated efforts in repeated lives, resolve the Great Mystery for himself. At times he will, as did Arjuna, lose the memory of the knowledge gained in the past when faced with the dread battle, but this is no cause for despondency. One thought directed to the Higher for help will bring back the knowledge that was his, and he can even ask for a repetition of the Teaching. The "listener" to the sacred words can read again the "sacred dialogue," can "listen to it with faith" and do His Will or bidding.

But between the knowledge glimpsed or gained and its outer expression in action is a dreary place of despondency, for, as St. Paul wrote, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do." This place is the real pause between two states of consciousness, the dread place of indecision which fills the heart with fear. The cry is always, "As I am of a disposition which is affected by compassion and the fear of doing wrong, I ask thee which is it better to do? Tell me that distinctly!"

Mr. Judge, with his unfailing sympathy and humaneness, draws attention to this state. He shows where the real danger lies, where the real fear should dwell, and where the real courage. Once a step in Nature has been taken, *there is no return*. Once any knowledge has been acquired, there is no return to the previous state of ignorance; once a step has been taken in the forward march of evolution, there is no real return. Most men are afraid to go forward, for the road seems, and is in fact, unknown, whereas behind are the familiar path and surroundings of the past. What is not realized is that between the future ahead and the past behind is the edge of the abyss, the present. The future is not an abyss; it is a Path, dark and

unknown, but nevertheless a path. The present can go forward to the future but it can never rebecome the past. Therefore the unknown of the future is infinitely less to be feared than the return to the past. The return is against the law of Nature, the forward march is in line with natural law and therefore not to be feared but courageously entered upon.

This teaching has often been given before, but realization comes slowly. The phrases, "Look not behind or thou art lost," and "One single thought about the past that thou hast left behind, will drag thee down and thou wilt have to start the climb anew," are familiar, but not yet alive to the reader.

A pause between the past, which was familiar but which has been left behind, and the future which is ahead, must be made while the traveller communes with his higher nature, as did Arjuna. For the Higher there is no time as we know it, and as much knowledge and strength and wisdom can come in a flash during that momentary pause as can be absorbed. Mr. Judge points out what should be the thought during this moment of silence—it should be the examination of motives and desires. In them lies the will to succeed, or to fail. The opposing forces are also made up of desires and ensouled by motives, and at this stage the combat, as in the *Gita*, is pretty even. A careful reading of the description of the powers and strength of the armies of Dhritarashtra and of the Pandavas shows this, but the balance of power lies with the side which is in line with Nature's evolutionary law, with Krishna. Therefore Duryodhana says that though his warriors are "practised in the use of arms, armed with diverse weapons and experienced in every mode of fight," and commanded by Bhishma, they are not sufficient, while he realizes that Arjuna's forces are sufficient, though led by Bhima.

It should be noted that Duryodhana acknowledges *defeat before* the battle begins but resolves to stand by Bhishma who symbolizes tradition, law and order as they existed in the *past*. Arjuna, though mentally disposed towards final victory, also makes his first stand on tradition, law and order, for his arguments against the fight are in terms of the traditional ideas of duty—that conception of duty which was his before he found himself faced with the actual battle,

but which, having passed the abyss, he is beginning to doubt. He cannot tell whether it is better to win or to lose and says: "My understanding is confounded by the dictates of my duty."

He asks for definite orders, he wants a simple command, he asks that Krishna shall dispel "this doubt of mine completely." All men long for a command when faced with indecision and the fear of doing wrong, but they must learn to make their own decisions based on knowledge. This is the Path of Return, which each man must walk by himself, for it is his own evolution that he is fulfilling. The place of indecision is the place of the real conflict of duty. With expanding knowledge the idea of duty changes. Can he keep up with the new order? He can, if he appeals for assistance.

Mr. Judge says that in the fight each man *has* the assistance of the "general will of nature" when he is on the path of evolution, but those who are real disciples *may invoke* it.

This assistance is...the heritage of every true student and may be invoked by the real disciple when he has arrived at and passed the first abyss.

