

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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LEARNING BY HEART

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—EDS.]

*Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-wisdom,
the “Eye” from the “Heart” doctrine.*

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THERE ARE two classes of beings among those who are seriously influenced by Theosophy. First, those whose minds are satisfied. The philosophy appeals to them because of its inherent reasonableness and unbreakable logic; because of its striking consistency, its uttermost common sense, and above all its sweeping breadth, encompassing every problem of human life as of cosmic world-process. They are of studious temperament. Finding Theosophy responsive where science is silent, capable of solving scientific conundrums at least in theory; also finding it enlightening in its philosophical propositions, these friends devour with speed the contents of our books. The ethics of Theosophy make no practical appeal to them. If they read *The Voice of the Silence* it is because of its poetry, its rhythmic beauty. They are not impelled to apply Theosophical principles to their own daily problems. Thus, re-incarnation is accepted as a logical and reasonable teaching on the plane of intellect, but they live as if they had never lived before on earth, and, what is even more remarkable, as if they will not return here to meet the reactions of their present deeds; and so on and so forth.

Some of us puzzle — Who buy hundreds of our books, when at the Lodge so few are seen, and still fewer are sacrificingly active? It is this first class of beings who purchase and use for their own purposes our literature. Among them are journalists and writers whose mental output

is the result of such reading; but they seldom publicly acknowledge the source. But Theosophy bears neither grudge nor ill-will towards these, for they too are serving our Cause without meaning to do so. A variant of this type is to be found in our several Lodges. Such come to our meetings and classes, participate in our labours, even help us in certain measure, but do not practise, do not apply our Teachings to better their characters, to purify their moral natures, to control their daily life process by the arousing of the Spiritual Will, which continues to lie dormant in them. As long as they keep on reading and studying and attending the classes, they benefit — but indirectly, unconsciously to themselves. Like children they absorb nourishment and grow, without being aware of either. But when they stop study they forget everything in a short while, and then they behave as if they had never heard of Theosophy.

The second class of beings comprises those whose hearts are satisfied by Theosophy. Suffering, some dire calamity, prepares them, and their intuitive natures are attracted by the Teaching. They do not know why or how. The mental capacity of many of them is perhaps below par, but their sole desire to understand life, to better their moral propensities, brings them to Theosophy. Our meetings and activities help them considerably: a peace of heart comes to them, and some contentment, especially through their power to help even in a small measure their struggling fellow souls. In a sense they are a serious danger to the Movement; for, with them, Theosophy becomes a religion — our books are revelations, our gatherings church meetings, our class work solemn ritual; our Masters who are living men are apt to be prayed to by these humble, innocent ones as if they were gods in some far-off heaven! But for all that Theosophy is for them too, and our effort is to keep the doors of our Lodges wide open for every class, including this. In spite of the danger it is to the Movement, this particular class compensates by producing from within its ranks hearts fired by real devotion. Not devotion of the religious kind, but of the spiritual type; not the one that makes believers, but that other which creates the intelligent worker, whose enthusiasm, transformed into earnest and steadfast labour, gains for the Cause the heart all afire to serve it. Such become learners by heart. They do not memorize words from our books but, by assimilating the Teachings and applying them, learn by and in life. To their head-learning is added life-experience; when these converse or correspond, lecture or write, they do so not with tongue and pen, but with life. Their fire is catching: they produce their like. One in a hundred perhaps is such

a fired heart, but it is one that serves for the hundred, and serves thousands, nay, millions!

Theosophical Teachings are like pure white snow. When it falls on street pavements, in crowded cities, its protective character cannot be at work. Let it fall on the fertile country and it protects and keeps warm the roots of life and silently works the miracle of the coming spring. When Theosophy enters the heart and not only the mind, its real creative fertility begins to operate. It begets work — works of noble sacrifice, of silent sacrifice, above all of impersonal sacrifice. Such works are small but faithful copies of those mighty works performed by the Sages of the East.

IF you have no devotion you will not gain anything by pilgrimage. You may roam all over the country and yet your heart will be impure. The man who has gone to Benares to see Lord Viswanath, but has not destroyed hypocrisy, lust and greed and has no devotion, will gain nothing.

Sow thou a rose to him that soweth thee a thorn. To thee there is always a rose; to him there is a thorn for ever more.

Every forest does not contain a sandal tree; every army does not contain a real soldier; every sea does not contain pearls; even so a Sadhu or a Saint or a Mahatma is not found everywhere in the world.

Have patience, everything comes out in time. The gardener daily waters the plant, but it bears fruit only in season.

Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today, nor till the evening what you can do this very moment; for you know not when death may overtake you, upsetting all your plans.

Just as the tree is in the seed and the seed in the tree, even so is the world in the Brahman.

Just as sugar toys are made of sugar and sugar exists in all of them, even so the whole universe exists in Brahman and Brahman in it.

A dumb man having tasted sugar cannot tell its taste. Even so the experience of Self-realization cannot be described.

—KABIR

THE LADDER OF LIFE AND ITS RUNGS OF PAIN

FOR THE AVERAGE MAN, pain is something to be shunned, an unpleasant experience that has to be cured or suppressed by any means which, for our day, are analogous to the pills and potions, drugs and tranquillizers of modern science. The medical man sees in pain a warning, a bell which incessantly rings the alarm and continues to do so till the necessity ceases. However, since he but scratches at the surface of the causal world, he is content to push back the pain for a period long or short; or worse still, he paralyses some one portion of his patient's mind or body, thus cutting off the sound of the alarm bell from his consciousness. In such case, the bell may continue to give its message of warning, which, however, is prevented from penetrating to the man's waking consciousness. There is a similar warning bell for the inner malaise of men, and since there are hardly any doctors for the maladies of the soul, men are known to drown their pain by intoxicants, a surfeit of pleasures and an overindulgence in desires. They will go to any length to forget the mental torture of unsatisfied turbulent emotions.

The Occultist views pain differently.

The Voice of the Silence sees in pain and suffering steps towards a higher elevation. It says: "The ladder by which the candidate ascends is formed of rungs of suffering and pain; these can be silenced only by the voice of virtue." The truth of this statement has to burn itself deep into the consciousness of the candidate long before he can take the first steps to mount the ladder. He cannot ask for, nor expect, any help from his guru or Master for the assuaging of his pain. He has to learn to do so unaided by applying to his wounds and sores the balm of virtue; and till he has developed in himself the strength to do so, he is in no fit condition to offer his services to the cause of Masters and to their altruistic plans. It is a well-established truism that in any field of human endeavour learning must precede practice and action.

Vice is the great enemy of the man of aspirations. It has the power to glamour, tempt, subjugate and enslave his mind. It has to be eschewed, not because of the suffering which inevitably dogs its footsteps, but because it will always be an obstacle and an unsurmountable bar to progress upwards. It is a characteristic of vice that it cannot stand in juxtaposition with virtue. It must vanish and be eclipsed, as is darkness at the approach of light. Vice, which has many a pleasing

face, has to be recognized in all its forms. One thing must, however, be very clearly understood, namely, that vice invariably prevails where the man loosens his hold on the spirit and abandons himself gladly to the heady fumes that matter is wont to emanate. In such moments of intoxication, he displays selfishness in one or the other of its myriad forms and his acts become a negation of the laws of Brotherhood. It is a most degrading form of vice this, that man schemes against man and seeks possession by force or stealth of that which is not his own.

It is one of the properties of matter that it lends itself to separative forms. Because of this, the consciousness that inhabits any one form has the tendency to view itself as something separate from other forms, a unit that must fight other units for its ease and survival. When a human consciousness which is still allied to matter tries to understand spirit, it endows spirit with the very attributes it has found in matter and only multiplies them in degree. Being thus unable to find the omniscient and immortal spirit, the ordinary man comes to deny its existence.

So, too, with virtue. It cannot be translated in terms of material applications. It can be known and realized only when the hold of matter is loosened and its clogging, clinging, dragging pull neutralized. The feet of the man will still have to walk the earth, but they have to be made immune to the soiling properties of matter by cleaning and bathing them in waters of renunciation. To shed vice, renunciation is the only, the surest panacea. It implies the giving up of all rewards, the surrender of all attachments to things, ideas, impressions and memories that arouse the thirst and craving for existence. It is from among those in whom self-interest prevails that vice and sin find their recruits to evil. The touch of matter not only defiles and makes the man unclean; its harm reaches deeper, for it bewitches the senses, blinds the mind, and makes of the unwary an abandoned wreck.

So long as man continues to live in and enjoy the sensations of the oscillations he calls life, he remains a prey to suffering and pain. This must be so because he lives and moves and has his being in matter. He inherits the divisive tendencies of matter and acquires the natural combativeness of the animal. Viewing himself as a thing apart by reason of caste, creed, nationality or organization, he cannot live in any one of such divisions without breaking the fundamental laws of Brotherhood. When violations are piled on violations, the consequences may be dire in the extreme. Those who call themselves Theosophists, yet cling to

their own sect or brand of philosophy and look down their noses upon others who are not of their own organization, are as violative of the law as anyone else and will in time find themselves accountable. Brotherhood is not only a fact in supernature. It is a law from which branch out all the other laws of harmony. The man who craves and thirsts, the one who seeks to fill his own special granary at the expense of and to the exclusion of others is a cheat, a violator of nature's laws and an offender against humanity. His life becomes a series of infringements of the Law, and since the personal effort of himself or even of a group or nation is pitted against the vast onward movement of what the scriptures term the wheel of the Good Law, pain and suffering follow upon the divagations. It is the measure of man's folly that he seeks to continue in his wrongdoing and tries to find out ways and means to avoid the suffering which must follow.

