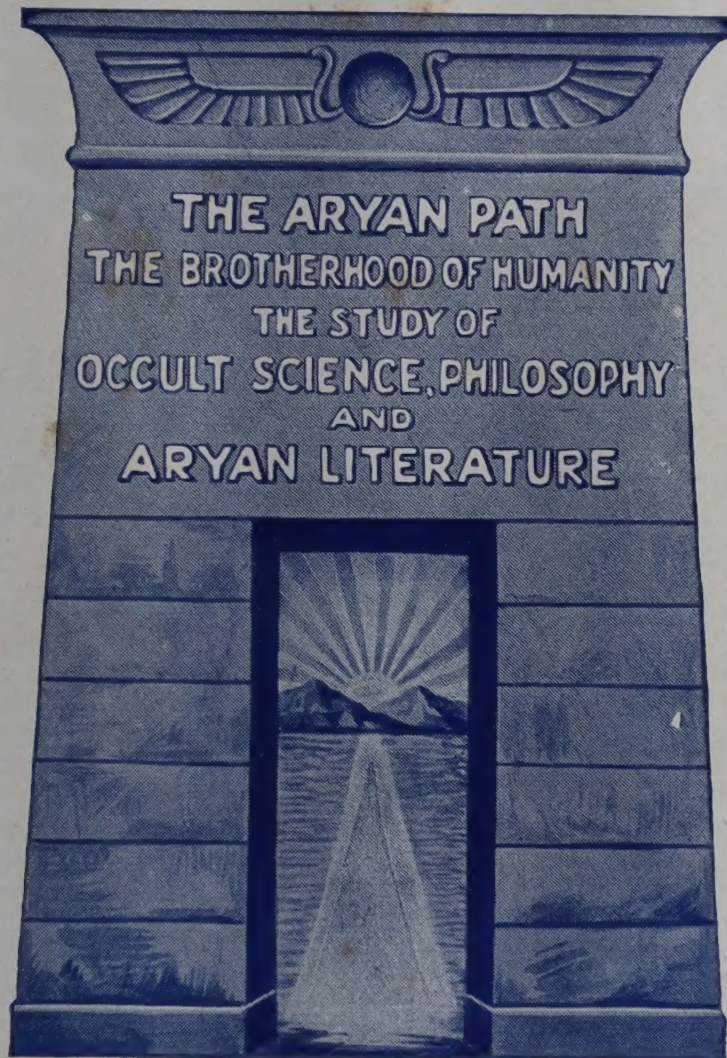




THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



Vol. XII No. 10

August 17, 1942

The truths and mysteries of occultism constitute, indeed, a body of the highest spiritual importance, at once profound and practical for the world at large. Yet, it is not as a mere addition to the tangled mass of theory or speculation in the world of science that they are being given to you, but for their practical bearing on the interests of mankind....They have to prove both destructive and constructive—destructive in the pernicious errors of the past, in the old creeds and superstitions which suffocate in their poisonous embrace like the Mexican weed nigh all mankind ; but constructive of new institutions of a genuine, practical Brotherhood of Humanity where all will become co-workers of nature, will work for the good of mankind.

—MAHATMA K. H.

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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 psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



There Is No Religion Higher than Truth

BOMBAY, 17th August 1942.

VOL. XII. No. 10.

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AUM

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th August 1942.

VOL. XII. No. 10

THE OBLIGATION TO LEARN TO SERVE

“ 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. ”

Is there an Associate of the U. L. T. who fails to see that among his obligations is the acquisition of a knowledge of Theosophy ? Only he who has signed the membership card without any consideration of what is put forward in the Declaration can hold such an attitude. No one compels us to learn and to study Theosophy, but why should any one declare his sympathy with the purposes of the Lodge when he does not see that its lofty work is “ the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy ” ?

Most perceive the necessity of study ; various causes hinder that task, but we are not now concerned with them. What is here attempted is to lend a helping hand to the earnest Associate who desires to acquire knowledge so that he can begin to serve the Cause. If all alone, he desires to become a magnet to which some few may be attracted, ensouled by a desire to better themselves and others. Then, a small group of students desiring to establish a regular U. L. T. may want to know what study would help them most to achieve that purpose. This article is meant for those who are eager to serve the Cause of Theosophy and who desire to acquire the right attitude and the adequate instruction for that noble purpose.

I.—THE MISSION

To put first things first : it will consid-

erably aid the pupil-teacher if he acquires as clear a perception as possible of the immemorial nature of the Theosophical Movement of which the Mission of H. P. B. is the latest expression. Unless the background of that Mission is perceived, the student is apt to become sectarian and err in making of Theosophy a creed—one of the numerous sects each of which claims to be the sole possessor of the whole truth. Or, he may become diffusive, “ tolerant ” and “ brotherly ” in the wrong sense, accepting the false as the true and mistaking fiction for fact.

What should he study to clarify his perceptions about the Mission of H. P. B. ?

Let him read the opening chapter of *The Theosophical Movement, (1875-1925) : A History and a Survey*. Then let him turn to two articles by W. Q. Judge entitled “ The Theosophical Society ” and “ The Future and the Theosophical Society ” (*The Path*, Vol. VI, pp. 78-79 and 394-396 ; *Theosophy*, Vol. XI, pp. 549-554 or THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. VI, pp. 187-189). Lastly, let him read the last section of *The Key to Theosophy* entitled “ Conclusion ” (Original or Los Angeles Edition pp. 304-307 ; Bombay Edition, pp. 254-257).

Study and reflection on these three pieces of instruction will prepare him to comprehend what is implicit in the four Dedications which

H. P. B. penned to her four books; there is more than meets the eye in these Dedications. They hint at the nature of H. P. B.'s Mission—its beginning, its middle and its end. A proper consideration of these Dedications will lead the earnest student to ask himself—"Am I a pupil of H. P. B. desiring to learn so that I may teach in my turn? If I am, am I one of the 'Few' to whom *The Voice of the Silence* was dedicated? Am I daily using the 'Chosen Fragments from the Book of the Golden Precepts'?"

The U. L. T., inspired by the Original Impulse, considers the volumes of *Isis Unveiled* as dedicated to it—formed as it is "to study the subjects on which they treat." Among its Associates are those to whom *The Secret Doctrine* was dedicated: "All true Theosophists in every country, and of every race, for they called it forth, and for them it was recorded." Its promoters consider themselves the pupils of H. P. B. who are learning to teach, and though they be only a few, their strength is very great. Why and how?

The strength shown by any worker is not that of the personality, which has none, of itself: it lies in the words, the ideas, the conviction of truth held by the inner man. (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 373)

The promoters of the U. L. T. are mortals and their efforts would be puny were it not for the fact that they sustain themselves by the Teachings, whose promulgation carries power because all the time they enshrine ideas which are immortal. The righteousness of the promoters consists in faithfully passing on what they have learnt by study and otherwise.

