

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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THE SUPREME MYSTERY

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—EDS.]

THE TRUE TEACHING about the real Masters or Great Gurus, the Living Mahatmas, brings lasting hope and consolation to the Theosophical student who, accepting it, aspires to walk the Path of Chelaship. The would-be Chela is instructed to “seek out him who knows still less than thou.” Having heard the Law, these would-be Chelas are called upon to let others hear it from their lips. As candidates for the higher life, the aspirants are asked to do this talking in a very definite way. What shall he who knows less than we do hear from us? Platitudes? A “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal”? Sentimental twaddle? Comfort? — “But men are not made into steel by comfort,” says Mr. Judge. No; *The Voice of the Silence* is very definite.

What we are instructed to do is to find those who know less than we do and to speak the teachings to them; that is our first step in proceeding onwards on the Path of Holiness, at the end of which we shall learn of the Supreme Mystery referred to in the *Gita* (XVIII. 68). Krishna’s “supreme and most mysterious words” are for the true devotees and are not revealed to those who do not practise *tapas* — mortification — and who are not eager to learn.

The “mysterious words” refer to the *final* surrender, total and complete, by the aspirant-chela of his own Soul to his Master-Guru. As we learn the art of self-surrender we come to know the nature and powers of our own inner Divinity. Sacrifice and surrender cannot be achieved in a moment. This is a long process. The seeing of the Way to this

Mystery comes through Right Preaching; but assimilation of what we hear, read, study and reflect upon, must precede Right Preaching.

It is only at the end of the Eighteenth Chapter that the Master says to His Chela — beloved of Himself:

Place thy heart upon me as I have declared myself to be, serve me, offer unto me alone, and bow down before me alone, and thou shalt come to me; I swear it, for thou art dear to me. Forsake every other religion and take refuge alone with me; grieve not, for I shall deliver thee from all transgressions. (xviii. 65-66)

That is the summation and the end. Where do we begin? Examine carefully the teaching of *The Voice of the Silence*, referred to above. The lanoo or chela, as a shravaka — listener — hears of the powers and virtues of sublime Living Ones whose sidereal symbol-expressions are the Sun, Venus, Mars and Mercury. And then come the pregnant verses which are to be applied for gaining the Second Birth. To be as one newly born, we must become, in some measure, like those Divine Lights. Let us quote the whole passage. The aspirant-chela is told this:

Be, O Lanoo, like them. Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law.

Tell him, O Candidate, that he who makes of pride and self-regard bond-maidens to devotion; that he, who cleaving to existence, still lays his patience and submission to the Law, as a sweet flower at the feet of Shakya-Thubpa, becomes a Srotapatti in this birth.

The beginning? Surrender pride and self-regard through real devotion. Cleave to the duties of life but at the same time have patience and the spirit of submission. The real esoteric devotee carries the flowers of certain virtues to the inner shrine, just as the exoteric devotee carries roses or jessamine to his temple god. In olden days, benefactors of the masses taught the lesson of surrender and submission by advocating that people should learn to recognize the Divine Will; and they used the art of personification of the One Supreme, Omnipresent Spirit. They adapted the Fire of Wisdom to exoteric ritualism for the profane who were taught in the lesser mysteries. Priestcraft took selfish advantage of this, and the effects of the resulting great degradation of spiritual

truth are present even today in the organized religions, in East and West alike. In *mandirs* and *masjids*, in temples and churches, false advice is given, including the harmful suggestion to place reliance on a personal god or gods, to whom worship is to be offered through prayers and propitiations and even submission. The God within and the Law of supreme justice which is the only true mercy are forgotten.

Emerging from different religious folds into a Theosophical sphere, the student-aspirants are subtly affected by that debilitating influence. The Personal-God idea dies hard; invariably it is accompanied with the notion that somehow the Law of Karma can be propitiated through prayers to and praise of the "Lords of Karma." Religious submission to God implies some apprehension of the great Law in the recognition that the agues and the aches, the diseases and the pains are "sent by God." The vulgar profane who submit themselves to the "Divine Will" harm themselves psychically and so physiologically as well; but they have their reward on the plane of the personal soul. The seed of submission to the Law and to the Lords of Wisdom is thus being sown in poor soil.