Who is the disciple? Even he who "listens" to the Sacred Dialogue "with faith and not reviling," thereby invoking that help.

The first necessity is to study the right philosophy. Krishna begins by telling Arjuna what is action and what inaction, and how to perform right action. To attain to the state of "calm that results from a broad philosophical foundation" is necessary, for only so can man see that inaction is a state attained by acting without being the actor. "Be not thou the actor," says Krishna.

It is difficult to act without feeling, and the endeavour to do so often results in hardness of heart or passivity, so Mr. Judge reminds the reader that "sympathy and emotion are as much parts of the great whole as knowledge" and should not be disregarded. In fact, without sympathy and emotion no knowledge can be really attained, for the effect of sympathy and emotion for others is that it draws the attention of Those who feel for and help others, and They begin to give the right knowledge of how to employ that sympathy and emotion. Because of Arjuna's sympathy for those who were to

lose their lives on the battlefield, Krishna gives the marvellous discourse on death, a discourse not only of value as portraying what happens at death and beyond, but of immense value to the living. It shows very clearly the relation of the inner man to the outer, the false personality, lightens up the idea of the possibility of acting without being the actor, and gives so great a vista of LIFE that the troubles of one existence loom less large. With the line of connection between lives becoming clearer, it is easier to say, "This is just what I desire" when anything happens that is annoying to the present false personality, though it will take lives before the recognition of the truth of this becomes a realized fact.

The power of illusion is strong and it is untrue to pretend that the false personality wants things when it does not; it is also false to accept passively whatever comes. A nettle passively held will irritate the flesh; grasped firmly it will have no effect. But he is untruthful who says, "I like the sting." Only when the consciousness is more firmly rooted in the inner man can it be truly said that "this is just what I desire." All life's experiences must be firmly grasped and the will brought into operation. The false personality must be taught to do the bidding of the inner man and, though it will feel that it is being cheated at first, in fact it is being enriched. It is a truism in all branches of life that to give is to hold, but without a broad philosophical foundation how shall the truth of this be seen? To give is to let life flow through the vehicle unimpeded, to let Nature's Life Force flow, perfecting Its work through the channel of the inner and the outer man. Each man must learn to say with truth, "I am not the actor, I am not the emotion I feel, I am not the desire I hug to my heart, I am not the ideas I hold or even the ideals that draw me on. I am Krishna, the ONE SELF in all. It is myself whom I meet in my friends and my enemies. I am everywhere in the whole universe. All that in my lower self impedes the free flow of the One is false, and sullies the One clear stream. All that in my false appearance changes is not real." Why struggle and strive to alter the false by the false? Why not cut asunder with the sword of spiritual knowledge all doubt, and realize that he who is devoted to the SELF is Krishna's best beloved? Only thus is there freedom, only then can

man say:

By thy divine power, O thou who fallest not, my delusion is destroyed, I am collected once more; I am free from doubt, firm, and will act according to thy bidding.

(To be concluded)

ALREADY since the two world wars humankind has been caught up in an epoch-making paradigm shift from modernity to post-modernity, in a change of overall constellation which has now also broken through into mass consciousness. At present we still do not even know what our new age will be called, what names (like "Reformation," "Enlightenment") or nicknames ("baroque," "rococo") will be given to it...

The paradigm shift does not necessarily include a destruction of values, but rather a fundamental shift in values: from an ethic-free society to an ethically responsible society; from a technocracy which dominates people to a technology which serves the humanity of men and women; from an industry which destroys the environment to an industry which furthers the true interests and needs of men and women in accord with nature; from the legal form of a democracy to a democracy which is lived out and in which freedom and justice are reconciled.

It also follows that this is a social shift not against, averse to, science, technology, industry and democracy, but a shift with, in alliance with, these social powers which formerly were absolutised but have now been relativised. The specific values of industrial modernity—diligence, rationality, order, thoroughness, punctuality, sobriety, achievement, efficiency—are not just to be done away with but to be reinterpreted in a new constellation and combined with the new values of post-modernity: with imagination, sensitivity, emotion, warmth, tenderness, humanity. So it is not a matter of repudiations and condemnations, but of counterbalances, counter-plans, counter-directions and counter-movements.