These Dedications illuminate the readings suggested above, for we now have a new light to examine them in. The Mission of H. P. B. takes a more definite shape and its intimate relation to her Message is seen. The earnest Associate must perceive this relation—between the Mission and the Message; for through it the power to serve the Cause aright comes to

birth, and devotion gains the proper kind of strength.

II.—THE MESSAGE

We cannot do better than call upon the future server to ponder over the following quotations which go to reveal the nature of the Message:—

The Mahâtmas, directing their servant H. P. Blavatsky, as they have directed many before, came out at a time when materialism was fighting religion and was about getting the upper hand, and once more everything moved forward in its cyclic way and these old doctrines were revived under the guidance of the theosophical movement. They are doctrines that explain all problems and in the universal scheme give man a place as a potential god.

—W. Q. Judge, *U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 24*, p. 17

These truths are in no sense put forward as a *revelation*; nor does the author claim the position of a revealer of mystic lore, now made public for the first time in the world's history.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, vii

[Theosophy is] the substratum and basis of all the world-religions and philosophies, taught and practised by a few elect ever since man became a thinking being.

—*The Theosophical Glossary*: "Theosophia"

It is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes, belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these. Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed, and become materialised.—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, viii

The Wisdom-Religion was ever one, and being the last word of possible human knowledge, was, therefore, carefully preserved. It preceded by long ages the Alexandrian Theosophists, reached the modern, and will survive

every other religion and philosophy.

—*The Key to Theosophy*

The writer [H. P. B.] loves them [the ancients], and therefore believes in the ancients, and the modern heirs to their Wisdom. And believing in both, she now transmits that which she has received and learnt herself to all those who will accept it.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxvii

What I do believe in is: (1) the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living divine men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men; (2) that it *has reached us unaltered*; and (3) that the Masters are thoroughly versed in the science based on such uninterrupted teaching.—*Lucifer*, October 1889, p. 157

The above extracts are not selected only for the information they convey, but to help the student to acquire the correct attitude towards the Message of H. P. B. Conviction depends on understanding and the attitude of right conviction is essential for effective promulgation.

Not only for promulgation is the right attitude necessary, but also for the very assimilation of the doctrines which constitute the Message; the manner in which the student approaches the teachings is determined by his attitude to the Message; further, his capacity to grasp a teaching and see its correlation to other doctrines depends on his attitude. It is not how much of the Message we know that is of primary importance, but how well we have grounded ourselves in perceiving the real nature of the Message. Once we are imbued with the truth that Theosophy is neither a revealed religion nor a conglomeration of facts culled from philosophies and religions, ancient and modern, but is a Body of Knowledge, constant in every era and always consistent in all its parts, we have taken a great step forward. Not in its entirety is the whole of the Esoteric Philosophy or the Wisdom-Religion expounded in Theosophy, but all that is necessary for modern humanity is given out.

Of her two volumes H. P. B. writes (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, xxxviii):—

The Secret Doctrine is not a treatise, or a series of vague theories, but contains all that can be given out to the world in this century.

The Custodians of the Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy take advantage of the Law of Cycles and give out that which is necessary and beneficent for any given period. What has been given out through H. P. B. is vast. With true spiritual humility H. P. B. compared the teachings to culled flowers, she herself providing but the string that tied them into a bouquet; but the string it is that is the most important factor, for the culled flowers had been in existence for centuries—how many had cared for them? Their very worth was unknown till H. P. B. brought them together and tied them with the string which she provided. Again, and this is an important point for the earnest server of the Cause of Theosophy, H. P. B. did not prepare the nose-gay for the personal use and satisfaction of a few capable of evaluating the scents of the flowers; she provided the string with a view that those who benefited from the beauty of her bouquet of truths should try to spread its fragrance far and wide.

Just as the Great Masters give out select teachings suitable for the public of any particular cycle, so also should the student-server master certain teachings of H. P. B.'s Message for the task of promulgation. A Master of Wisdom has written:—

Theosophy should not represent merely a collection of moral verities, a bundle of metaphysical ethics, epitomized in theoretical dissertations. Theosophy *must be made practical*; and it has, therefore, to be disencumbered of useless digressions, in the sense of desultory orations and fine talk.

U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 22, p. 10

In clarifying his attitude the student will be most helped by a study of Sections XII and XIII in *The Key to Theosophy*; and the section

entitled "In the Beginning" in *The Friendly Philosopher*. The simple presentation of the basic teachings requires the promulgator to divest himself of the complexities of his own psycho-mental apparatus. False notions of ethics and of philosophy have to be discarded. The student who has been living so far by the light of the Eye-Doctrine has to learn to exchange it for that of the Heart-Doctrine. It is the Heart-Doctrine which the U. L. T. is trying to promulgate, and the server will find full guidance in two very important communications from the Great Masters, published as *U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 22*, pp. 10-13, and the whole of *U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 33*. His own self-examination will require a mirror, and this he will find in the following reprint entitled "Theosophical Work and Duty."

All this may sound somewhat vague to the earnest student who is looking for a set programme of study. In reality no such programme can be made for him; he has to make one for himself, suited to his own temperament. He will not find the task difficult if he has acquired the Right Attitude to life and the Right Comprehension of the Mission and the Message of H. P. B.

Nevertheless, some very general indications may be given.

The above extracts will help the student to answer the primary question which he must put to himself—What is Theosophy? In conjunction with the above he will do well to study, with great care and considerable reflection, two important passages in *The Secret Doctrine*: (1) Volume I, pp. 272-273; (2) Volume II, p. 794.

Let the student, especially in India, make clear his perception that Theosophy or

archaic Occultism would remain incomprehensible to all, if it were rendered otherwise than through the more familiar channels of Buddhism and Hinduism. For the former is the emanation of the latter; and both are

children of one mother—ancient *Lemuro-Atlantean Wisdom*.—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 668

Once the answer is mastered the student will find it of great value in his work of promulgation and in a variety of other ways. Unless new students understand correctly what Theosophy is, their progress will be dwarfed, and it is the duty of the old students to make this clear.

Next, the whole work of the U. L. T. rotates round the axis of the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*. Therefore a study, and a continuous study, of these propositions is necessary.

Then, in this cycle, Theosophy alone can help the credulous, the superstitious, the ignorant as well as the men of great learning to comprehend the psychical powers of man and of Nature, and the abnormal psychical phenomena which the Spiritists and the Psychical Researchers alike misunderstand. Theosophy alone can explain them and it does this on the basis of important Items, ten in number, given in *Isis Unveiled*.