On the path of soul life, sooner or later, the student-aspirant has to part company with any and every form of exoteric religion, its ritual and its worship. To live the good life proves attractive and the reasoning mind, seeing through the weaknesses and degradation of creedal religious life, turns to morality. The urge to lead the good life is strong, but it is not realized that to do so demands study and understanding. Today large numbers of the educated and cultured, aspiring to be noble and to do good, are meeting with frustrations and failures.

In the ancient days the *Niti Shastras* — codes of ethics and good conduct — were guides for those who aspired to live the good life, as there were *Yoga Shastras* for those who aimed at emancipating the mind-soul from the bondage of the senses and attaining to enlightenment. Codes of ethics are sufficient for the lower man of senses and desires who wants to be good. Moderation and control are excellent disciplinarians; the cultivation of friends and the coming together of the gregarious are beneficial, as far as they go. They teach the art of submission to the True, the Good and the Beautiful; but difficulties arise and frustrations follow, for Karma, inflexible and infallible, is moving, and demands that man should have two wings — not only that of morality, but also one of knowledge.

Therefore, the Theosophical student desiring to live the higher life studies metaphysical principles with which rules of morality are inti-

mately connected. One of the early lessons in the art of submission is to learn submission to the Good Law. What does that signify? The Laws of Chelaship lay down this requirement:

Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the law of Karma, independent of any power in nature that could interfere: a law whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies.

It is the practice of this piece of instruction, founded upon knowledge of the Law of Karma, that prepares us to practise the laying of our own prides and prejudices, our own self-regard and egotism, as sacrificial offerings on the altar of our own inner Divinity, the "Lord of Karma" *par excellence* for us. This particular study, leading to this particular practice, shows us the way to carry on in full the correct promulgation which is enshrined in the instruction quoted above from *The Voice of the Silence*.

In time we shall see the inner meaning of the wisdom of *The Secret Doctrine* which describes the Supreme Mystery thus:

"Man can neither propitiate nor command the *Devas*," it is said. But, by paralysing his lower personality, and arriving thereby at the full knowledge of the *non-separateness* of his higher SELF from the One absolute SELF, man can, even during his terrestrial life, become as "One of Us." Thus it is, by eating of the fruit of knowledge which dispels ignorance, that man becomes like one of the Elohim or the Dhyanis; and once on *their* plane the Spirit of Solidarity and perfect Harmony, which reigns in every Hierarchy, must extend over him and protect him in every particular.

In the meantime, the Theosophical devotee engaged in the task of unity, study and work has to fix his gaze, not on the distant goal so much as on the near one which is — Enter the Stream.

Better than sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, better than lordship over all worlds, is the reward of the *Srotapatti* Path.

Wisdom is the pursuit of completeness.

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

ASSIMILATION

Eternal life's pure waters, clear and crystal, with the monsoon tempest's muddy torrents cannot mingle.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

IT IS SAID that for man the whole of life is one long period of learning. If we take the trouble to review our own lives — the opportunities that came our way and that we seized or lost — we shall be convinced that life continuously presents lessons for our advancement. Widening our scope of inquiry to the lives that surround us, we shall also find that the lessons presented are suited and tailored to individual requirements. In our survey we shall also find that all men do not take seriously to schooling. There are truants in life as there are truants in schools; and when the lessons are not learnt either through inattention or absenteeism (in life, this would be running away from a situation), the student becomes a drag on the efforts of others. This is so because study is usually a joint and co-operative effort.

More often than not, the teachers of our modern institutions fail to show to the pupil the why of education and the wherefore of the particular subject studied. Why the youngster should learn his geography, algebra or geometry is not convincingly disclosed to him. Why the older man who wants to study nature's finer forces should first study cosmogenesis and anthropogenesis is also left in ambiguity. So, the younger and the older man take learning as an irksome imposition that evokes no great interest and arouses no enthusiasm. If the man fails to grasp the purpose and deep import of his study, he will merely encumber his brain with undigestible material which will part company with him at the threshold of death.