—HANS KUNG

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Why does the Universe behave the way it does? Why does Nature obey one set of equations and not another? Max Tegmark, a physicist at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton, New Jersey, believes that there may be a way to answer these questions. It needs to be accepted first of all, he says, that all the stars and galaxies we can see are simply an infinitesimal subset of reality. There are "universes which dance to the tune of entirely different sets of equations of physics." If he could work out the conditions necessary for life to evolve, Tegmark claims, he should be able to explain why we find ourselves in the Universe that we do.

Marcus Chown writes about Tegmark's theory in *New Scientist*:

The idea that there is a vast "ensemble" of universes is by no means new. "Nature has been telling us for a while and from many different directions that the ensemble of universes is much bigger than anyone imagined," adds Tegmark. In the many worlds interpretation of quantum theory, which is increasingly being embraced by physicists, the Universe "splits" into parallel realities at every quantum instant....Also, according to a theory of the early Universe known as "inflation," our Universe is no more than a tiny bubble in a tremendously bigger universe....

But the main reason for believing in an ensemble of universes is that it could explain why the laws governing our Universe appear to be so finely tuned for our existence....Wherever physicists look, they see examples of fine-tuning. Many physicists have taken this as evidence for an ensemble of universes, with each corresponding to differences in the constants of physics or the initial conditions of the Universe. In proposing that there are universes corresponding to entirely different equations that are subject to different starting conditions and with different constants, Tegmark is taking this concept to its extreme. "I call the ensemble the 'ultimate ensemble' because it embraces all other ensembles," he says....

So how can we explain why our Universe behaves the way it does? This is the clever part. The laws of physics would be slightly different for every universe containing life....In other

words, creating all possibilities is much simpler than creating one very specific one.

Science is seeking only for physical causes of existence and the laws that govern them. It knows nothing of the metaphysical causes, the chief of which, says *The Secret Doctrine*, "is the desire to exist, an outcome of Nidana ['a concatenation of cause and effect in the whole range of existence through 12 links'] and Maya ['the cosmic power which renders phenomenal existence and the perceptions thereof possible']."

This desire for a sentient life shows itself in everything, from an atom to a sun, and is a reflection of the Divine Thought propelled into objective existence, into a law that the Universe should exist. According to esoteric teaching, the real cause of that supposed desire, and of all existence, remains for ever hidden, and its first emanations are the most complete abstractions mind can conceive. These abstractions must of necessity be postulated as the cause of the material Universe which presents itself to the senses and intellect; and they underlie the secondary and subordinate powers of Nature, which, anthropomorphized, have been worshipped as God and gods by the common herd of every age. It is impossible to conceive anything without a cause; the attempt to do so makes the mind a blank. This is virtually the condition to which the mind must come at last when we try to trace back the chain of causes and effects, but both science and religion jump to this condition of blankness much more quickly than is necessary; for they ignore the metaphysical abstractions which are the only conceivable cause of physical concretions. These abstractions become more and more concrete as they approach our plane of existence, until finally they phenomenalise in the form of the material Universe, by a process of conversion of metaphysics into physics, analogous to that by which steam can be condensed into water, and the water frozen into ice. (*S.D.*, I, 44-45)

We are further told that universes are built in the likeness of older universes—*i.e.*, those that existed in preceding *Manvantaras* (periods of manifestation) and went into *Pralaya* (period of

obscuration or repose),

because the LAW for the birth, growth, and decay of everything in Kosmos, from the Sun to the glow-worm in the grass, is ONE. It is an everlasting work of perfection with every new appearance, but the Substance-Matter and Forces are all one and the same. But this LAW acts on every planet through minor and varying laws. (*S.D.*, I, 145)

Over the last few years, psychological researchers have amassed sufficient data suggesting that affluence does not necessarily bring happiness. Not only does having more things prove to be unfulfilling in the long run, but people for whom money, material goods or fame are priorities in life also tend to experience an unusual degree of anxiety and a lower overall level of well-being.