The above-mentioned three subjects are gathered together for the constant use of the student in a small pamphlet: *Texts for Theosophical Meetings*.

The twin doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation next claim the student's attention.

And finally, in the task of promulgation, the worker has to remember the Golden Chain with its four links mentioned by H. P. B.—(1) Unity and Causation; (2) Human Solidarity; (3) the Law of Karma; and (4) Reincarnation.

The value of *The Key to Theosophy* has already been indicated. Only one word is necessary to emphasise the importance of *The Ocean of Theosophy*. It is the best text-book for class work, and as it is in constant use, it is necessary for the student thoroughly to familiarize himself with its contents.

Lest all this study-work may sound formidable and lest a wrong deduction be drawn from what is said, *viz.*, that before this study is completed service of the Cause should not begin, we will add this: Learning and teaching are a single process; study and service go together; as we teach we learn more; as we study, we find the field of service slowly expanding.

It will help the student-server in the task of elevating his attitude as well as in studying the Message and understanding the Mission of Theosophy if he keeps in mind and ponders over these words of W. Q. Judge:—

It is the Master's work to preserve the true philosophy, but the help of the companions is needed to rediscover and promulgate it. Once more the elder brothers have indicated where the truth—Theosophy—could be found, and the companions all over the world are engaged in bringing it forth for wider currency and propagation.

[The following article, referred to above, is reprinted from *Theosophy*, Vol. XI, p. 13, for November 1922.—EDS.]

THEOSOPHICAL WORK AND DUTY

Once that a man has become vitally attracted by the great ideas of Theosophy he is, by the contact, driven in on himself in some measure. He becomes aware of the demands of duty upon him: Duty in a sense hitherto unknown and which, if he is to perform it intelligently as well as conscientiously, he must define to and for himself. There is nothing in his prior experience or working philosophy of life which can give him clear and clean conceptions, for hitherto Duty has spelled but two things: the irksome but unavoidable performance of a disagreeable task, or the doing of this, that and the other

thing because others think he ought to do them. A longing for self-reliance awakens in him, the longing to decide for himself his own course of conduct, the longing for such a development of his intuition as shall enable him not only to choose and act sincerely but wisely in all contingencies of thought and deed.

This is true not only in all the personal relations of ordinary everyday life, but more especially is it the case in respect of Theosophical relations. What is the path of duty toward the Theosophical Movement, the Theosophical Society to which one may belong, and toward one's fellow-Theosophists?

At the very outset, then, the thoughtful student finds himself confronted by four questions which he will have to answer for himself before he can even approach the problem of Theosophical work and duty. What is Theosophy? What is the Theosophical Movement? What is a Theosophist? What is a Theosophical Society?

Having no sufficient information of his own, the student must turn to outside sources. He will have no difficulty in obtaining abstract replies to the first two questions, and they will all be in accord, no matter to what theosophical quarter he may apply. He will be told that Theosophy is an old and forgotten word restored to use by H. P. Blavatsky to designate the Wisdom-Religion of the Adepts or Masters; that she claimed this Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy to be the real Source of every system of thought, ancient or modern, in the great divisions called Religion, Philosophy, and Science. He will be told that the Theosophical Movement is the name given to the continuous effort of the Lodge of Masters to aid the evolutionary progress of mankind spiritually, intellectually, and physically, in various ways and by various means, some private, some public; that the succession of great religions and great philosophies at different periods and among different races is a notable example of the Theosophical Move-

ment, and has been due to the appearance among men of great Adepts in human guise, to correct old errors of mankind in the interpretation and application of former Messages, by restating the old unchanging truths, as well as to make such further impartation of the Wisdom Religion as the evolutionary progression of the race requires.

If the student is naturally reflective or well-advised, he will not take these replies on hearsay or authority. He will at once set to work to investigate, so that he may be able to verify or disprove them for himself. He may, for example, study *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*, in which Madame Blavatsky has piled up the mountains of evidence which buttress her statements in regard to Adepts, to the Wisdom-Religion, to the source and origin of religions, to the course of the Theosophical Movement. These evidences are not arcane, occult, mysterious, one-sided, inaccessible, unverifiable. They are drawn from the myths and traditions of every people, from all religions themselves, from hundreds of sacred and profane histories and historians.

Now the student is prepared to ask, and to find the answer within himself for the other two problems precedent: What is a Theosophist? What is a Theosophical Society? He will see that the Adepts are the only *true Theosophists* in a complete sense; *Their Lodge* the only true Theosophical Society; *Their Wisdom* and example the only true Method of Theosophical work and duty. His mind has been made ready; the pulse of the Spiritual Will beats with a steady throb within him; he knows that a *Theosophist* in a human sense must test, must "prove all things" for himself. He has proved two of the steps of the Path of Adeptship; what is the third? To determine what is and what is not Theosophy and Theosophical; in himself first and foremost, in all else presented or contacted in men, things, methods and ideas. For himself the whole Path consists in acquiring a Theosophical

education; in his relations with others it consists in *applying* that education step by step. The two are one; they are the internal and external aspects of the same problem—the Mysteries.

Once more the student will derive results of an enormous unanticipated value. He will know for himself that the devotees of all sects and religions are unable to separate the true from the false and erroneous in their own system; he will see for himself why this is the case: they have not made and they do not make open-minded investigation to verify the truth or the falsity of that which has been told them and which they have *believed*. The student has not merely gained the knowledge of the Adepts regarding the fact of Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement, the fact of the corruption of all religions and philosophies, but he will see as They see, why and how it is that corruptions come about. In other words, he has taken, safely, soundly, unshakably, the first two steps on the road to adeptship on his own account—taken them in the only way they can ever be taken, by self-induced and self-devised exertions of his own. As Krishna predicates to Arjuna in the second chapter of the *Gita*, the student must become immune from the by-paths which still, as of old, seduce and spoil the efforts of humanity to find and follow the Wisdom-Religion—he must become "indifferent to those doctrines which have been already taught or which are yet to be taught."

Our student will once more proceed to ask outside for an answer to this great question. The replies he will get will be neither abstract nor in accord. If he applies to priest or devotee of any of the great religions he will be told, "Mine is the only true, unadulterated and unchanged; all other religions are either totally false or erroneous." The investigative Will already developed will now lead the student to take these claims up for impartial study and comparison. This is that natural pursuit of the Second Object of the Parent

theosophical society which will prove to him, first, that the fundamental propositions of the Wisdom-Religion are inherently reasonable; second, that those eternal verities are, in very fact, contained in every religion and philosophy, not just in some of them; third, and most highly important, he will see for himself that though present in all sects and systems, these fundamentals are therein contained in a *misleading guise*—so misleading that the devotees of those faiths are not aware of them, nor that they are fundamental.