There are certain teachings which are basic to life and therefore to knowledge. They are analogous to the firm foundations which are essential to any lasting edifice. The principles and laws that govern behaviour, the intelligent assuming of discipline and restraint and the good governance of emotions, desires and fancies are some of the important constituents of the foundational structure. They ensure a stable base on which any man's life can be made to rest. But these ingredients are useless if they stand alone. They have to be knit together into one compact mass. They therefore require the introduction of the additional material that will cement them into one solid and homogeneous whole. That cementing agent has to be drawn out by the teacher from the

inner recesses of the pupil. Enthusiasm evokes it as does the vision of a definite plan for the future and an awareness of his responsibility for the achieving of the goal for that one particular incarnation.

The teacher all too often finds that pupils are a heterogeneous lot with widely differing reactions. Each has by atavism or karmic heredity acquired moods, longings, capabilities, deficiencies and defects. These exist and cannot be ignored by either the teacher or the pupil. The mode of reaching to the inner capability of the pupil varies with the nature and environment of each. The rose plant requires one type of attention, the oak sapling another. There are natures so sensitive and delicately balanced that they may be upset by the slightest criticism. A harsh word or an uncharitable remark may prove disastrous though the unwitting cause of the failure may remain blissfully unaware of his contribution to the downfall. The entering upon a study of the Scriptures is a very serious matter indeed and even small lapses may injure souls and hinder and sometimes halt their progress. Study alone does not always produce that cementing agent which can bind students irrevocably one to another through the high purpose which they have chosen and of which they have had their moment of vision. Where assimilation is lacking, there cohesion is weak and the man erects his edifice on unstable foundations.

Even though a teaching may be learnt by heart, it does not become useful unless it is readily and spontaneously available in all its strength and efficiency at the exact moment at which it is needed. If it can be covered over by a dense mental fog; if it can be weak enough to allow anger or any other passion to arise and put it in eclipse; if it cannot give the man enough stamina to stand up to intense anguish or as intense a pleasure, then is the study partial and the knowledge only an outward tinsel ornament that was purchased at high price but which has — to use a commercial expression — no resale value.

Whatever be the type of knowledge, its objective is the generation of a capability that can transmute it (an idea, a formula, an abstract idiom) into the concrete. Though anyone can with effort acquire knowledge, not many have the aptitude to work that knowledge into tangible, effective action. Thus we have brilliant thinking with poor performance and high aspirations producing insipid results. For the student of Theosophy, this wide gap between knowledge and its application constitutes a real danger because the knowledge that finds no outlet in action becomes stagnant and dies sooner or later of inertia. On the other hand,

the knowledge that is not properly applied may produce only evil. This evil becomes the great corroder of knowledge. To counter this, the student has to learn how not to misuse his knowledge, which means that he has to control and keep in abeyance his lower nature with its wiles and casuistic tendencies. At first, the walk of this lower self does not appear to be either alarming or abnormal. It is both.

The first lessons in living the life are preliminary and just because of that they are basic. They have not only to be learnt but assimilated. These lessons comprise chiefly the acquisition of a firm belief bordering on faith that the inner and the spiritual is superior to both the inner and psychic and the outer and physical. Any lingering doubt about this may wipe out all progress if after years of effort the student gets glamourised by the psychic or lulls himself into a fatal complacency produced by the delight that comes through acquisition of material things. A failure along these lines is indicative of the fact that assimilation was lacking and the malaise and indigestion consequent on heavy intakes of food was not attended to in time. Obesity and heartburn of the physical organism have their inner counterparts. At all times the student has to square his actions with the ideals he professes. If, for instance, he acknowledges that the Paramitas of *The Voice of the Silence* are really transcendental virtues, he cannot make a mental reservation and say to himself that the particular scriptures of the religion he professes enumerate virtues which are superior or that the content and import of the Paramita virtues require modifications and additions. If he is sincere, then will he devise ways and means by which he can give the virtues life, filling them with the warmth of his endeavour and the radiance of his devotion.

The importance of putting ethical precepts into action is easily recognized by the average intellect. Not so readily recognized is the fact that this really constitutes the second stage. The first stage is that of dedicating the life to such service as would benefit mankind. The exercise of finding out what one can do for such unselfish service — not for self, family, race or nation, but for mankind — develops the inner sight and demonstrates, as very few exercises can, the futility of working for oneself or for groups and cabals of men.