Could man but take an impersonal and detached view, he would realize that pain is nature's pointer and indication that he had violated some one or the other of nature's laws. Seen from this viewpoint, pain is necessary, is in fact a valuable teacher and a sure guide to progress. *Light on the Path* stresses this aspect in its own great language: "No man desires to see that light which illumines the spaceless soul until pain and sorrow and despair have driven him away from the life of ordinary humanity." Joy and pleasure and ease do not afford the opportunity that pain and suffering give. It is in this sense that the latter constitute rungs in the ladder as soon as they are surmounted. Pain and suffering can be stilled by one agency only, namely, the voice of virtue. But this voice which cures all and integrates all is not that of the so-called morality of the day. Virtue in its fullest sense is the over-spreading influence of the one law of Universal Brotherhood on all planes of thought and action. The diversifications of that law are many and wide and wherever it abides and becomes a living power in life, there virtue sits enthroned and peace and plenty bless the land. So potent is its presence that a thousand serpents are kept away from the candidate's path if only he acknowledges its omniscient and omnipresent sway.

Rarely can a man who has tasted vice and acquired its taint and stigma abandon it at the initial resolve or even after a long visitation of pain. He delays his own advancement because he does not know how to use suffering as a step in the ladder by means of which he can raise himself. He has to learn through bitter experience that all his efforts at checking vice by fighting it must come to naught. Frustration and

failure lie that way. There is one method and one method only by which he can achieve a turning away from vice, and that is by fixing his whole attention on the Inner Ruler whom he has not seen but whom he has felt during rare moments of introspection. *Light on the Path* has valuable instructions to offer on the subject in the essay on Karma:

It is useless for the disciple to strive to learn by means of checking himself. The soul must be unfettered, the desires free. But until they are fixed only on that state wherein there is neither reward nor punishment, good nor evil, it is in vain that he endeavours. He may seem to make great progress, but some day he will come face to face with his own soul, and will recognize that when he came to the tree of knowledge he chose the bitter fruit and not the sweet; and then the veil will fall utterly, and he will give up his freedom and become a slave of desire. Therefore be warned, you who are but turning towards the life of occultism. *Learn now that there is no cure for desire, no cure for the love of reward, no cure for the misery of longing, save in the fixing of the sight and hearing upon that which is invisible and soundless.*

But the invisible and soundless is impersonal, altruistic and of quite another nature than the perishable. It is the embodiment and exemplar of brotherhood. The laws of brotherhood have their greatest strength on the inner and hidden planes of being from where their projections descend the staircase of manifested existence. They have therefore to be understood, not in isolation but as the containers and roots of other laws. To realize Brotherhood *in actu* and as a corrective to vice and sin, its laws have to be studied in all aspects of the complex relationship that exists between man and nature and between man and man. When brotherhood is thus sensed in its vastness, it becomes evident that no man can stand aside from the bad man or the foolish man. If he does, suffering that may at times border upon agony may be his. This, the two wars of the 20th century have proved beyond doubt. The bad man is still a link in the chain of brotherhood and he who foolishly shrinks away from him may find that the mantle of the bad man is thrown across his shoulders by nature herself; and the more his abhorrence, the more prolonged will be its presence round his shoulders. In all aspects of life, it will be found that self-righteousness destroys itself. It is one of the many forms of unbrotherliness. It takes the man away from virtue and throws him wide open for the entry of vice.

BASIS OF INVESTIGATION

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OFTEN students of Theosophy are dubbed blind believers. Some men calling themselves Agnostics or Rationalists claim for themselves the privilege of being reasoning thinkers, to the exclusion of all others — Mystics or Occultists, Theosophists or Gnostics.

H. P. Blavatsky had numerous friends and admirers among the Rationalists like the well-known "Saladin" (W. Stewart Ross) and she always was a vigorous defender of freedom of thought, of speech and of action. In her *Key to Theosophy* (p. 267) she says:

We prefer immeasurably more in our Society Agnostics, and even rank Atheists, to bigots of whatever religion. An Agnostic's mind is ever opened to the truth; whereas the latter blinds the bigot like the sun does an owl. The best — *i.e.*, the most truth-loving, philanthropic, and honest — of our Fellows were, and are, Agnostics and Atheists (disbelievers in a *personal* God).

From time to time she reprinted from Free-Thought, Rationalist and Secular periodicals extracts bearing on this subject. There are blind believers among the Agnostics and the Rationalists and there is dogmatism and creedalism in their ranks also. All students of Theosophy are not free of these weaknesses.

So we print below from *Lucifer*, Vol. III, p. 82, for September 1888, something of value to all, with H.P.B.'s introductory words:

We copy this extract from a review of *Agnosticism and Christianity*, by "Julian" (*Secular Review*, June 2nd, 1888), as embodying remarkably logical and philosophical arguments against some so-called axioms which can never be accepted as such.

"Mr. Samuel Laing, in his new booklet, *Agnosticism and Christianity*, begins with stating Professor Huxley's definition of knowledge. The Professor is made to say: 'A man shall not say he knows or believes that which he has no scientific grounds for professing to know or believe.' As an axiom this is most faulty. As a universal truth it is, *me judice*, wholly untenable. It may be in part true, so far as phenomenal 'knowledge' is concerned, but certainly is not at all true of 'belief.' Belief is based solely on man's faith in the competency and credibility of

the person who professes to instruct, and not 'on scientific grounds,' as the Professor states. Children do not believe on scientific grounds, but solely because they think the person who tells them is competent to know and honest to state what he knows. All our belief in history is based entirely on our faith in the historian. Nine-tenths of our knowledge is that of faith; the remaining tenth is of a very mixed character indeed, and very often inferential and most erroneous. Experiment is by no means infallible; data are by no means always to be trusted. Hasty inferences from experiment and data have led to a legion of errors, and new experiments with new data often re-write the 'knowledge' thus obtained.

"Then, again, not one in a million has any 'scientific grounds for his knowledge or belief' even in phenomena. He is taught by a master, that master by other masters or by books, and those masters or books were most of them only second-hand. Phenomenal knowledge, no doubt, must be originally based on personal observation, data, or experiment; but such science forms only an infinitesimal part of our 'knowledge or belief.'

"Then, in regard to the other dictum of Professor Huxley, quoted by Mr. Laing — 'We know nothing beyond phenomena' — it is by no means clear what the Professor means. We know scores and scores of things *besides* phenomena; but of phenomena themselves we only know what our senses inform us of, or what we believe the senses of others have taught them. Thus a blind man has no personal knowledge of the phenomena of sight; but all he knows of such matters is from faith. And very often the knowledge derived from our five senses is quite erroneous, and requires correction. Trusting to our eyes, the sun, moon, and stars are round planes like plates; but telescopes inform us they are balls or spheres. A ship at sea viewed from the beach seems quite near at hand, but may be many a long mile off the spectator.

"Sometimes these corrections are truly marvellous, as when rays of light of widely different lengths appear to be all equal: as, for example, in the sun, many thousands of miles make no difference in the apparent lengths of the rays of light, so that those from the solar equator seem no longer than those from the pole nearest the earth. Our sight, therefore, is not trustworthy; our sense of touch is equally deceptive; and so is our sense of hearing, which perpetually leads us astray in regard to the direction and source of sounds.

"If, however, Professor Huxley, by the phrase 'beyond phenomena,' means what is called 'noumenon,' then he only expresses a platitude and

means by 'beyond phenomena' what the old schoolmen called 'substratum.' Thus, in a rose the petals do not make the rose, the perfume does not, the colour does not, the shape does not: all these are logical accidents, subject to change; but when all accidents are taken away, a substratum remains, which evades knowledge and escapes detection."

HENRY THOREAU, the nineteenth-century writer, naturalist and philosopher, said: "It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look. . . . To affect the quality of the day — that is the highest of arts."

He is trying to remind us that great art is not restricted to painting, music, sculpture and writing. There is an art of living, too.

Thoreau makes us think of people like St. Francis of Assisi, Gandhi, Florence Nightingale — people who, through the nobility of their lives, affected the "quality of the day." There is no limit to the number of such artists. It includes the countless obscure, good people who quietly affect the lives of those about them without even being aware they are doing it, winning no commendation, expecting none.

Everybody must at one time or another have known people — strangers, as well as friends — who have changed the quality of the day. They come into a room in a dark hour — a sick-room, say, or a death room, a room without hope, or merely in an hour when we are lonely or discouraged. They may say little, if anything. But the shining quality of goodness radiates from them, and where there was dark there is light, or the beginning of light; where there was cowardice there is courage; where there was listlessness there is love of life.

These friends — or wonderful strangers, met at a picnic, in a lifeboat, in a hospital waiting-room — all these, humble and unaware, carry with them the kindness and generosity of their lives. These, it seems to me, are the greatest artists, for they practise the highest of the arts — the art of life itself.

—MYLES CONNOLLY

THE VALUE OF A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS

We are saved not by creeds but by gnosis, jnana, or spiritual wisdom. — S. RADHAKRISHNAN

Religion is the finding of the real *Self*: that spiritual Self which is inherently and intrinsically immortal. — WILLIAM KINGSLAND

THERE ARE at least two methods of evaluating the comparative study of religions. One is theology-science orientated, using inductive reasoning (bequeathed by Aristotle) and the Evolution of Form theories of Darwin.