As he probes the tendencies springing to life within himself; as he contacts them in manifestation in others, he experiences the real and fruitful source of all the errors and falsities in human nature which, concentrated and crystallized, pass current for religion, philosophy, science, and morality. He has already found out for himself that this is the case with humanity at large. He is now to find out that this is the case with himself and all his fellow-Theosophists. He finds divergences and differences, conflict and contradiction, between the two poles of his own nature; he finds the same in writings purporting to be Theosophical teachings, in associations purporting to be Theosophical societies; in practices purporting to be Theosophical work and duty. He is astonished—disgusted, perhaps—to find that his fellow-Theosophists are just as human, just as prone to sectarianism, just as apt to succumb to the lure of belief, just as liable to depend upon some authority, as are any of the devotees of this or that sect or party in religion. He finds the same lack of perception of fundamentals; the same lack of knowledge—the ability to apply those fundamentals. Everywhere he finds men falling into—already engulfed in—one or another of the channels of error, channels worn deep and narrow by the labours of countless *sincere* men and women.

To particularize: He finds countless “Theosophists” who believe but who do not *know* what they are talking about; who are

totally unaware of the contradictions in their own beliefs; who *believe* in “H. P. B.” and in “apostolic succession”; who believe in “Karma” and constantly find fault with a multitude of things and persons; who believe in “self-induced and self-devised exertions” and at the same time depend on the study, the thinking, the “authority” of this or that; who believe in “Theosophy” but cling to some “Church”; who believe in “Masters,” and swallow in child-like innocence anything and everything someone may tell them comes “from the Master”; who believe in “law” and in “miracles.”

He finds countless others who are fully persuaded that “psychic development” is the one sure, speedy, efficacious and easy “road to Masters” and adeptship, and to whom it signifies nothing that those very Masters have refused to give out any information, instruction, or directions for “acquiring occult powers,” but have insistently warned against all such tendencies; that They have abundantly given out information, instruction, directions, “orders” to all seekers and inquirers to study Their Philosophy, to practise Their Ethics, to apply Their Method in all Theosophical work and duty.

He finds numberless writers, leaders, guides, ready and hungry to give out their own interpretations, their own visions, dreams, and beliefs, “in the name of” Masters, Theosophy, H. P. B., what not and who not, and numberless others equally avid to listen to them, follow them, rely upon them.

He finds substitution of the spurious for the genuine, the erroneous for the undefiled, the personal for the impersonal, as rampant, as undetected and uncorrected, among Theosophists as among Christians, Brahmins and Buddhists. He sees sectarianism mistaken for religion, partisanship for loyalty; indifference mistaken for tolerance; enthusiasm for devotion. Moreover, he perceives that any attempt to point out contradictions is mistaken for

intolerance; any presentation of disagreeable facts in order that their cause and course may be scientifically determined mistaken for attacks; any straightforward comparison of one thing with another mistaken for prejudice and unbrotherliness.

This is a part, a great and a sad part, but a most necessary part of the student's Theosophical Education in work and duty. Its unanticipated resultant to himself is to increase his perception that "to live to benefit mankind" is the "first step" of Occultism; is to convince him that "to *practise* the six glorious virtues is the second." For the one concerns his motives, the other his relations.

His Theosophical education so far progressed, his conception of Theosophical work and duty so far clean and clear, the fourth step on the Path is open within him: all that he has hitherto seen outside, in others, his fellow-Theosophists, he now realizes is active, fiercely active, in himself. A new meaning, a new validity, in such words as Brotherhood, Duty, Discrimination, *Chelaship*, appears as written in letters of fire within him.

From these brief considerations on Theosophical work and duty, the reader is invited to turn to two articles, written many years ago, on this very subject—a subject of supreme and therefore of enduring interest to every student.

"What Are the Theosophists" was written by H. P. Blavatsky and appeared in Volume I, Number 1, of *The Theosophist*, October, 1879, and is reprinted in *U. L. T. Pamphlet No. 22*. It appeared at an important juncture—for the information and help of the Theosophists of India in particular; for all students in general.

"Theosophy: A Letter from a Friend" was published by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path*, Volume I, Number 2, May 1886. It also appeared at an important point—the renaissance of Theosophical work and duty in America. Who the "Friend" from whom the "Letter" came has never been disclosed,

but its content may afford an indication to the intuitional-minded. The concluding "Note" was written by Mr. Judge.

We commend the thoughtful and repeated study of these two articles to all students everywhere who may be confused or inquiring as to their basis and method for Theosophical Work and Duty.

[The Letter referred to above is as follows.
—EDS.]

THEOSOPHY

[A LETTER FROM A FRIEND]

Dear Brother:

"It rejoices us all here more than I can tell you, to know that you have made such a start in America with Theosophy. We have had so many things to pull us back, that it has been quite as much as we could manage to keep our heads above water, and this not so much from the action of our enemies as from the apathy of our friends. It is strange to me to see how little faith there is in the power of truth, even among those who ought to realize this most strongly. Why should we fear and fold our hands when men speak evil of us or of the cause, why should we imagine that any attack on individual members can affect the position we take as a group or that Theosophy can be endangered thereby? How few understand what Theosophy is; they look upon it as solely an intellectual movement that can be damned by the folly of its adherents; they little dream of the strength that underlies the apparently inconsistent workings of this manifestation of truth which we call the Theosophical Society. And there is one thing which I believe establishes more than any other, the fact that the Society as a whole has true vitality within it, and that is the visible action of Karma in its developments.

"See how the mistaken value given to phenomena in the early history of the Society, brought immediately its Karmic development

in the troubles then, and whenever any undue importance has been given either to individualities or any particular line of practice, it is always on that particular point that the next attack comes. So that while fully realizing that as an organization, the T. S. is defective in some things, I yet believe that there is a power within it that will purge it from its defects and carry it on in spite of the attacks of its enemies and what is worse still, the follies of its friends. What I do feel more and more is the necessity that we should remember and constantly keep before us what it is we are working for and not think we accomplish our end when we number our converts in the world of fashion, and gather around us men and women who vainly hope for psychic powers and the arts of fortune telling and reading the future. I do not fear black magic in our midst, but I do feel very strongly that there are many who will sink to the level of mere wonder-seekers and that they will become the prey of elemental influences.

"What can be done to make men realize, as you say, a sense of universal brotherhood and the true meaning of Theosophy?" Well, let us join you in America and the few here who do realize that psychism is not spirituality, and let us try to stir the hearts of men with the living truths of Theosophy.

"I am most anxious, and have been for a long time, that we should address ourselves to another stratum of society than that (the intellectual and the fashionable) which we have sought. It is not that I would depreciate intellect; if I err in that matter it is in putting too much stress on intellectual development. But I am beginning to realize that the lower intellect can only deal with physical facts and that it can never develop ideas; these can only be apprehended by the higher intellectual faculties, and the ethical and emotional nature of man has also its higher and lower aspects.