When a student passes several years in such endeavours, he acquires a greater certainty about the correctness of his teachings and the eminence of his teachers. Yet has he, at each stage, to beware of the glamour which emanates from the psychic and physical aspects of both men and

nature. These aspects are non-eternal and therefore speak to the non-eternal aspects of the man. Once lured by them, his consciousness gets trapped in the lower part of himself and his life and actions can thereafter mirror forth only that lower (not necessarily the ugly), thus shutting the door against the higher. The stream of his life can no longer help mankind. It has incapacitated itself from conceiving of the universal, and therefore gives of its strength and vitality to parts and factions, sects and divisions.

The choosing of good and wholesome food, the proper cooking and preparation of it as also the act of introducing it into the system is only part of the process of feeding the body. The nourishing becomes effective only when the food taken can advance and sustain growth. The digestive and assimilative processes if put in disarray will lead to a rejection and throwing out of the nutritive elements. The mechanism that turns food into blood, bones and muscle is different from that used for the ingestion of food. So, too, with the food of ethical experience. If not assimilated, the experience makes no lasting impression. To make it a part of one's being by extracting its essence it is necessary that it be subjected to special mind processes that will break it up into image scenarios and reduce these to corollaries of established theorems. These are then stored away into appropriate memory cells for future use. Such a process (undertaken during a review of the day just closing) tones up the moral fibre of the man and provides an index of idea-associations that on the instant leap to the attention of the man as soon as analogous situations develop. The strength that flows from such assimilation helps build up other sources of energy as yet latent in the disciple.

THE AIM of education should be to teach us rather how to think, than what to think — rather to improve our minds, so as to enable us to think for ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men.

—JAMES BEATTIE

THE SEVENFOLD MAN

IV.— MORTAL MAN AND HIS INSTRUMENTS

IN our last article we saw the source of man's virtue, strength and wisdom. The Individuality, composed of the Human Soul, the Spiritual Soul and the Human Spirit, one with the Spirit of the Universe called Deity, is the fountain beautiful from which flow the Waters of Truth and of Love.

That Individuality may also be compared to a flaming fire. But where there is flame there is smoke. The spiritual Individuality is surrounded by the smoke of our lower nature, which is not wholly evil but is foolish and is shot through and through with selfishness. This lower man is called the Personality. As smoke always surrounds fire and very often chokes it out of existence, so does the Personality which envelops the Higher Man. Our Personality hinders us and makes it most difficult for the Individuality to express itself. The term "Personality" comes from the Latin *persona*, a mask. Our earthly personality is a mask of our divine Individuality. What our clothes are to our physical body, that our Personality is to our Individuality. These images give us a perception of the relation which subsists between the Immortal Triad and the mortal man.

Now, just as the Higher Triad is composed of three constituents, the Personality is composed of four and is therefore called the Lower Quaternary. These four are: (*a*) the animal soul, (*b*) the vital energy, (*c*) the astral body, and (*d*) the physical body.

While many people find it difficult to trace within themselves the presence of Divinity, there is hardly one who is ignorant of the activity of the beast in his blood. But, though all are aware of the presence of the animal nature, only very few know the womb from which it has sprung or the manner of its growth or the method by which it can be subdued. Modern knowledge makes the body of flesh and the senses of that body responsible for giving birth to animalism. Theosophy, the ancient knowledge, teaches differently. Our animal nature is not born of the body and the senses, but uses them for its own purposes. The body and its organs are instruments of the animal nature; they play an important part in its activity, but it exists independently. The animal nature can function without the aid of the senses and in fact the body itself comes to birth because of the animal desires. Writes W. Q. Judge: "Most people consider them as being the result of the influence of the

flesh, for they are designated often by the terms 'desires of the flesh' and 'fleshly appetites.'” But, he adds:

The passions and desires are not produced by the body, but, on the contrary, the body is caused to be by the former. It is desire and passion which caused us to be born, and will bring us to birth again and again in some body on this earth or on some other globe. It is by passion and desire we are made to evolve through the mansions of death called lives on earth.