Recent studies by Dr. Richard Ryan, professor of psychology at the University of Rochester, and Dr. Tim Kasser, assistant professor of psychology at Knox College in Illinois, U.S.A., reveal that people who value "extrinsic goals" are not only more depressed than others, as the satisfaction they seek is very fleeting, but also report more behavioural and physical discomfort, and score lower on measures of vitality and self-actualization.

Outlining the findings of the two researchers, Alfie Kohn writes in *The New York Times*:

A preoccupation with money bodes ill regardless of how much money one already has. The effects also appear not to be limited to any one culture. Dr. Kasser and his associates have now collected data from subjects in 13 countries, including Germany, Russia and India. The fact that pursuing wealth is psychologically unhelpful and often destructive, he reports, "comes through very strongly in every culture."

Affluence, per se, does not necessarily result in an unsatisfying life. Problems are primarily associated with "living a life where that's your focus," Dr. Ryan said. Nevertheless, the negative psychological picture does seem to be associated with the extent to which people believe they are already on the way

to attaining extrinsic goals....

Another study by the same researchers found that college students who were already "relatively high in the attainment of appearance, financial success and popularity" were nevertheless "lower in well-being and self-esteem." Those who aspired to affluence also had more transient relationships, watched more TV and were more likely to use cigarettes, alcohol, etc., than were those who placed less emphasis on extrinsic goals.

The Ryan-Kasser research raises questions about the proclivity of some psychologists to analyse the dynamics of what is often called goal-directed behaviour while, in effect, ignoring the nature of the goal. Likewise, it challenges the advice to "follow one's dream," whatever it may be. According to the researchers, pursuing goals that reflect genuine human needs, like wanting to feel connected to others, desiring to help them, turns out to be more psychologically beneficial than spending one's life trying to impress others by acquiring money and fame.

In all spheres of life, especially in the business world, the concept of stress management has been gaining ground. The requirement of one-up-manship propels the need for a highly efficient work culture in the entire rank and file of any corporation. Stress management courses have become quite popular, especially in the West. Continuous pressure to perform affects a person in many ways, and the mind needs to be properly equipped and trained to cope. Sometimes it leads to the total collapse of the person, and he may resort to drugs or alcohol or some such intoxicant.

Writing in *The Economic Times* (February 8) S. K. Shelgikar says that the best prescription for stress management and counselling on the spot is in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Arjuna was under tremendous pressure to win the Mahabharata war, but he was distressed at the thought of fighting against his relatives, friends and elders. Great warrior though he was, he broke down under the stress, and laying aside his weapons declared to Krishna, his charioteer, that he would not fight.

Lord Srikrishna utilized all his persuasive skills [writes Shelgikar] to help Arjuna emerge from the after-effects of stress, by taking him through the path of *sankhya/dhyana marg*, *karma marg*, *bhakti marg*, and made him come to the conclusion, "I am now ready to do whatever you say to fight the great war." From this episode of stress management and counselling session, evolved a profound theory for the rest of the world for the rest of the time.

The prescriptions given by Krishna are timeless and also applicable to the human race as a whole, whether in the East or West, irrespective of sect or stream that any person follows.

One who can understand and practise the code of conduct of a true *Karmayogi* as outlined in the *Gita*, writes Shelgikar, "will never require a single lesson of stress management in his life, even if he is part of the proverbial rat race in the global market place."

One of the problems that is occupying the mind of our generation, on account of its importance and the mystery that surrounds it, is that of sex. All the world over it presents itself with unmistakable urgency as something that needs to be solved, for the root of many mischiefs lies in the perversion of man's creative power. In the schools of the young, in the slums of the poor and the haunts of the rich, in town life or country life, everywhere, some evil arising out of this one source works havoc, which statutes and churches have failed to grapple with. When and how the sexes originated, how to preserve their utility for the evolution of humanity and at the same time eradicate the weeds that have entwined round the idea of sex, and how to raise the level of public morality—these are some of the problems that have remained unsolved for the world at large.