"I wish very much that we had a literature calculated to appeal to the general

masses, and I think that we should resolutely turn our attention to this object. I think the little book that Dr. Buck has just published very useful and I should be glad to see many more such little works treating of the various points of doctrine such as Reincarnation, Karma, &c. It is also encouraging to see such efforts as that contained in the small book lately out—*What Is Theosophy?* Doubtless, in connection with that, for it seems to have been written for the author's children, you will call to mind what was written by one of the adepts, not so long ago: 'there is a great likelihood that the sons of theosophists will become theosophists,' and will quite agree with me in the idea that we need a literature, not solely for highly intellectual persons, but of a more simple character, which attempts to appeal to ordinary common-sense minds, who are really fainting for such mental and moral assistance, which is not reached by the more pretentious works. Indeed, we all need this. It is fortunate that we have been able to live through the tide of mere psychism and bare intellectuality which threatened nearly to swamp us. And you know to whom we owe our escape, and now, that there are ten or twelve members left who are prepared to work on independently of perturbation, I think it a clear gain. What does it matter to us whether H. P. Blavatsky has or has not fulfilled all of her duties, or whether investigation has cast doubt into the minds of some. In so far as she has done her duty, her work will remain, and if perchance she has come to the end of her capabilities—which I do not admit—it is for us to carry on what she has thus far done.

"In America I hope you will not fall into running after wonders and psychic gifts to the detriment of true philosophical and moral progress.

"Believe me to be, fraternally yours,

A."

NOTE.—The whole of this letter should be carefully studied, and in particular the point that

Karma brings its attacks just on the point or persons where or by whom stress has been laid on phenomena. It may be accepted as almost axiomatic by our members, that if any group or single person has paid too undue attention to phenomena, to astralism, psychism, or whatever it is called, there will develop the next trouble or attack upon the Society. It has been authoritatively stated by one of the great Beings who are behind this movement, that *it must prosper by moral worth and philosophy, and not by phenomena*. Let us well beware then. Phenomena, powers—or *siddhis* as the Hindu say—are only incidental. Our real object is to spread Universal Brotherhood, in which task we necessarily explain phenomena, but the Society is not a *Hall for Occultism*, and that has also been asserted by an adept in India in reply to letters written him by certain well-known Englishmen who desired to establish a Branch then which should control all literature and phenomena. There are no secrets to be given out to any select persons, for no one receives a secret inaccessible to the rest, *until he has acquired the right to it*, and the proper sense to know when and to whom it is to be given out.—[ED., *The Path*]

Students of Theosophy must welcome any move towards *rapprochement* between the followers of different faiths, such as that represented by the lectures amplified in a recently published volume, *Faith for Today: Five Faiths Look at the World*, by Stanley High, Frank Kingdon, Gerald Groveland Walsh, S. J., Louis Finkelstein, Ph. D., and Swami Nikhilananda, with an introduction and a postscript by George V. Denny, Jr.

There is of course a wide difference in the attitude of these five lecturers. The narrowest is that of the Roman Catholic, who opposes "any form of common denominator creed or code." He seems convinced that the ocean of Truth is contained in his family water-jug! It is Humanism pure and simple that the Protestant layman presents, "a moral order issuing, on the human level, in personality values." That, he holds, is the faith common to Americans. He is not so narrow as to claim for his country a monopoly of this faith that makes the average American believe in himself and in his neighbour, but why label it distinctively Western?

Mr. Frank Kingdon, University President and Methodist minister, justly traces our ills to the fact that "we are building an immoral society in a moral world."

The Rabbi's presentation is the shortest of all but valuable for its insistence on the need for profound religious conviction, for the democracies to withstand their ideational foes, the conviction of universal brotherhood and passionate devotion "to the principle of the moral responsibility of the individual." Religion, he predicts, will overcome the spiritual barriers. Religion, yes; religions, never.

Swami Nikhilananda's statement of "The Hindu Viewpoint" presents many Theosophical ideas. Its weakness lies in its syncretistic presentation of both the Impersonal Absolute and a personal god and in its artificial division of Yoga into different types for different men, as though action, devotion, concentration and philosophical study were not all necessary for every spiritual aspirant! He makes a further contribution to mutual *rapprochement*:—

The bigots of religion do not realize that by claiming exclusiveness for the spiritual experience of their particular faith they make it an abnormal thing. Truth has a universal character... Behind the assertion of the fanatic lies a sort of unconscious egotism. Those who love their sects more than truth end by loving themselves more than their sect.

Mr. George V. Denny, Jr., in his able introduction and postscript, stresses "the limitations of the finite mind in relation to phenomena beyond the control of scientific procedure." "Perhaps," he suggests, "we must rely upon a higher sense of awareness as we search for universal truth"—a Theosophical idea.

Of that absolute Wisdom, of which the ancient and unchanging Wisdom-Religion is a formulation, all religions radiate like the spokes of a wheel from the hub. The farther they go from the centre of fundamental truth, the more they diverge from each other. There are two ways for their votaries to get together. One line of mutual approach might be figured by the rim of the wheel. That way is to water down the differing creeds into an amorphous Humanism, whose good feelings, unrooted in the fundamentally religious conviction of and aspiration to the One Life in all, can not more sustain the strains and stresses of life than cut flowers can long survive. The other and better way, the only way for permanence, is approaching the common Centre, putting aside the superstitions, the rites, the dogmas, that have carried men away from Truth and coming together on the basic and eternal verities. Those who take that way are the Theosophists of the future, whatever label they may wear today.

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

[W. Q. Judge published in *The Path* fourteen instalments of "Conversations," two of which are between H. P. B. and himself and the rest between a Student and a Sage. We are reprinting them in the chronological order observed by Mr. Judge and to facilitate the work of the student we plan to complete the series in the current volume of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT. Below we print the twelfth instalment of the series from *The Path*, Vol. IX, p. 280, for December 1894.—EDS.]

PHANTASY; MEMORY AND MIND; THE SUN; ALTRUISM

Student.—Is there not some attitude of mind which one should in truth assume in order to understand the occult in nature?

Sage.—Such attitude of mind must be attained as will enable one to look into the realities of things. The mind must escape from the mere formalities and conventions of life, even though outwardly one seems to obey all of them, and should be firmly established on the truth that Man is a copy of the Universe and has in himself a portion of the Supreme Being. To the extent this is realized will be the clearness of perception of truth. A realization of this leads inevitably to the conclusion that all other men and beings are united with us, and this removes the egotism which is the result of the notion of separateness. When the truth of Unity is understood, then distinctions due to comparisons made like the Pharisee's, that one is better than his neighbour, disappear from the mind, leaving it more pure and free to act.