The one basic characteristic of the animal soul is cleaving to separate existence. It burns fiercely during life in matter and is inseparable from animal existence. Mme. Blavatsky says that “this is the centre of the animal man, where lies the line of demarcation which separates the mortal man from the immortal entity.” By itself, Desire has its own divine purpose; in conjunction with matter, it acts as the ensouling power in the animal kingdom, and therefore it is called the animal soul. In its own kingdom of the birds and the beasts, of the reptiles and the insects, its action is not lethal as it becomes when it sucks into itself the force of human thought-energy and the image-making power. The lower mind, a portion of the higher Individuality, coming into incarnation contacts closely the animal soul, and thus becomes a beast more fierce than any creature of the jungle. Imagine a tiger with human intelligence, with the power to reason, to experiment and to draw inferences; such a race of tigers would be fiercer than the present ones who keep to their own haunts and who have not the political greed to conquer other lands!

This animal desire is composed of Nature Spirits or Elementals impressed by thinking man who imparts to them or infuses into them clinging feeling — the desire to live on earth, in a corpus, so that the lessons in the school of life may be learnt. In the process of learning the necessary lessons, man goes astray and allows himself to be influenced and energized by the living organisms called in Buddhism Tanhaic Elementals. These elementals do not form a body, but they circulate in the human constitution just as blood circulates in the body. What blood is to the body, that Desire-lives or Desire-elementals are to the Astral Body. This constituent may well be designated Desire-Energy.

The next constituent is Vital Energy. This is absorbed by us from the great ocean of Life and it is the real breath. Just as our lungs breathe in pure air which surrounds us on every side, so do our invisible astral “lungs” breathe in the Vital Energy. This energy keeps the various

parts of the body alive and functioning, and at death it changes the nature of its activity.

These two forces — the Desire-Energy and the Vital Energy — circulate in the next constituent which we must consider, namely, the Astral Body.

The Astral Body is not an invention of Theosophy. It is known in Asiatic Psychology under many names, *e.g.*, in the Brahmanical classification it is known as *Linga-Sharira*, the Design Body. This is an excellent name, inasmuch as it offers to us one very important characteristic of the Astral Body: it is the design, the pattern or the model on which the physical body is built. What the foundation and the steel structure are to a house, that the Astral Body is to the physical. There are only two organized bodies — the physical and the astral. The vital energy as also the desire energy or the animal energy circulate in the astral and affect the physical, because the physical is built upon the astral. Another name for the Astral Body is the Ethereal Double — “ethereal” because the matter of which it is composed is subtle, electrical and magnetic in its essential nature, and “double” because the Astral is the exact counterpart of the physical.

Now, the most important teaching which Theosophy gives about the Astral Body is indicated by another name. Mr. Judge has given the many names of the Astral Body and among them is that of “Personal Man.” The human soul could not incarnate without the Astral Body; it could not learn its lessons and fulfil its mission in the world without the Astral Body in which circulate vitality as well as desires, feelings, passions. The Astral Body is the mask, the *persona* referred to above, in which man dwells; it is the conjunction of the incarnated soul with the Astral Body that forms the Personality.

The fourth and last constituent is the Physical Body, in and around which the Astral Body is carrying on its work. The Physical Body is not the Personal Man; the Personal Man, as just explained, is the Astral Body which is composed of its own substance and has its own senses and in which desires circulate. Men and women of the world put a false value on the Physical Body. It is valuable because it is the outer casement of the Personal Man, but unless used as such it is worthless. The majority of humanity, however, do not regard the body as the Temple of the Personal Man and as having within it the Holy of Holies in which the Spirit is enshrined. They not only disregard the existence of the Spirit, but, polluting the body by impure thoughts, selfish emo-

tions, wrong nourishment, they desecrate it.

The training of the body, the development of the Personal Man into spirituality by control of the wandering mind, by subduing the fire of sense-life, by kindling the pure flame of knowledge, and so forth; the bringing down of the light of the Immortal Triad so that it streams forth at every gate of the body — all these are explained in Theosophy, the Science of the Soul. This series of articles draws but an outline map; those who are desirous of knowing more will do well to go to *The Ocean of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge; but that book does not argue the case for Theosophy, and those who desire to get their objection to Theosophy answered and their confusions cleared up will find *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky more suitable. The former small volume, however, gives knowledge of the great philosophy for those who want to learn its fundamental principles and its important items.

Do NOT make a distinction between public speeches and private conversations. In private conversation we must observe the same caution and the same sense of discipline as we do in public.

Every drop of water goes to the making of the sea. In the same caution and the same sense of discipline as we do in public talk, goes together to make the national life.

This is the lesson I have received from Mahatma Gandhi. That which is right, is right under all conditions.