Related to this first method, attention is called to a new approach to the religious traditions of mankind, sponsored by Professor Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Director, Centre for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University, former Birks Professor of Comparative Religion and Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University. In his book, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, Professor Smith contends that the study of man's religious life can be adequate only if the concept "religion" is put aside in favour of two separate concepts — cumulative tradition and personal faith. By using these two concepts, it is possible to describe anything that has ever happened in the religious life of mankind, according to his thesis.

The author of *The Gnosis or Ancient Wisdom in the Christian Scriptures*, William Kingsland, offers the opinion that

where religion is only presented as something which an enlightened intellect must regard as superstition, the result can only be agnosticism, scepticism, or materialism. So far as the intellect is concerned, the remedy lies largely in a comparative study of religions; and this ought to lead . . . to a deeper apprehension of what Religion itself is in its essential nature. . . . If a comparative study of religions does not lead us to acquire at the very least a profound intellectual conviction of this supreme truth of man's immortal spiritual nature — not to speak of the godlike powers which a practical realization of it can give — then I am afraid I must say that in a merely intellectual or scholarly study of religious beliefs and practices, we shall only be partaking of dead-sea fruit.

The second or occult method uses deductive reasoning, is allied to occult science, deals with the unfoldment of LIFE as well as the evolution of FORM, includes all the kingdoms of Great Nature, and, very

important, embodies these instructions which man needs for the building of his individual bridge to the Eternal. From the point of view of this essay, there is greater value in this occult method.

Looking at the modern world is akin to looking down the fiery crater of a volcano! All is heat and seething violence. From the laboratories of the modern vatican, SCIENCE, comes the message that Nature *is* violent, ruthless, and has no patience with any but the most adventurous. Weak, anaemic minds, unable to bear the thought of annihilation, are cautioned not to inquire about the meaning of life. Therefore, for the thoughtful, to live in the modern world is to travel a rough road. If it leads nowhere, how can it be worth travelling?

Is life then a profitless performance, "a star at dawn, a bubble on a stream, a flash of lightning in a summer cloud, a flickering lamp, a phantom, and a dream"? Doesn't the man of today qualify for rational explanations that satisfy his intuitions as well as his intellect? If he does not live by bread alone, neither can he be nourished on equations. Understanding Man implies understanding his religions, dead and dying.

The cancer of our age grows out of Man's unanswered questions concerning the purpose of life and the meaning of death. Matter has dissolved into radiant energy, but what of the soul?

It is the opinion of Professor Smith that

a world that has read Darwin, Marx and Freud, that has known the evil of Nazism, and of dropping two atomic bombs; that has seen the vistas from Mt. Palomar, and witnessed the opening of the Space Age — this world is open for a new understanding of religion.

Mystics of all religions in all ages have proclaimed that there is a bridge between the ONE and the MANY, between the WHOLE and its PARTS. What one would hope to gain by a comparative study of religions would be, among other things, a satisfying, inspiring description of this Bridge to the Eternal. From the point of view of this essay, the Bridge comes to view in full colour only as a result of the study of the original instructions of Theosophy, particularly those detailed in *The Voice of the Silence*.¹

¹ "To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second.

"To don Nirmanakaya's humble robe is to forego eternal bliss for Self, to help on man's salvation. To reach Nirvana's bliss, but to renounce it, is the supreme, the final step — the highest on Renunciation's Path."

Religions today stand discredited as never before. Not since the Renaissance has there been such an upheaval and re-evaluation of the religions of the world. Their tensile strength and resilience are being tested. Much will evaporate, especially from dogmatic, ecclesiastical Christianity. What survives will be vastly altered.

As religions have failed to meet the needs of man's developing intellect, so science has failed to acknowledge the needs of his soul, and modern man could die of spiritual malnutrition. Science claims to have made him lord of creation, but is he heir to heaven?

But neither is economics the saviour. Given the opportunity, world planners could fill the empty stomachs of the hungry millions of this earth, but could they fill their empty hearts? They could not. Their competence ends leagues this side of an ability to provide spiritual sustenance.

Putting aside superstitions, rites and all dogmas of all organized religions, is it possible to find a common centre, the hub of the wheel of the Gnosis, Jnana, Spiritual Wisdom? Postulate that there does exist such a common centre of fundamental truths, combining religion, philosophy *and* science, and one has established a centre. Admit that the further each individual religion has moved from this centre toward the rim of the wheel, the further it has moved away from concepts that remain changeless from eternity to eternity.

At the end of the nineteenth century a re-statement of man's origin and destiny was needed. For ages, both in the Eastern and Western hemispheres, this knowledge had been lost. In the very first sentence of the Preface to that monumental work, *Isis Unveiled*, Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky announced that those two volumes were the fruit of "a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Eastern adepts and study of their science." She said she learned from Them that by combining Science with Religion, the existence of God and immortality of man's spirit may be demonstrated like a problem of Euclid, and from that moment, Mystery is replaced by Law.

Madame Blavatsky recognized that nineteenth-century mankind had begun to revolt against the religious dogmas, bigotry and repression imposed by Church and State authority. That this continues to this day is very apparent. *Isis Unveiled*, and her later work, *The Secret Doctrine*, were and are powerful emetics!

With these two works, the essential truths of which had lain fallow

and unlearned for long centuries, Madame Blavatsky pried open the mind of the 19th-20th century. She established the bench-mark, and invited men and women of every country and of every race to become "acquainted with the few fundamental conceptions which underlie and pervade the entire system of thought" of the Eastern Adepts with whom she had studied.

The beginning of the comparative study of religions in the nineteenth century opened a new chapter in the religious life of men and women in many countries. Prior to 1875, only rare individuals in the Western world—the American Transcendentalists, for instance Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, Thoreau and a handful of others—were drawn to the teachings of the Ancient East.

In Europe, August Schlegel published the first German translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, as well as other Sanskrit works. The influence of Oriental thought was pronounced among the German Transcendentalists—Immanuel Kant, Lessing, Goethe, Schiller and others.

In India, devastating damage had been done to the minds of Indian youth by Christian missionaries who had undermined their respect for and faith in their own Aryan scriptures.

An examination of that period in history reveals that there was no comparative study of religions in any effective sense before Madame Blavatsky launched her mission in New York City, and, with William Quan Judge, Colonel H. S. Olcott and others, founded the Theosophical Society on November 17, 1875.

It was H. P. Blavatsky, Messenger to the 19th-20th century, who held up to the view of an astonished world the Wisdom-Religion and invited its study. It was she who revitalized a comparative study of the faiths of all peoples.

She gathered in her writings the radiant jewels of many mines—the diamond of India, the sapphire of Buddha-land, the ruby of Persia, the opal of Chaldea, the emerald of Egypt, the amethyst of Greece, the moonstone of Judea, and set them all in the exquisite platinum of our own era which she secured from her Masters. She made this necklace for the daughter of Time named the 19th-20th century. (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, May 1960)

In the ninety-two years since then, the Theosophical Movement has opened up the spiritual treasures of the ancient East to seekers all over

the globe. While Theosophy encourages the study of Aryan scriptures and philosophy, it aims chiefly to uncover the *identity* of source of all scriptures and all philosophies. Herein lies the value of the study of the original teachings of Theosophy.

The Second Object of the Theosophical Movement for this century is "the study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study." Therefore, the value, *par excellence*, of the comparative study of religions equates with the study of Theosophy which yields higher values than a mere *intellectual* grasp of the teachings. The *inner* values of all teachings examined are searched for, and a much deeper, broader appraisal results. Theosophy points not merely to the dead letter of religious texts: it supplies the *key* without which even the Vedas are incomprehensible, especially to the Western mind.

In the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*, the Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy, Madame Blavatsky established the fact that there existed in the remote past — and still exists — a Wisdom-Religion emanating from the Elder Brothers of the human race, who constitute a Lodge of Adepts. Two of the aims of *The Secret Doctrine*, as stated in the Preface (p. viii), are "to rescue from degradation the archaic truths which are the basis of all religions; and to uncover, to some extent, the fundamental unity from which they all spring." Madame Blavatsky stated in the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (p. xxxiv):

The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world. Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity.

The task of this Fraternity of Perfected Beings, these Just Men made perfect by their own self-induced and self-devised efforts, is to *preserve* and *transmit* the accumulated Wisdom of the Ages. From the infancy of mankind, from generation to generation, from age to age, this has been done. Thinking man has never been without the rational, truthful explanation of his origin and destiny.

Madame Blavatsky stated at the beginning of *The Secret Doctrine* (pp. 13-17 of the Proem) that it is absolutely necessary that the student be made acquainted with the few fundamental conceptions which un-

derlie and pervade the entire system of thought of the Eastern Adepts. She set them out under three headings which, briefly, may be denominated, Deity, Law, and the Evolution of Beings. Any comparative study of religions which ignores these three fundamental propositions partakes of the dead-sea fruit, referred to earlier by William Kingsland.

Direct quotations abound in the original theosophical literature, namely, the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge, respecting the Vedas, the Upanishads, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity and the ancient Mystery Schools, as well as modern Masonry, the latter being the survival of earlier efforts of the Great Lodge of Masters to keep alive and nourish human aspirations toward the Divine, apart from dogmatic religions.