Student.—What would you point out as a principal foe to the mind's grasping of truth?

Sage.—The principal foe of a secondary nature is what was once called *phantasy*; that is, the reappearance of thoughts and images due to recollection or memory. Memory is an important power, but mind in itself is not memory. Mind is restless and wandering in its nature, and must be controlled. Its wandering disposition is necessary or stagnation would result. But it can be controlled and fixed upon an object or idea. Now as we are constantly looking at and hearing of new

things, the natural restlessness of the mind becomes prominent when we set about pinning it down. Then memory of many objects, things, subjects, duties, persons, circumstances, and affairs brings up before it the various pictures and thoughts belonging to them. After these the mind at once tries to go, and we find ourselves wandering from the point. It must hence follow that the storing of a multiplicity of useless and surely-recurring thoughts is an obstacle to the acquirement of truth. And this obstacle is the very one peculiar to our present style of life.

Student.—Can you mention some of the relations in which the sun stands to us and nature in respect to Occultism?

Sage.—It has many such, and all important. But I would draw your attention first to the greater and more comprehensive. The sun is the centre of our solar system. The life-energies of that system come to it through the sun, which is a focus or reflector for the spot in space where the real centre is. And not only comes mere life through that focus, but also much more that is spiritual in its essence. The sun should therefore not only be looked at with the eye but thought of by the mind. It represents to the world what the Higher Self is to the man. It is the soul-centre of the world with its six companions, as the Higher Self is the centre for the six principles of man. So it supplies to those six principles of the man many spiritual essences and powers. He should for that reason think of it and not confine himself to gazing at it. So far as it acts

materially in light, heat, and gravity, it will go on of itself, but man as a free agent must think upon it in order to gain what benefit can come only from his voluntary action in thought.

Student.—Will you refer to some minor one?

Sage.—Well, we sit in the sun for heat and possible chemical effects. But if at the same time that we do this we also think on it as the sun in the sky and of its possible essential nature, we thereby draw from it some of its energy not otherwise touched. This can also be done on a dark day when clouds obscure the sky, and some of the benefit thus be obtained. Natural mystics, learned and ignorant, have discovered this for themselves here and there, and have often adopted the practice. But it depends, as you see, upon the mind.

Student.—Does the mind actually do anything when it takes up a thought and seeks for more light?

Sage.—It actually does. A thread, or a finger, or a long darting current flies out from the brain to seek for knowledge. It goes in all directions and touches all other minds it can reach so as to receive the information if possible. This is telepathically, so to say, accomplished. There are no patents on true knowledge of philosophy nor copyrights in that realm. Personal rights of personal life are fully respected, save by potential black magicians who would take any one's property. But general truth belongs to all, and when the unseen messenger from one mind arrives and touches the real mind of another, that other gives up to it what it may have of truth about general subjects. So the mind's finger or wire flies until it gets the thought or seed-thought from the other and makes it its own. But our modern competitive system and selfish desire for gain and fame is constantly building a wall around people's minds to everyone's detriment.

Student.—Do you mean that the action you

describe is natural, usual, and universal, or only done by those who know how and are conscious of it?

Sage.—It is universal and whether the person is aware or not of what is going on. Very few are able to perceive it in themselves, but that makes no difference. It is done always. When you sit down to earnestly think on a philosophical or ethical matter, for instance, your mind flies off, touching other minds, and from them you get varieties of thought. If you are not well-balanced and psychically purified, you will often get thoughts that are not correct. Such is your Karma and the Karma of the race. But if you are sincere and try to base yourself on right philosophy, your mind will naturally reject wrong notions. You can see in this how it is that systems of thought are made and kept going, even though foolish, incorrect, or pernicious.

Student.—What mental attitude and aspiration are the best safeguards in this, as likely to aid the mind in these searches to reject error and not let it fly into the brain?

Sage.—Unselfishness, Altruism in theory and practice, desire to do the will of the Higher Self which is the "Father in Heaven," devotion to the human race. Subsidiary to these are discipline, correct thinking, and good education.

Student.—Is the uneducated man, then, in a worse condition?

Sage.—Not necessarily so. The very learned are so immersed in one system that they reject nearly all thoughts not in accord with preconceived notions. The sincere ignorant one is often able to get the truth but not able to express it. The ignorant masses generally hold in their minds the general truths of Nature, but are limited as to expression. And most of the best discoveries of scientific men have been obtained in this sub-conscious telepathic mode. Indeed, they often arrive in the learned brain from some obscure and so-called ignorant person, and then the scientific

discoverer makes himself famous because of his power of expression and means for giving it out.

Student.—Does this bear at all upon the work of the Adepts of all good Lodges?

Sage.—It does. They have all the truths that could be desired, but at the same time are able to guard them from the seeking minds of those who are not yet ready to use them properly. But they often find the hour ripe and a scientific man ready, and then touch his cogitating mind with a picture of what he seeks. He then has a "flash" of thought in the line of his deliberations, as many of them have admitted. He gives it out to the world, becomes famous, and the world wiser. This is constantly done by the Adepts, but now and then they give out larger expositions of Nature's truths, as in the case of H. P. B. This is not at first generally accepted, as personal gain and fame are not advanced by any admission of benefit from the writings of another, but as it is done with a purpose, for the use of a succeeding century, it will do its work at the proper time.

Student.—How about the Adepts knowing what is going on in the world of thought, in the West, for instance?

Sage.—They have only to voluntarily and consciously connect their minds with those of the dominant thinkers of the day, to at once discover what has been or is being worked out in thought and to review it all. This they constantly do, and as constantly incite to further elaborations or changes by throwing out the suggestion in the mental plane so that seeking and receptive minds may use it.

Taking as his text Newton's declaration of policy, "*Hypotheses Non Fingo*," Mr. A. E. Bell commends in *Nature* of 28th February Newton's sturdy refusal to stray beyond the realm of science into metaphysical speculations. Newton wrote at the end of his *Principia*:—

Hitherto I have not been able to discover the cause of those properties of gravity from phenomena,

and I frame no hypotheses, *hypotheses non fingo*; for whatever is not deduced from the phenomena is to be called an hypothesis; and hypotheses, whether metaphysical or physical, whether of occult qualities or mechanical, have no place in experimental philosophy. In this philosophy particular propositions are inferred from the phenomena and afterwards rendered general by induction.