The brain is a machine which should be properly assembled and adjusted during youth.

Truth is one and eternal, but by reason of the natural limitations of the human mind, it is only discovered by us in parts.

One may be illiterate and yet can be good and intelligent. What is required is goodness of heart and character.

—C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

“‘TRY’ IS THE BATTLE-CRY”

“TRY” is a very small word, but it is a word full of strength. We might compare it to a little key which can open the great Door of Possibilities. Here are some instances of what we could enter upon through that Door, provided we use the Key aright, taken from the correspondence of him whose signature still holds good for all students of Theosophy — “Your brother, William Q. Judge.”

TRY to recollect that you are a very small affair in the world. . . . Your only true greatness lies in your inner true self. (p. 123)¹

TRY to put into practice what in your inner life you hold to be right, [and] you will be more ready to receive helpful thoughts and the inner life will grow more real. (p. 114)

TRY to work for others, and rely on your Higher Self. (American ed., p. 174)

TRY to take pleasure in doing what is your duty, and especially in the *little* duties of life. When doing any duty put your whole heart into it. (p. 134)

We are all parts of the one great whole, and if you TRY to centre your mind upon that fact, and to remember that those things that seem to trouble you are really due to your own way of looking at the world and life, you will probably grow more contented in mind. (American ed., p. 176)

TRY to follow the advice of the *Bhagavad-Gita*: “To whatsoever object the inconstant mind goeth out, he should subdue it, bring it back and place it upon the Spirit.” (American ed., p. 175)

TRY to acquire patient Resignation. . . . The first step in *becoming* is Resignation. Resignation is the sure, true, and royal road. (p. 20)

The circumstances we are in *are* the best for us if we will only so regard them. TRY to do this, and thus get the best out of them, and escape them in another life. (American ed., p. 168)

TRY to make it a part of your inner mind that it is no use to worry; that things will be all right, no matter what comes, and that you are resolved to do what you see before you, and trust to Karma for all the rest. (p. 135)

Let me again insist upon your TRYING to realize in yourselves that

¹All quotations are from the Indian edition of *Letters That Have Helped Me*, except where otherwise stated.

you are a part of the All. This is the constant subject of meditation, and will bring the best and most rapid progress. (American ed., p. 200)

TRY for patience in all the very smallest things of life every day, and you will find it growing very soon, and with it will come greater strength and influence on and for others, as well as greater and clearer help from the inner side of things. (p. 136)

TRY to get people to practise true theosophy and brotherhood. (American ed., p. 168)

No effort, even the smallest, is ever in vain; and knowing this, each one can "TRY, ever keep trying." (American ed., p. 167)

It is one's duty to TRY and find one's own duty and not to get into the duty of another. And in this it is of the highest importance that we should detach our *minds* (as well as our tongues) from the duties and acts of others whenever those are outside of our own. If you can find this fine line of action and inaction you will have made great progress. (p. 130)

We must aspire ardently . . . ever TRYING to purify our thoughts and free ourselves from the attachment to actions and objects. (p. 3)

TRY to progress in harmony; the other kind of progress will then follow in due course. Be a centre of harmony yourself and others will help you in spreading that feeling throughout. (American ed., p. 168)

If you will regard all things and events as being in the Self and It in them, making yourself a part of the whole, you will see there is no real cause for sorrow or fear. TRY to realize this and thus go in confidence and even joy. (p. 140)

TRY as much as you can to spread the true spirit in all directions. (p. 126)

Arouse, arouse in you the meaning of "Thou art That." Thou art the Self. This is the thing to think of in meditation, and if you believe it, then tell others the same. You have read it before, but now TRY to realize it more and more each day and you will have the light you want. (p. 136)

On the doors and walls of the temple the word "TRY" is written. (p. 9)

Wrote H.P.B. in the 1880's, "I trust Judge more than anyone else in the world." Let those of us whose trust in him today is no less TRY to put some of these wise precepts into practice.

MAITRI — FRIENDLINESS

MAITRI, or true friendliness, is the inner attitude of the mind and heart to be spontaneously brotherly with all. Lifelong friendships, with their blessings, only a few can maintain, but friendliness can be shown to all, whoever comes our way, young or old, rich or poor, learned or illiterate.