In the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (p. xxx) we find this concerning a "primeval revelation":

Learned writers... have insisted for the last century or so that there must have been "fragments of a primeval revelation, granted to the ancestors of the whole race of mankind..." This is what all the Eastern Initiates and Pundits have been proclaiming to the world from time to time... There *was* a "primeval revelation," and it still exists; nor will it ever be lost to the world, but will reappear.

In her Preface to *The Secret Doctrine* (pp. vii-viii), Madame Blavatsky said:

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. For what is contained in this work is to be found scattered throughout thousands of volumes embodying the scriptures of the great Asiatic and early European religions, hidden under glyph and symbol, and hitherto left unnoticed because of this veil. What is now attempted is to gather the oldest tenets together and to make of them one harmonious and unbroken whole... It is needless to explain that this book is not the Secret Doctrine in its entirety, but a select number of fragments of its fundamental tenets... But 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.

What of the morrow?

The religion of the ancients is the religion of the future. A few centuries more, and there will linger no sectarian beliefs in either of the great religions of humanity. Brahmanism and Buddhism, Christianity and Mahometanism will all disappear before the mighty rush of facts. (Isis Unveiled, I. 613)

The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church—the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter, but penetrable by anyone who can find the way. (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 635)

CONSIDER our selfish pursuits, our condemnations, our judgments, our criticisms, our foolish laws, which seek to make men “good” by legislation with no attempt to arouse the real nature of man, but only to repress what is considered “bad.” Prohibitions of all kinds serve only to exasperate the evil nature in men. We need not to *prohibit*. We need to *educate*, and first of all, we need to educate ourselves. Let us take the beam out of our own eyes before we try to remove the mote from the eyes of others. Let us retreat into the shrine of our own being. Let us *be* that Self, and act for and as that Self. Let us follow the lines of the law of our own being—compassion, love, helpfulness for all—and then we shall be able to understand ourselves and the natures of all others. . . .

If only once any considerable number of persons could take the true position and act from the true nature, right ideas would soon spread all over the earth. A true league of humanity could be formed—without social distinctions, class distinctions, national distinctions. In their stead would come a common perception and a common realization of the universe and a common course for humanity.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE VISION OF SCIPIO

A VERSION OF CICERO'S "SOMNIUM SCIPIONIS"

[Reprinted from *Lucifer*, July 1889.—EDS.]

THE SHORT FRAGMENT of Cicero generally known as the Vision of Scipio to those who are seeking for the scattered pearls which once adorned the sacred bosom of the pure virgin of the mysteries, before she was defiled and her robe and jewels trampled in the mire of the sty, is perhaps the most interesting record in the voluminous writings of the great Roman orator.

Whence Tully derived his information, whether from the writings of the outer schools of Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy, or from private sources, is in the present case immaterial.

Antiquity has appealed to a higher tribunal in these later days for justification, and, as a witness in this all-important case, we welcome the noble Scipio, and bid him come into the fair and open court of *Lucifer*, there to plead his cause in words so eloquent, wise and clear that the jury, *Lucifer's* good readers, will require no further comment.¹

For those who like dates and facts, and the anatomical processes of modern chronicle-ism, with its dry-boned rattle, it may be stated that the occasion of the vision was as follows.

At the outbreak of the third Punic War, 149 B.C., P. Corn. Scipio Æmilianus Africanus Minor, the philosopher and polished man of letters, accompanied the Roman army to Africa, and there met with the aged Massinissa, prince of Numidia, the friend of his great-grandfather by adoption, the renowned Africanus (Major). After spending the day in discussing the political institutions of their respective countries and in recollections by the aged prince of the elder Africanus, for whom he still retained the most lively affection, Scipio, wearied by the lengthy conversation and exhausted by his journey, retired to his couch and soon fell into a profound sleep. And while he slept the vision of his grandsire appeared to him, in that form which was more familiar to Scipio from his statue than from his own person, and after foretelling the future exploits of his adopted grandson and the incidents of his death in full detail, continued (Scipio narrating the story):

"But that you may be the readier to protect your country, know this of a surety. All who have preserved, helped or increased their country,

¹ The most remarkable passages are printed in italics.

have in heaven a certain and assigned place, there in blessedness to enjoy a sempiternal age. For to the Supreme Deity, which rules the whole of this universe, nothing on earth is more acceptable than the assemblies and gatherings of men united by law, which are called States. It is from this region that the rulers and preservers of States proceed and hither do they return."

Hereupon, although excessively frightened, I asked whether my father Paulus too and others, whom we thought annihilated, still lived.²

"To be sure they do," answered Africanus, "for they have flown from the chains of their bodies, as out of a prison. That which you call life is death. But behold your father Paulus approaching you."

And when I saw my father, I burst into a great flood of tears. But he, folding me to his breast, with kisses, forbade me to weep. And as soon as I had dried my tears and began to be able to speak, I said: "Prythee, most reverend and excellent father, since this is a state of life, as I hear from Africanus, why do I tarry on earth and not hasten to join you in this state?"³

"It may not be," he replied, "for unless that Deity, whose temple is the whole of this, which you behold, shall free you from those ties which keep you in the body, the way hither cannot be open to you. For this is the law which governs the birth of men, that they should maintain that globe, which you see is the middle one in this temple, and which is called the earth. And a soul has been given them from those sempiternal fires, which you call constellations and stars. These being of a globular and round nature and ensouled with divine minds, perform their cycles and orbits with wonderful rapidity. Wherefore, both you, Publius, and all good men should keep their soul in the guardianship of the body, and should not quit the life of mortals without the command of that Being, by whom the soul was given to you, lest you should seem to have been untrue to that duty to mankind, which has been assigned you by the Deity. Practise, therefore, justice and the spirit of duty⁴ like as both your grandsire here and I, your father, have done. Now duty, excellent though it is when shown to parents and re-

² *Extinctos*, a strong word in contradistinction to *viveret* expressing the continuance of life.

³ *Hac*.

⁴ *Pietas*.

lations, is best of all when practised towards one's country.⁵ Such a mode of life is the path to Heaven and to this assembly of men, who have lived, but now freed from their body inhabit the place which you see."

Now that place was a circle shining with dazzling splendour amid the stars,⁶ which you, after the Greeks, call the Milky Way, and from it all other objects seemed to me, as I gazed, exceedingly bright and marvellous. There were stars which we have never seen from earth; and the magnitudes of all of them were such as we have never suspected. The smallest of them was the star which, being furthest from Heaven and nearest to earth, shone with a borrowed light.⁷ Moreover, the stellar globes far exceeded the earth in magnitude, which now to me appeared so small that I was grieved to see our empire contracted, as it were, into a very point.⁸

Now as I continued to gaze thereon with increasing interest, Africanus continued:

"How long will your attention be fixed earthwards? Do you not perceive into what precincts⁹ you are come?"

"All things are bound together with nine spheres or globes. The last of these is celestial, and embraces all the others, being that supreme Deity which restrains and contains the rest. In this sphere are fixed the sempiternal cyclic revolutions of the stars,¹⁰ and to it are subjected the seven spheres, which revolve backwards with a contrary motion to the

⁵ The Roman mind saw no higher duty than this. It was necessarily the *summum bonum* of a race even in its best days of warriors and statesmen.

⁶ *Inter flammæ*, flaming bodies.

⁷ Heaven (*coelum*) here means the *Lactæus Orbis*, the Milky Way.

⁸ The above lines, as well as the still more extraordinary passages in the sequel, written some fifty years B.C., are such a stumbling-block to the critics that the wildest hypotheses have been put forward with all the parade of learning. Among others the following is interesting: "If we compare this passage with the fortieth chapter of the Prophecies of Isaiah and with other parts of the same prophecy, we shall find it difficult to believe that that inspired book had not in part, or wholly, come to the knowledge of the Romans as early as the age of Cicero." The passage of Isaiah referred to is as follows (v. 22): "It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers." The other passages referred to have not as yet been discovered by the translator. *Verbum sapienti satis*.

⁹ *Templum* signifies a portion of the heavens cut off from the rest, and was the technical term for the "Houses of the Heavens" in augury.

¹⁰ *Illi, qui volvuntur, stellarum cursus sempiterni*, a somewhat involved passage; the translation, "the original principles of those endless revolutions which the planets perform," is not warranted by the Latin.

celestial sphere.¹¹ Of these the star they call on earth Saturnian, possesses one sphere. Next comes that splendour, which is said to be of Jupiter, propitious and salutary to the human race. Then a sphere of a red colour and terrible to the earth, which you say is of Mars. Next in order and almost under the mid-region the Sun holds place, the leader and chief and director of the remaining lights, the mind of the world and its controlling principle, of such magnitude that it illumines and fills all things with its light. The two orbits of Venus and Mercury follow the Sun, as attendants. In the lowest sphere the Moon revolves, lit by the rays of the Sun. Below this there is nothing, which is not subject to death and decay, except the souls bestowed on the race of men by the gift of the gods. Above the moon, however, all things are eternal. For the Earth, which is the middle and ninth sphere, both does not move and is lowest, and all ponderable bodies are carried towards it by their natural gravity."¹²

And when I recovered myself from my amazed contemplation of these things, "What," I asked, "is this mighty and sweet harmony which fills my ears?"