Valso Thampu, who teaches at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, addresses the issue of sex-related crimes in his article in *The Indian Express* for January 23:

Sexuality is at the core of our humanity. How it is understood and practised in a particular society is, therefore, an index of its health. Not surprisingly, strong sentiments have been associ-

ated with this sphere of human experience in societies around the world. The rise in sex-related crimes and the increasing fragility of the family, are matters of serious concern today....

Our aberrations result from violating the harmony between means and ends. Spirituality is both a mandate to harmonize the two, and the means for doing it. Nothing can be healthy or holy if, in using it, the means are divorced from the purpose and turned into an end in itself. When that happens, it creates a culture of indulgence harmful to human dignity and fulfilment.

Purified by the fire of love and reinforced by responsibility, human sexuality becomes a sacred thing. It is the ultimate cementing force, and is the foundation for family and society. Divorced from its purpose and unbridled by love, human sexuality increasingly becomes a demonic force.

Sexual aberrations and sex-related crimes are not the primary malady. They are, rather, the symptoms of a socio-cultural epidemic: the rise of a culture of unbridled indulgence with its necessary accompaniments of lust, impersonality and cruelty. Such a culture tends to focus all of human energies on self-gratification, leaving little for any altruistic purpose. It erodes our sense of humanity and creates a society that is sexually hyperactive, but socially exhausted and enervated....The need of the hour is to create a healthy society founded on love, where the worth of every human being is respected.

The duality of sex exists not only in the human kingdom but also in the animal; yet one does not come across there the many gross blunders that are prevalent among humans. The sensuality of man is verily worse than the bestiality of the beast. The root of the mischief, therefore, lies deeper than in the physical organism. The passions and emotions, which bring in their train follies and vices of all kinds, are really responsible for the mischief—passions and emotions that come into play with the birth of mind in humans. It is the awakening of mind that is to be taken into account and then only can we find the real cause of the curse of Karma called down upon humanity for abusing the creative power (*cf. The Secret Doctrine*, II, 410-15). H.P.B. has explained fully "the real CURSE from the physiological standpoint" and the birth of the "chronic

animalism and sensuality...which hang over humanity like a heavy funeral pall." "The lower aspect of *Manas* of the animal (*Kama* having remained unchanged, instead of 'an untainted mind, heaven's first gift' (Aeschylus), there was created the eternal vulture of the ever unsatisfied desire."

The limitation of words in imparting spiritual or metaphysical ideas, or even in conveying one's deepest thoughts, is well known. "Watch words...they are traps. Catch ideas," advises Mr. Judge. And he adds that "Language only expresses the experience of a race, and since ours has not reached the upper levels of Being we have as yet no words for these things."

Even for scientists, writes Ralph Estling (*New Scientist*, October 3, 1998), "language is no substitute for reality. Some facts just cannot be expressed in words, and scientists who ignore this, "mirror themselves in meaningless hypotheses":

How long is infinity? What is a singularity? Or a space-time foam? Scientists create words for indescribable states of physical being. Yet if something cannot be described—such as the "absolute nothingness" whose constituents formed the Universe—then does having a word, or a bunch of words, bring us closer to comprehending it?

Some words actually hinder our understanding, because they delude us into thinking that we have a grip on a problem. We seem to believe that as long as we have a word for something, we're in business, we can cope, we can hypothesise. The reality is that we confuse our invention—the word—with the external state of things. We mistake the word for what it is supposed to represent....Of course, we must invent words, create languages, because without them we can't even begin to discuss things, let alone think about them. The words I object to are the ones we create to take the place of thought and understanding....

Sometimes our physics breaks down, and all we can do is hope that somebody will eventually be able to make sense of it, if only partial, tentative, limping sense. For that is what science is meant to do: make sense.