Mr. Bell's plea for keeping "science clear of metaphysical entanglements," the metaphysician would heartily support. H. P. B. took exactly the same stand in the interest of truth:—

The business of the man of exact Science is to observe, each in his chosen department, the phenomena of nature; to record, tabulate, compare and classify the facts, down to the smallest minutiae which are presented to the observation of the senses with the help of all the exquisite mechanism that modern invention supplies, not by the aid of metaphysical flights of fancy. . . . He has no right to trespass on the grounds of metaphysics and psychology. His duty is to verify and to rectify all the facts that fall under his direct observation; to profit by the experiences and mistakes of the Past in endeavouring to trace the working of a certain concatenation of cause and effects, which, but only by its constant and unvarying repetition, may be called a LAW. This it is which a man of science is expected to do, if he would become a teacher of men and remain true to his original programme of natural or physical sciences. Any side-way path from this royal road becomes speculation.—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 663-4)

But the very fact that baffled physical science does turn to metaphysical hypotheses, *e. g.*, such as the ether, which Mr. Bell cites, bears witness to its inability to account for all phenomena by the laws of known Nature alone. Newton himself, whom H. P. B. calls "one of the most spiritual-minded and religious men of his day" recognised fully, she writes, "the limits that separate the action of natural Forces from that of the INTELLIGENCES that set the immutable laws into order and action."

Mr. Bell admits that Newton recognised "that there is a considerable problem in the validity of induction and that there is no absolute certainty in the conclusions of physical science." A short time before his death, Newton, with the characteristic humility of that truly great man of science, declared:—

I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great Ocean of Truth lay all undiscovered before me.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The British Association for the Advancement of Science has issued the Transactions in which are brought together the views presented by eminent thinkers at the Conference which has now become famous and which was held in London in September 1941 to discuss the all-important subject of "Science and World Order." The publication is full of many good things, but of special interest to the Theosophical student are statements of advanced thinkers indicative of the progress made by modern science in the direction of genuine Occult doctrines of the Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy. Again, it is satisfying to note that the need of co-ordination of the different branches of knowledge—not only of science—is felt by more than one thinker. Thus Prof. Max Born, F. R. S., says, answers the question how it is that German scientists have submitted so easily to totalitarian ideas:—

The answer is connected with a dangerous attitude found not only inside the totalitarian state. It is the ability of some men to divide their brain into watertight compartments, without interaction and without the mutual relation of complementarity which produces a higher unity. The worst form of it is the narrow specialist who is abundant in Germany. The average German scientist is extremely efficient in his field and knows this. But his self-confidence fails him completely outside his domain. He believes that there are experts for everything who know better, and he is happy if he can transfer to them the responsibility of action. In these conditions a self-appointed expert in politics, a Führer, will find little opposition. The result is well known. It is not due to a specific failure of scientific education but to a lack of democratic tradition and training in civil virtues.

The specific truth contained in science differs in some degree from the truth in other subjects which form our general education, history, classical and modern languages. I cannot give a philosophical description of the difference, and I do not wish to establish differences of value, but to stress again the complementary character of the arts and science. Even inside science there is no unity of subject and method. Who of us knows more than a small section of the whole?

Not only is the need felt for co-ordinating all branches of knowledge but also sincere efforts are being made by some front-rank thinkers. Thus Dr. Joseph Needham, speaking on "Aspects of

the World Mind in Time and Space," does not confine himself to modern culture; evidently he is a believer in the ancients and their lore; thus:—

It has been said that whenever modern man climbs to the top of some newly conquered mountain of intellectual achievement, he finds that the Greeks had shot an arrow there two thousand years before. Those of us who are acquainted with Chinese culture would add that when he looks again he finds a Chinese arrow too. I cannot claim to have anything of value to say on ancient Indian contributions, but I know that a progressive study of the course of Chinese philosophical thought filled me step by step with amazement and delight that in that ancient system, perhaps the only one comparable with the Occidental system in richness and variety, so many ideas had found another expression, as if in a symphony on the same themes by another composer. Writing to Lorenzo de Medici in 1515 from China, Andreas Corsalis described the Chinese as "di nostra qualità," of the same stuff as ourselves. It was a compliment to us.

A synthesising of the different branches of knowledge is very necessary; and more, a synthesising of the knowledge of the moderns with that of the ancients.

And this was said at one of the sessions—that on "Science and Human Needs," the speaker being Prof. Emil Abel who had to leave his country and was "happy enough to find hospitality in the United Kingdom":—

All of us breathe the free air of free countries. What a tremendous change of air! And who indeed should be more competent than the chemist to find proof for it? We have always heard that the composition of air is practically the same all over the globe. But certainly the chemist must have made a mistake somewhere, the analysis should be repeated as soon as possible, for how can the oppressing air over Vienna or Prague be the same as the refreshing and exhilarating air over London or New York?

Professor Emil Abel may have used these words as mere poetic imagery, but Occultism seriously advances the teaching that cities have their psychic atmosphere, and that air all over the world is the same only in the same sense that all men are clothed in a skin. The skin does not make the man nor the combination of oxygen and nitrogen the atmosphere of the city. The chemist has not "made a mistake somewhere," but he has

not fathomed the soul of his elements yet. When he solves the mystery of the seven Elements of the Ancients—earth, water, air, fire, etc.—he will learn why at this hour the atmosphere of London is freer than that of Berlin. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (Book I, Part II, Section XIV, on “The Four Elements of the Ancients”):—

Metaphysically and esoterically there is but ONE ELEMENT in nature, and at the root of it is the Deity; and the so-called *seven* elements, of which five have already manifested and asserted their existence, are the garment, *the veil, of that deity*.

Fire, Air, Water, Earth, were but the visible garb, the symbols of the informing, invisible Souls or Spirits—the Cosmic gods to whom worship was offered by the ignorant, and simple, respectful recognition by the wiser.

The ancients knew and could distinguish the *corporeal* from the *spiritual* elements, in the forces of nature.

The ancients knew these powers so well, that, while concealing their true nature under various allegories, for the benefit (or to the detriment) of the uneducated rabble, they never departed from the multiple object in view, while inverting them. They contrived to throw a thick veil over the nucleus of truth concealed by the symbol, but they ever tried to preserve the latter as a *record* for future generations, sufficiently transparent to allow their wise men to discern that truth behind the fabulous form of the glyph or allegory.

Why did the ancient scientists contrive to veil such truths? It was to protect humanity against the misuse and the abuse of knowledge. Our civilized scientists are beginning to feel the need of withholding knowledge from those who would use it for destructive or selfish ends. M. le Capitaine H. Bernard said:—

Do not let science remain in the reach of those who have repeatedly proved their ferocious instincts. Do with science what is done with the driving licence, remove it from unworthy hands.

And he recognized that “there are no ethics in science, the ethics must be in the souls of those who handle it.”