And he replied: "This melody composed of unequal intervals, yet proportionately harmonized, is produced by the impulse and motion of the spheres themselves, which by blending high and low tones produces uniformly divers symphonies. Such mighty motions cannot be made in silence, and nature brings it to pass that the extremes should at one end give forth a low note, at the other a high tone. Consequently that highest star-bearing orbit of heaven which I have mentioned, whose revolution is more rapid, moves with a sharp and vigorous sound, whereas this sphere of the Moon, which is the lowest, gives forth a very grave tone. While the Earth, the ninth, remaining immovable always abides in the lowest seat, *encompassing* the middle place of the

¹¹ See Plato, *Timaeus XII* "... besides which he made one of the circles external, the other internal. The motion of the exterior circle he proclaimed to be that of sameness, and that of the interior the motion of difference."

¹² If from these nine spheres we subtract the ultimate celestial, and the Earth, which is perishable, we shall, as in the Eastern system, get a septenary, for the so-called first and seventh principles are really no principles. It must be left to the intuition of the student to decide whether this echo of ancient science, this fugitive ray from the lamp of the Mysteries, is to be applied literally to the seven physical bodies called planets in ancient astronomy, or is meant as a hint for those who have ears to hear. "For the Mercury of the Philosophers is not the common mercury." In occult science the seven physical "planets" of astrology are merely symbols of the seven principles of all material bodies. See *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, 152.

universe."¹³

"These eight orbits,¹⁴ two of which have the same power, namely, Mercury and Venus, create a scale of seven distinct intervals; *a number which is the connecting principle*¹⁵ *of nearly all things.* And learned men imitating this mystery with strings and vocal harmonies, have won for themselves a return to this place: like as some others, who, *endowed with extraordinary natural powers, have studied divine sciences even in earth-life.*¹⁶

"Now mortals have become deaf to these sounds, by having their ears continually filled with them; so much so that hearing is the dullest of your senses, just as the people who dwell near the Cataracts of the Nile are defective in their sense of hearing. And so this sound, which is generated by the exceedingly rapid revolution of the whole Cosmos,¹⁷ is so stupendous that mortal ears cannot contain it: just as you cannot look at the face of the sun without both sight and sense being overcome by its rays."

Now, though I was struck with astonishment at these things, I still kept my eyes turned to the earth. Whereupon Africanus said: "I perceive, Scipio, that you still gaze upon the seat and home of mortals. But, if it appears to you so small as it really is, it were better to keep your eyes ever fixed on these celestial sights, and disregard those of earth. For what renown from the mouths of men, or glory worth striving for, can you achieve? You see that the population of the earth is confined to scattered and narrow localities, and that vast uninhabited tracts surround the inhabited specks: that the dwellers

¹³ *Complexa medium mundi locum*; this is generally translated, "occupying the central spot in the universe," a somewhat strange and unnatural rendering of *complexa*, which is never found bearing this meaning in any other context. By giving it, however, its natural signification of "embracing," a key to the true meaning of the term, sphere, is offered. Readers who are interested in mystic harmonies, the music of the spheres, and their occult correspondences, should carefully study the opening chapters of the *Timaeus* of Plato; this, however, will prove a somewhat desperate undertaking, if the translations of the schoolmen have to be solely relied on.

¹⁴ The celestial sphere is not included, seeing that the various tones are produced by the varying velocity of the different spheres revolving in an opposite direction to the heavenly sphere.

¹⁵ *Nodus*.

¹⁶ *Qui praestantibus ingenii in vitae humana divina studia coluerunt.*

¹⁷ *Totius mundi*, an additional proof that the physical planets are not meant in the preceding description.

on earth also are so cut off from one another, that mutual intercourse is impossible: but that *some stand sideways, some backwards, some directly opposite you*,¹⁸ from whom you can certainly hope for no glory. You perceive, moreover, that the earth is also encompassed and surrounded, so to speak, with belts: *two of which separated by the greatest distance and situated at each end under the very poles of the heaven*,¹⁹ you see are rigid with ice; but the middle zone, which is also the largest, is burnt up with the heat of the sun. Two of these are habitable; the southern zone, the inhabitants of which *have their feet turned towards you*,²⁰ has no connection with your race. Of the northern (temperate) zone, however, which you inhabit, see what a small share you possess. The whole surface inhabited by you, of small extent north and south, but of greater length east and west, is an insignificant strip²¹ surrounded by the sea, which you call on earth the Atlantic, the Great Sea, or Ocean. And yet you see how small it is in spite of its great name. How, then, is it possible for either your own name, or that of any of our countrymen, to pass out of these familiar and well-known countries and either traverse the Caucasus here, which you see, or cross yonder Ganges? Who in the rest of the world, east or west, or in the extreme northern or southern regions, will hear your name? And if you abstract these you will easily see within what narrow limits your glory seeks to spread itself.

“How long, again, will those who speak about you continue to do so? For even if future generations should successively desire to hand down the praises of any one of us, which they may have, in their turn, received

¹⁸ *Sed partim obliquas, partim aversos, partim etiam adversos stare vobis.* A somewhat difficult passage to do justice to; the next paragraph, however, proves beyond all doubt that the positions are referred to a spherical and not a plane surface.

¹⁹ If Cicero believed the earth was a flat surface, how could he possibly speak of *two poles*?

²⁰ *Quorum australis ille, in quoqui insistunt, adversa vobis urgent vestigia, nihil ad vestrum genus.* Surely no words would testify more clearly to the science of the ancients! Even a child might conclude the argument with a triumphant Q.E.D., and yet hear the commentator of the orthodox schools: “This is a very curious passage, and if our author’s interpreters are to be believed, he was acquainted with the true figure of the earth, a discovery which is generally thought to have been reserved for Sir Isaac Newton (?!), and to have been confirmed by some late experiments; but I own I am not without some doubts as to our author’s meaning, whether he does not here speak, not of the whole face of the earth, but of that part of it which was possessed or conquered by the Romans.”—GUTHRIE. *Requiescat in pace!*

²¹ *Infula*, literally a fillet or ribbon used as an ornament in the sacrifices.

from their fathers, yet, because of *the cataclysms of water and fire*,²² *which must happen at fixed periods*, we can attain not even lasting renown, much less eternal glory. For what does it profit you to be spoken of by men who shall be born hereafter, when those are silent, who were born before you, not less, indeed, in number, and certainly better men; when, moreover, no one even of those who can bear our repute, is able to preserve the recollections of a single year. Now men usually measure the year by the sun, that is, by the revolution of one star; but it is only when the *rest of the constellations*²³ *have returned to their original positions*, and have brought back the same aspect of the heaven after long intervals, that the true revolution of the year can be spoken of. In which cycle I scarcely dare say how many centuries of mortals are contained. For, like as in olden days, when the soul of Romulus entered into these mansions men saw the sun obscured and extinguished, so when the sun shall be again obscured in the same position and period, and all the signs and stars are recalled to the same origin, then must you consider the cycle complete. But you must know that not even the twentieth part of this year has completed its revolution.²⁴

“Wherefore, if you have hopes of a return to this place, where great and excellent men enjoy all things; of what value, I ask, is that human glory, which can scarcely extend to the small fraction of one cycle? And so if you would look on high and fix your gaze on this state and your eternal home, you will neither devote your life to vulgar fame, nor centre the hope of your welfare in human rewards. True worth itself by its own attractions should lead you to real achievement. What others say of you, let them see to it; for talk they will. But all such fame is bounded by the narrow limits of the regions which you see. Never yet has man enjoyed lasting fame, for death destroys and the oblivion

²² *Propter eluriones, exustiones que terrarum.*

²³ *Astra*; the term *astrum* is never applied to the planets; it generally means a constellation or a sign of the zodiac, and is used in the plural as a designation of the heavens. The usual rendering, however, is “planets”; clearly a perversion of the radical meaning.

²⁴ This astronomical cycle was called by the Romans *Annus Magnus* or *Annus Mundanus*. It is a period of some 25,000 common years, and the key to the mysteries of the Manvantaric cycles, rounds, races, and sub-races. The method of calculation of such cycles, being one of the most important branches of occult astronomy, was jealously guarded. Even in the present Renaissance, figures are kept back.

of posterity engulfs it."²⁵

"And, if indeed, O Africanus," I said, "a *side path*²⁶ to the highway to heaven lies open to men, who have deserved well of their country; and though heretofore from my youth up, by treading in the footsteps of yourself and my father, I have never been untrue to your honourable reputation; yet now with such a prospect before me, I will strive with even greater watchfulness."

"Strive on," said he, "with the assurance that *it is not you who are subject to death but your body*. For that which is really yourself is not the being which your bodily shape declares. But the real man is the *thinking principle*²⁷ of each, and not the form, which can be pointed to with the finger. Of this, then, be sure that *thou art a God*; inasmuch as deity is that which has will, sensation, memory, foresight, and rules, regulates and moves the body it has in charge, just as the Supreme Deity does the universe. And like as eternal deity guides the Cosmos which is in a certain degree subject to decay,²⁸ so a sempiternal soul moves the destructible body. *Now that which is ever in motion is eternal*. Whereas that which communicates motion to something else, and which is set in motion by an external cause, must necessarily cease to exist, when its motion is exhausted.

"That, therefore, which has the principle of motion in itself, seeing that it can never fail itself, is the only eternal existence, and moreover is the source and causative principle of motion to all other bodies endowed with movement. The causative principle, however, can have no antecedent cause. For all things spring from this principle, which cannot in the nature of things be generated from anything else; for if it were so, it would cease to be the principal cause. And if this is without beginning, it can evidently have no end, for if the principle of causation were destroyed, it could not be reborn from anything else, nor give birth to anything out of itself, for all things must necessarily be generated from the causative principle. The principle of motion, therefore, comes from that which is endowed with self-movement; and this can

²⁵ Throughout this remarkable exposition of the emptiness of fame the grand precept "kill out ambitions" re-echoes, emphasized, however, with all the logic of the practical Roman mind, so that it may stand for trial in the open court of Reason, and fight the doubter with physical facts.

²⁶ A hint that even true patriotism is not the *Path*, though tending in its direction.

²⁷ *Mens* (Manas).

²⁸ Cosmic pralaya.

suffer neither birth nor death; otherwise every heaven would collapse, and every nature necessarily come to a standstill, seeing that it could no longer obtain that force by which it was originally impelled.

“Since, therefore, it is evident that that only is eternal which is self-motive,²⁹ who is there to deny that this is a rational attribute of souls? For, everything which is set in motion by external impulse is destitute of the soul principle,³⁰ whereas everything ensouled³¹ is energized by an interior and self-created motion; for this is the soul’s proper nature and power. And if it alone of all things has the attribute of self-movement, it surely is not subject to birth but is eternal. Exercise the soul therefore, in the highest pursuits. Now the noblest interest of a man is the welfare of his country; and if the soul is practised and exercised in such cares, it will the more speedily wing its flight to these mansions and its proper home. *And the time of this achievement will be greatly shortened, if even now in the prison of the body it extends beyond, and by contemplating things which are not of the body, withdraws itself as much as possible from its earthly tabernacle.*

“For the souls of those who have given themselves up to the pleasures of the body, and have made themselves the servants of these pleasures, and under the sway of the passions, whose ruler is pleasure, have transgressed the laws of gods and men; *on quitting the body, they hover round the earth, and do not return to this heavenly haven until they have been tossed about for many ages.*”³²

He vanished and I awoke from sleep.

—E.E.O., F.T.S.

²⁹ This is why the Absolute and the unknown deific Principle is called “Absolute Motion” in *The Secret Doctrine*—a “motion” which has certainly nothing to do with, nor can it be explained by, that which is called motion on earth.

³⁰ *Inanimatum.*

³¹ *Animal.*

³² *i.e.*, are reincarnated.

TO BE REMEMBERED BY THEOSOPHISTS

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KARMA. Karma is not a person nor a collection of conscious powers. It is not merely retribution, for it is also reward, help from others and to our fellows.

We have no right to decide that we will not “interfere” with the Karma of others who may need help. As we are ignorant of the exact working of Karma in each case, and are not ourselves above Karmic bonds, we are really not able to “interfere,” and to speak of doing so is conceit and assumption. The only persons who can interfere in Karma are adepts, who have reached to perfect knowledge, and when interference in Karma is referred to, it is in respect to these beings.

It is said that Karma is created or comes into existence by action, but it is not well enough understood that *action* means not only the definite conscious acts of life, but also all and each, the smallest acts, conscious or unconscious, automatic or otherwise. Therefore it is said in the Hindu books that the sleeping body of man creates Karma — by its breathing. For, when we breathe, some lives of minute beings are extinguished, and we in order to live ourselves have to bear that small portion of Karma.

The Karma produced by thought is more potent than that from act. Acts are really dead thoughts, for they are the expression on the mortal plane of thought, and while the Karma of some acts may be very small and soon wiped out, the thought behind it may be so strong and deep that it will affect the soul for more than one life.

SEVENFOLD CONSTITUTION OF MAN. It is a philosophical and substantial error to say that there are seven principles which include *Atma* as one. There can be only one *Atma*, indivisible and present in each so-called principle, high and low. Hence it is the whole. It is more correct to say that one spirit manifests itself by means of six vehicles.

THE ILLUSION OF “I” AND “MY.” There is no greater illusion than that which leads us to say “my Karma,” “my spirit.” No being on earth has *his* spirit separate from others, nor any Karma disassociated from the Karma of his race, nation, and Humanity. Remember these words from a letter to the U.S. Convention, 1889: “Your Karma, good or bad, being one and the common property of all mankind, nothing

good or bad can happen to you that is not shared by many others. . . . There is no happiness for one who is ever thinking of self and forgetting all other selves." And the *Bhagavad-Gita* says that only he knows indeed who sees that there is but one Kshetrajna or knower in all the different bodies of creatures. Are theosophists afraid to lose their miserable personal selves in the great unknown one?

—AUGUST WALDERSEE

NOTHING can resist the will of man, when he knows what is true and wills what is good.

To will evil is to will death. A perverse will is the beginning of suicide.

We can and should accept evil as the means to good, but we must never will it or practise it, otherwise we should demolish with one hand what we erect with the other. A good intention never justifies bad means. When it submits to them it corrects them, and condemns them while it makes use of them.

To earn the right to possess permanently, we must will long and patiently.

The more numerous the obstacles which are surmounted by the will, the stronger the will becomes. It is for this reason that Christ has exalted poverty and suffering.

To affirm and will what ought to be is to create; to affirm and will what should not be is to destroy.

To do nothing is as fatal as to commit evil, and it is more cowardly.

Sloth is the most unpardonable of the deadly sins.

To suffer is to labour. A great misfortune properly endured is a progress accomplished. Those who suffer much live more truly than those who undergo no trials.

—ELIPHAS LEVI

STUDIES IN MAGIC

X. — THE ARTS OF DIVINATION

Outside a certain highly spiritual and elevated state of mind, during which Man is at one with the UNIVERSAL MIND — he can get nought on earth but relative truth, or truths, from whatsoever philosophy or religion.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

IF ALCHEMY dealing with the finer forces of nature was a Hermetic gift which conveyed to the uninitiated “so much of the *mysterium magnum* as is safe in the hands of a selfish world,” the art of divination was also a gift of the gods which, falling on the animal mind of man, has been misspent, abused and distorted. Prometheus (the name signifies “he who sees before him,” or sees futurity) is said to have taught humanity the arts of divination, of which psychological insight was not the least. This is evident in his words addressed to the daughters of Oceanus:

Of prophecies the various modes I fixed.
And among dreams did first discriminate
The truthful vision . . . and mortals guided
To a mysterious art. . . .

Futurity is predicted commonly in two ways: one, consciously, by adepts who are able to look into the Akasic currents, and the other unconsciously, by those who act under inspiration. But other than these two methods, his faculty seems to be distributed in a general, albeit feeble, way, as thousands of persons have had premonitions of events still to happen. They cannot be labelled as “coincidence” when multiplicity of proofs of such incidents assail us from all quarters of the globe. Several theories have been put forward for this widespread gift, but nothing would be completely satisfying unless one understood the true nature of matter, time, mind and space.

There is no question of foretelling the future, for it is entwined in the present and the past. According to Cicero:

It is not concerning something which has no existence, but only of that which is not yet revealed; for everything exists, although the time has not yet arrived to unfold it.

As the dormant vitality lies hidden in the seed, so does the future lie concealed in its causes; and this future is, therefore, seen by the

unfettered soul in sleep or when roused by other influences, or reason and experience draw conclusions. Chrysippus explains prophecy thus:

There is a power which understands and explains the signs of all things, lent to man by the gods. By the means of soothsaying, we perceive the feelings of the gods towards man; the signs they give us; how they are to be made favourable to us, and in what manner we may conciliate them. The same may be said of dreams.

Cicero commences his work on soothsaying, *De divinatio et de natura deorum*, in a pleasing manner, thus:

From the heroic times there has been a universally received belief among all nations, that among men is to be found the power of soothsaying (*esse divinationem*) — that is, a presentiment, a knowledge of future things. Certainly a glorious gift, through which mortal nature becomes like to the gods. I am acquainted with no people, either civilized or learned, savage or ignorant, which does not believe in the prediction of future events, by a few individuals who understand and are able to foresee the future. Is it not, therefore, presumption to endeavour to overthrow things firmly fixed and venerable by age through calumny?

He then divides soothsaying into two kinds — artificial and natural. The first includes divination by presupposition, speculation, and partly by experience — *e.g.*, conclusions drawn from natural happenings such as lightning, storms, flight of birds; or from the stars, or from lots, and from portentous signs and omens. In all these, says Cicero,

... we must rather look to the fact than search for the causes: we should regard the examples of all nations, and, although we may not at once be able to account for them, we must at least not doubt facts which have really happened. If some things are false and others are true, we must not therefore consider soothsaying as fallacious — just as little as we ought to call our eyes useless because they do not always serve us aright. It is not desired that we should understand all this, but that we should make use of it.

To natural soothsaying belongs the prophetic excitement of the soul, which the ancients believed is of divine origin and knows no barriers of time and place. The soul, they believed — as Plato affirmed in *Phaedrus* and *Phaedon* — was so mixed with earthly matter that it had lost much of its former power of penetration. Man has, however, not wholly lost the power of the seer, for according to its nature it is imperishable.

As the sun [says Plutarch], does not become radiant only when it pierces the clouds, but is always so though obscured by the surrounding mists; so the soul does not receive the power of looking into the future only when it passes from the body as from a cloud, but has always possessed this power, although dimmed by its mixture with the mortal part of the body.