Division of knowledge leading to the emergence of experts in the sphere of Science is not an unmixed blessing, bemoans Canon Roger Lloyd in *Time and Tide* for 25th April:—

The prestige of science is enormous, and rightly so. We rely on our scientists to save us today, and

without their specialized knowledge we cannot win. Nor could we build again without it when we have won. But similarly, those same scientific techniques have sign-posted humanity down the road to hell. For science is, as all scientists say, ethically neutral. Therefore a solely scientific education is one in which ethics simply do not come into the picture. Philosophy, Reason, and Art also gradually become noises off. There is another side to it. To be proficient in science one must now specialise rigidly; and a basically scientific education will therefore become more and more technical and lop-sided. But what does this specialization do to its victims? It gives them an exhaustive proficiency in one tiny field of knowledge, accompanied only too often by an abysmal, contented, and even aggressive ignorance of every other. This sort of illiteracy, which one finds distressingly often among the scientific technicians of every grade, is directly due to a too rigid specialization in one field of learning alone. It often leads him who suffers from it into the sins of contempt and self-satisfaction. It is apt to call waste all time spent in the pursuit of all knowledge not of immediately practical use. And it is this sort of spirit which is fast spreading its beastly hand all over the educational system of our country.

The war in which the world is now engaged is not between two parties with well defined aims and purposes. In reality it is a civil war, an internecine fratricidal war. Canon Roger Lloyd sees Great Britain divided into two nations and the wall dividing them is not an economic or political wall. He says:—

Wealth now seems to divide us very little. The levels of economic difference steadily approximate, and most of us now have much the same views about wealth as such. Politics hardly divide us at all, for we are truly united in the service of a cause which transcends them. But deep down under that unity there is a mighty cleavage. It concerns the big issues about the purpose and the meaning of life, and what the good life actually is, and how one lives it. In this sphere of being, which is ultimately vital to all the others however ephemeral they seem, it is the grim truth that one half of us simply does not understand the language the other half of us is using. And the division of course is not a simple fifty-fifty of the population: it is more like seven or eight to one.

But this division of his nation into two classes is not peculiar to it; as he truly points out, it appertains to “the whole field of Western civilization” and therefore touches even the Orient where that civilization has found its way. The “big issues about the purpose and meaning of life” will remain unsolved unless the front-rank thinkers of every nation seek with sincerity, honesty and

vigour the cause of the collapse of the Occidental civilization. While modern science should receive its due share of blame, other builders of the collapsing Occidental civilization must also see the error of their ways. The irreligious principles of sectarian creeds—Brahmanical, Anglican, Jesuitical or any others—is at least as bad an influence as that of scientific knowledge without the soul of ethics.

Canon Roger Lloyd makes a reference to "the knowledge and the practice of ancient disciplines," but we presume that what he has in mind does not include the Sanskrit, Pali and Arabic classics, or the spiritual austerities of the schools which flourished long centuries before the age of Moses. Ethics and morality formed the roots of the tree of discipline in the ancient East, and universality was the life-sap. Is the new order to be the sectarian child of the old one? Are there to be divisions of caste and creed, country and colour? Many years ago a great Indian Sage wrote to his English correspondent:—

We, who have studied a little Kant's moral teachings, analyzed them somewhat carefully, have come to the conclusion that even this great thinker's views on that form of duty (*das Sollen*) which defines the method of moral action—notwithstanding his one-sided affirmation to the contrary—falls short of a full definition of an unconditional absolute principle of morality—as we understand it. The philanthropy you Western thinkers boast of [has] no character of universality; i. e. never having been established on the firm footing of a moral, universal principle; never having risen higher than theoretical talk; and that chiefly among the ubiquitous protestant preachers, it is but a mere accidental manifestation but no recognised *Law*. The most superficial analysis will show, that, no more than any other empirical phenomenon in human nature, cannot be taken as an absolute standard of moral activity; i. e. one productive of efficient action. Since, in its empirical nature this kind of philanthropy is like love, but something accidental, exceptional, and like that has its selfish preferences and affinities; it necessarily is unable to warm all mankind with its beneficent rays. This, I think is, the secret of the spiritual failure and unconscious egotism of this age. And you, otherwise a good and a wise man, being unconsciously to yourself the type of its spirit, are unable to understand our ideas upon the Society as a *Universal Brotherhood*, and hence—turn away your face from it.

That in Karma and Reincarnation alone is to be found the self-compelling basis of ethics seems to be recognised by the Editor of *The Asiatic Digest*, who writes in his June issue:—

It is a curious thing that, although the question of reincarnation is often discussed in the West—and is a fundamental belief among many millions in the East—few realise the profound effect which would result from any conclusive proof of its reality. Our whole outlook on life and death would be changed, together with our expectations of happiness in life, of

material success, and so on, if we knew for certain that this life is the result of past lives and the foundation of future lives.

Proof of reincarnation would modify all our politics. It would strike, for example, at the fundamental basis of Socialism that all men are born equal. It would give a new meaning to: "As a man sows, so shall he reap."

It is strange that in the West so many who are concerned with the problem of where we go when we die, never stop to consider where we came from before we were born.

There is hardly an earnest student of Theosophy but professes the conviction that Reincarnation and Karma are facts. Has it worked this transformation in his life and outlook? Does he so act and think and feel as if he trusted in the just, unerring Law? And if he does not, is his conviction real or only lip-profession?

Prof. A. D. Ritchie, in his discussion of "Theories of Immortality" in *Philosophy* for April, concedes the logical connection between arguments for survival after death and for existence before birth. That the latter has not been popular in the West outside the Pythagorean and Platonic schools he finds surprising, because

many of the arguments for survival apply equally well to pre-existence.... Anyone who wishes to advocate survival without pre-existence must pick his arguments carefully to avoid those that favour both.... If the argument is that the soul is a pilgrim and a stranger in this world, then pre-existence is a necessary part of the doctrine.

The other theories that he discusses are Perpetuity or the indestructibility of spiritual substance, and Eternal Life. His discussion is marred by the Orientalists' traditional error about Nirvana. He does not use the name but he rejects the "Oriental" concept of "absorption of the finite individual in the infinity of God" as implying "the extinction or annihilation of something valuable in itself."

But he renders a service to Truth in repudiating as inconclusive the arguments against survival which rest on the scientific demonstration of the extreme dependence of mental functions on the smooth functioning of the bodily organism. He suggests a refutation in which many will see a value greater than he himself concedes to it:—

If we suppose that the bodily organism is merely the soul's instrument, all evidence of this kind can be given full weight without in any way impugning the possibility of "psychic" existence independent of the body. The evidence merely shows that a bad instrument spoils the effectiveness of the soul's action. If the piano is out of tune the best musician cannot produce good music from it, but the badness of the piano does not annihilate the music, it only puts it off to another occasion.

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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 to 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.

Correspondence should be addressed to

The United Lodge of Theosophists

51, MAHATMA GANDHI ROAD, BOMBAY, INDIA.

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