As the power of foretelling is natural to and a portion of the soul, though latent in the usual circumstances of life, it may be aroused by a higher power, or can become active when the strength of the body is weakened. This is particularly the case in those circumstances where the soul has least in common with the body, as in the case of sleep and dreams. That spontaneous prediction which appears often on the approach of death was well known in the earliest ages. In Greece the belief in the prophetic power of the dying was so universal that Socrates expresses it in the Platonic *Apology* as an established fact.

On divination Plutarch had very remarkable ideas, for he said that it is not more wonderful that the mind should have the power of foretelling events than that of remembering them; for, if the soul experienced that which is not yet present, it would not be more wonderful than that it should remember that which is past.

Although Cicero is against auguries and omens, and decries the Stoics' belief in artificial soothsaying as superstitious, he is not against the natural gift of divination and the power of the seer, for he says:

The views of the Peripatetics, of old Dicearchus, as well as of the now blooming Cratippus, suit me better. They believe that in the spirit of man dwells an oracle, by which the future may be perceived, either when the soul is excited by divine inspiration, or when through sleep the soul expands herself unfettered.

The gift of prophecy exists in latency in every man and may become patent in persons of some inner development, while in those of high spiritual aspiration who are pure, devoted and firm, true clairvoyance sooner or later manifests. The ordinary man moves in the consciousness of the material world, of ordinary feelings and thoughts. But surrounding and interpenetrating the physical world is the Astral Light, which contains the faithful record of every thought and action and is the reservoir of all occult forces.

The explanation of the simple prevision of future events lies in this imponderable, tenuous medium, the tablet of the unseen universe. Not

only does it contain the record of the past, of all things whatever that happened to any person, but the future also exists in it in embryo, or at least, in the words of W. Q. Judge,

the pictures of those events to come, the causes for which are sufficiently well marked and made. If the causes are yet indefinite, so will be the images of the future. But for the mass of events for several years to come all the producing and efficient causes are always laid down with enough definiteness to permit the seer to see them in advance as if present. By means of these pictures, seen with the inner senses, all clairvoyants exercise their strange faculty.

The universal body of reciprocal influence is, according to the ancients, the atmosphere — the ether; so that through it the influence of the stars upon things, and especially upon man, comes about. For not only were the heavenly bodies perceived, not only were the revolutions upon the axes, and with this the centrifugal force admitted, but also the influence of the solar rays, without which the earth would be in eternal night and unbroken sleep without any organic life of any description. Man the microcosm is the image of the macrocosmos, and thus he stands in unbroken communion with the universal nature, not only with the earth but with the sun and the stars.

The ancients always considered the “ambient” — or entire heaven — at birth, as being that which affected man, and that the planets were only the pointers or indices showing when and where the influence of the “ambient” would be felt. The modern astrologers, unable to grasp the enormous subject, have reduced the scheme to the influences of the planets. Hence the influences of the stars, which often produce effects not to be sought for under planets, have been missed out. It is stated: “When such stars have rule nor wise nor fool can stay their influence.” As the planets were only foci for the influence of the whole ambient, their own power was only of a secondary nature exercisable when the ambient influence was weak. William Q. Judge, referring to this subject, observes:

When London was burnt a mighty star — not a planet — had rule, and Napoleon was prefigured by a star also, his fall being due in fact to the aspect of the heavens *as a whole*, and not to the ruling of Wellington’s significator. A slight accident might have thrown the power of the latter out of the horary field. Similarly, the cyclic vicissitudes of this globe will not be shown

by any planetary scheme, but by certain *stars* that fix the destiny of poor Earth. When they have their day and term the wise man will be unable to rule his own stars or any others.

The Deity was conceived in India and Egypt in the earliest days as the eternal spirit, origin and ruler of the world, the universal soul penetrating, vitalizing and maintaining all things, and of which the human soul is a portion. Pythagoras who studied in the East had a similar theory. He called God the spirit permeating all portions of the world and all things, from which all beings have their life. Zeno, the Stoic, declared God to be the soul of the world.

The stars were regarded as the habitations of the gods and, therefore, declared to be divine by Pythagoras, Plato, Chaldidius, and others. Hence arose, with the spread of these views among the people, the worship of the stars under certain forms, so that many venerated the sun as the centre and noblest part of the universe and called him the king, and the moon, the queen of heaven; the other celestial bodies were regarded either as their followers, or as independent divine beings — as gods.

According to the ancient doctrine, every event of universal importance, such as geological cataclysms at the end of one race and the beginning of a new one, involving a great change each time in mankind, spiritual, moral and physical, is precogitated and preconcerted, so to say, in the sidereal regions. The science of astrology is built on this mystic and intimate connection between the heavenly bodies and mankind; and it is stated that astrology formed one of the secrets of initiation and occult mysteries. Madame Blavatsky affirms:

Ancient Wisdom added to the cold shell of astronomy the vivifying elements of its soul and spirit — ASTROLOGY. And, as the sidereal motions *do* regulate and determine other events on Earth — besides potatoes and the periodical disease of that useful vegetable — (a statement which, not being amenable to scientific explanation, is merely derided, while accepted) — those events have to be allowed to find themselves predetermined by even simple astronomical computations. Believers in astrology will understand our meaning, sceptics will laugh at the belief and mock the idea. Thus they shut their eyes, ostrich-like, to their own fate. . . . (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 645)

Ancient mythology included astronomy as well as astrology, as it was recognized that the planets were the hands pointing out, on the dial of our solar system, the hours of certain periodical events. The destiny

of every man is connected with the Lipika, not fatalistically, but only because the future, like the past, is ever alive in the *present*; and this is explained by the author of *Les Mystères de l'Horoscope* thus:

Now that photography has revealed to us the chemical influence of the Sidereal system, by fixing on the sensitized plate of the apparatus millions of stars and planets that had hitherto baffled the efforts of the most powerful telescopes to discover them, it becomes easier to understand how our solar system can, at the birth of a child, influence his brain — virgin of any impression — in a definite manner and according to the presence on the zenith of such or another zodiacal constellation.

Many are the forebodings and prophecies which are coming true almost daily, and which very often do not come to light; but still a few which are published in newspapers and journals time and again keep alive public interest in the occult and set controversies going on the "explanations" offered by psychiatrists and other learned men. Not only do such words as "prophetic," "occult," "magical," etc., inspire a sense of curiosity in the public mind, but they carry with them an aura of suspicion. But how many are the wise who are able to sense a higher order of things lying beyond the familiar? And why seek a magical feat, when it can be found in everything that seems natural? As Carlyle said: "Why go in for a miracle, when your right hand itself is one?"

From the boy sniffing his two fingers and asking us to touch one of them, to the modern computer evaluating the occurrence of a particular event, the attempt to divine the future has been an immemorial pastime. Many are the varieties of divination practised down the ages. Not only do living beings prophesy but also certain devices are known by which various objects become prophets, so to speak.

Chiromancy, one of the most popular, is the art of divining the fate, temperament and disposition of a person by the lines and lineaments of the hand. It was known to the ancient Indians and Egyptians. Some of the great practitioners of this art in the West were Artemidorus, Fludd, Johannes de Indagine, Tacconerus and M. de le Chambre. According to the last, the inclinations of people may be known from consulting the lines on the hands, there being a very near correspondence between the parts of the hand and the internal parts of the body, the heart, liver, etc., "whereon the passions and inclinations much depend."

Tarot or Tarocchi cards, as they are called, were devised for fortune-telling and consisted of a pack of seventy-eight cards comprising four

suites of fourteen cards each and the twenty-two symbolical picture cards answering for trumps and marked from zero to twenty-one.

The word "tarot" is derived from the Egyptian *tar*, meaning "path," and *ro*, *ros* or *rog* signifying "royal"; it must then stand for the Royal Path of Life. Or it may also stand for "Divinity," if the word is derived from *As-taroth* or *Ash-tarote*. Some others affirm that it is from *Taru* which means "to require an answer." Hence the word is equivalent to "that which is concealed."

The twenty-two trump cards are the hieroglyphic symbols of the occult meanings of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. If read aright, this trump series is supposed to give a connected sequence:

The human *Will* (1) enlightened by *Science* (2) and manifested by *Action* (3) should find its *Realization* (4) in deeds of *Mercy* and *Beneficence* (5). The wise *disposition* (6) of this will give *Victory* (7) through *Equilibrium* (8) and *Prudence* (9) over the fluctuations of *Fortune* (10). *Fortitude* (11) sanctified by *Sacrifice* of self (12) will triumph over *Death* itself (13) and thus a wise *Combination* (14) will enable him to defy *Fate* (15). In each *Misfortune* (16) he will see the star of *Hope* (17) shine through a twilight of *Deception* (18) and ultimate *Happiness* (19) will be the *result* (20). *Folly* (0), on the other hand, will bring about an evil *Reward* (21).

Each of the other fifty-six cards, too, has a special meaning and significance. It is essential that during the shuffling and cutting of the cards the enquirer earnestly think of that about which he is anxious for information. There are different methods of reading the Tarot cards.

The use of various objects for prophecy, including some gruesome practices, has a complicated rationale, a hint as to which is contained in H. P. Blavatsky's article, "Animated Statues," which appeared in *The Theosophist* for November 1886 and is reprinted in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*. We quote here some excerpts from this article:

The theory that certain objects — statues, images and *amulets* for example — serve as a temporary or even constant habitation to a "god," "genius" or *spirit* simply, has been shared by some of the most intellectual men known to history. It was *not* originated by the ignorant and weak-minded, since the majority of the world's sages and philosophers, from *credulous* Pythagoras down to sceptical Lucian, believed in such a thing in antiquity; as in our highly civilized, cultured and learned century several hun-

dred millions of Christians still believe in it, whether the above definitions be correct or the one we shall now give. The administration of the Sacrament, the mystery of Transubstantiation “in the *supposed* conversion of the bread and wine of the Eucharist into the body and blood of Christ,” would render the bread and wine and the communion cup along with them *fetiches* — no less than the tree or rag or stone of the savage African. Every miracle-working image, tomb and statue of a Saint, Virgin or Christ, in the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, have thus to be regarded as *fetiches*; because, whether the miracle is supposed to be wrought by God or an angel, by Christ or a saint, those images or statues *do become* — if the miracle be claimed as *genuine* — “the receptacle or dwelling” for a longer or shorter time of God or an “angel of God”....

The teraphim-gods of Laban exist to this day among certain tribes of Mussulmans on Persian territory. They are small statuettes of tutelary genii, or gods, which are consulted on every occasion... Philo of Biblos shows that the Jews consulted *demons* like the Amorites, especially through small statues made of gold, shaped as nymphs which, questioned at any hour, would instruct them what the querists had to do and what to avoid (“Antiquities”). In “More Nevochim” (1. iii) it is said that nothing resembled more those *portative* and *preserving* gods of the pagans... than those tutelary gods of the Jews. They were “veritable phylacteries or *animated* talismans, the *spirantia simulacra* of Apuleius, whose *answers*, given in the temple of the goddess of Syria, were heard by Lucian personally, and repeated by him....

Unless it be an *immortal God* (an angel) who animates an object, it can never be a *spirit*, to wit, the SOUL, or real spiritual ego of a once living man; for these ascend, and an astral shadow (unless it be of a living person) can never be higher than a terrestrial, *earth-bound* ego, or an *irrational* shell.... It is such illusive shadows, belonging to neither Earth nor Heaven, that are used by sorcerers and other adepts of the Black Art.

As to such astral shadows, the article in question implies that these have the power of so becoming infused among the atoms of any object, whether it be a statue (idol), a picture, or an amulet, as to impart to it their potency and virtue, and even to animate it, and that it is within the possibilities of sorcery to *fix* such entities in certain objects.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

More than one study has revealed that the liberalization of the abortion law in India some two years ago is against not merely public opinion but even thinking within at least some sections of the medical profession. A recent issue of a family-planning journal, for instance, contains the results of a six-month study by three Bombay doctors covering 500 persons belonging to different age- and income-groups. One hundred of them were doctors. Nearly 56 per cent of 400 laymen and 52 per cent of the doctors did not approve of the legislation then going through Parliament. Although the study was undertaken when the law was in the process of being passed, by and large its findings remain valid because attitudes do not as a rule change so rapidly, especially to so intimate and delicate a subject as abortion. (*The Times of India*, July 3)

A 1971 study in Bombay, covering only doctors, among them some specialists, disclosed roughly the same degree of reluctance among them to endorse the liberalization of abortion.

Can this attitude among highly educated and skilled people who are fully aware of the medical and human aspects of the problems involved be taken lightly? Sixteen of the fifty-two doctors in the present study who opposed abortion did so because they said they felt guilty about "playing God" with the foetus.

Legalization of abortion has a logical correlative in the agitation for legalized euthanasia or "mercy killing" in the case of the incurably and fatally ill. Here again many eminent Indian doctors are opposed to the idea. Of those interviewed, only one was in favour of it, the rest expressing disapproval on moral and other considerations. (*Times Weekly*, June 10)

Mr. Mahendru Talwar, a former president of the Indian Hospitals Association, is said to have remarked that the so-called incurable patient was a standing challenge to a physician. "Mercy killing" would amount to surrendering to that challenge. What was now considered incurable might well be within the realm of a cure tomorrow, with advances in medical research. Another eminent medico felt that no one had the right to take anybody's life, not even his own; while yet another observed that the time was not yet ripe to undertake a drastic social measure like euthanasia. Still others described it as "very im-

proper.”

While the subject is increasingly being debated in the West, this appears to be the first public (not professional) discussion on it in recent times in India. In the West, public debate on the issue began decades ago and the Voluntary Euthanasia Legalization Society was established in England as early as 1932. Newly evolved methods of prolonging life in the body have made a re-examination of the whole question of life and death essential, not only from the medical and legal but also from the moral aspects involved.

What exactly is meant by euthanasia? It means “mercy killing” by the administration of a poison or a drug by a fully qualified doctor, out of compassion for a patient who is either totally incapacitated or in intolerable pain due to some fatal or incurable disease. It can also mean desisting from undertaking measures for prolonging life evolved by modern science.

To a student of Theosophy, some of these measures for prolonging life may seem highly objectionable from the point of view not only of the body, but also of the inner man (*e.g.*, blood transfusion, organ transplants, etc.), and desisting from such measures cannot be put in the same category as the administration of a poison or drug to bring about the suffering patient’s death, even though the motive be a benevolent one and the patient himself desires to be relieved. The experience of natural death and its final lesson, bitter though it be, should not be denied to the incarnating ego. Pain and suffering may be just the lesson the ego requires and could well be a means of wiping out a heavy chunk of Karma to clear the way for better opportunities in the next birth. The whole question if viewed in the light of Karma and Reincarnation takes on a new angle which is almost completely ignored by medical and public debate on the issue.

“Whether you believe in ESP or not, the fact is that man has many more than the five commonly accepted senses,” says Brendan O’Regan, a consultant at Stanford Research Institute (Santa Clara, California), with a background in mathematics, chemistry and brain research (*Psychic*, April 1973). However, O’Regan believes that scientific proof of ESP may be forthcoming “in the next three or four years, if the right people do the investigating.” He suggests an interdisciplinary approach to the study of psychic phenomena, with physicists, biologists, chemists

and psychologists all working together.

“We are on the brink of new discoveries in psychic phenomena,” said O’Regan, noting that he saw connections between ESP, geomagnetic fields, solar flares, electrical fields, and positive and negative ions and biological effects on humans.

Citing examples, he claimed one study showed that more people were admitted to mental hospitals during periods of high geomagnetic intensity than during other periods. Another study showed that the reaction time of subjects to stop lights was four times slower during the occurrence of solar flares.

O’Regan said a “sympathetic resonance” can exist between objects or persons. “For instance,” he said, “if you hang two watches side by side which tick at a different rate, they will tick in unison. That’s an old experiment and has been verified many times.” Also, he added, it has been noticed that when two women are especially good friends, they eventually develop the same menstrual cycle.

O’Regan demonstrated another phenomenon by showing colour Kirlian photographs of an Indian musician’s fingerprints taken before and after a concert. The prints gave off a red hue before he performed and a blue one afterward. Experiments indicate, O’Regan said, that the red hue revealed a low emotional state and the blue a healthy one.

What O’Regan calls “new discoveries in psychic phenomena” are not so “new” as he thinks. Appropriate experimental methods for investigations into a world of hidden realities, a realm beyond mind and matter, beyond time and space, were formulated ages ago by the ancients. They knew, among other things, all about the astral light — that tenuous medium which with its various properties can explain many a phenomenon that baffles modern science.

“There are occult properties in many . . . minerals, equally strange with that in the lodestone, which all practitioners of magic *must* know, and of which so-called exact science is wholly ignorant,” wrote H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 589). Precious stones come under this category and from time immemorial a special mystical significance has been attached to them.

In *Réalités* (December 1972), Francis Brunel, an authority on Indian art who has been allowed to photograph some of the remarkable temple jewels of southern India for the first time, remarks that, designed and set with geometric simplicity, each stone has its “supernatural implica-

tions." This sumptuous jewellery is kept hidden away and brought out on ceremonial occasions to garland the statues of gods and goddesses. Equal in splendour are the jewels belonging to India's great historical families. India, writes Francis Brunel,

has been the home of fabulous jewels from as far back as history records. . . . Jewellery is frequently mentioned in the very oldest writings — the Vedas, the great epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and the *Vishnu Purana*. Early Sanskrit treatises on astrology specify the subtle qualities and virtues of the various stones. The *Ayur-veda* — the Science of Life — teaches us that precious stones have been used to prevent and cure illnesses for over 3,000 years.

According to this tradition, the universe is full of cosmic forces which condition the whole of life and creation. Colour-vibrations are simply their visible expression. A precious stone — thought of as a centre radiating energy — corresponds to each basic colour. Harmony in the presence of the primary colours conditions one's balance and state of health, and hence one's capacity to enjoy life. . . .

Besides possessing an ornamental value and representing wealth and power, jewels are magical and mystical things. They are the symbols of secret correspondences between man, the small universe, and the great universe which surrounds him and to which he belongs; the visible form of the impalpable beauty of nature's purest and most luminous gift.

The widespread use of hallucinogenic drugs tends to be diminishing rapidly, according to observers at the University of Michigan (*Psychiatry*, April 1973). At Drug-Help, a crisis centre at Ann Arbor, Michigan, a spokesman said that part of the reason is a fear of physical damage from such drugs as LSD. "However," he said, "people are doing other things now. ESP, hypnosis, yoga, macrobiotic diets — there are a lot of other levels of consciousness they're exploring without drugs." He added that less than 20 per cent of calls to the centre now relate to problems with hallucinogens whereas 90 per cent did three years ago.