One time, Lord Buddha was passing from village to village, taking his message to the multitudes, the common folk, and he spoke to them of *maitri*. They did not understand the word, so they questioned, "Master, what does *maitri* mean?" And the Buddha answered, "Friendliness with all; build your civilization in *maitri*." All distinctions give way before friendliness with all. He made it a duty and responsibility for each and all. It begins with one's immediate circle and extends outward, in an ever-widening circle, creating friendliness everywhere. High metaphysics, the absolute and the relative, spirit and matter, involution and evolution, are for the learned; but all others, and these constitute the bulk of humanity, do not need such cosmic ultimates. So the Master asked them simply to cultivate *maitri* — friendliness. Those who live close to nature understand nature's laws without argument; they accept the advice of a great teacher devotedly and are benefited to that extent.

People living in big cities sometimes show the opposite of friendliness in their ways and behaviour. When a catastrophe occurs, like an earthquake, fire or flood, people show sympathy spontaneously and are friendly and eager to help their comrades. But this is not done in day-to-day life, in ordinary circumstances; that is why friendliness does not spread and conflicts and quarrels continue. It is the flow of love, one from another, it is the response of love, one to another, that brings about real friendliness. People usually think of themselves first and of others afterwards, and so the opportunities pass by of extending friendliness. A little disagreement, and a quarrel starts. In smaller groups, however, there are better chances of sharing each other's joys and sorrows and of becoming more loving and friendly.

There should be friendliness between one country and another, one race and another, between families and communities. There is a very good story about the quarrel between the two clans, the Sakyas and the Koliyas, and how promptly and wisely Lord Buddha solved their problem about the use of the river waters. The Rohini stream was the boundary between the fields of the two clans. Lord Buddha asked them, "Whence come its waters?" They answered, "From the snowy range of

the Himalayas.” And after he had heard them, he advised: “Let the Koliyas for this day have freedom of drawing water, and let the Sakyas dig their channels for them. Even so tomorrow let the Sakyas draw water, and the Koliyas dig. There is water for all, and the river will be flowing still.” Thus, the great socialist stopped their quarrels and established peace and friendliness in a simple way. This has a great lesson for all of us.

Sri Krishna addressed his pupil Arjuna as “my devotee and my friend.” So at all levels of life and in all spheres of activity we can build friendship and extend friendliness. It does not cost us anything to smile, because that alone can win new friendships. Even in the so-called unions, whether labour or trade or any other, there is no real friendliness; there are different parties and strifes among them because each is looking to his own gain in money and possessions. There are troubles between capitalists and labourers; in the field of art and literature, in different professions of life, there are always criticisms and opposition which bring about unfriendliness. A real change of inner attitude is the only solution. It alone can stop all divisions which are playing havoc in our world.

How to cultivate the spirit of true friendship? Emerson said that “the only way to have a friend is to be one.” Here is a good starting point. If a student of Theosophy tries to become an impersonal friend he finds excellent opportunities in the Lodge where like-minded aspirants are seeking the same path.

THE ABSOLUTE GOOD is the cause and source of all beauty, just as the sun is the source of all daylight, and it cannot therefore be spoken or written; yet we speak and write of it, in order to start and escort ourselves on the way, and arouse our minds to the vision: like as when one showeth a pilgrim on his way to some shrine that he would visit: for the teaching is only of whither and how to go, the vision itself is the work of him who hath willed to see.

—PLOTINUS

A BEWITCHED LIFE

[This is the second part of a story by H. P. Blavatsky, commenced in our July issue.—EDS.]

II

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR

YEARS PASSED; and as time went by, my ineradicable scepticism grew stronger and waxed fiercer everyday. I have already mentioned an elder and much-beloved sister, my only surviving relative. She had married and had lately gone to live at Nuremberg. I regarded her with feelings more filial than fraternal, and her children were as dear to me as might have been my own. At the time of the great catastrophe that in the course of a few days had made my father lose his large fortune, and my mother break her heart, she it was, that sweet big sister of mine, who had made herself of her own accord the guardian angel of our ruined family. Out of her great love for me, her younger brother, for whom she attempted to replace the professors that could no longer be afforded, she had renounced her own happiness. She sacrificed herself and the man she loved, by indefinitely postponing their marriage, in order to help our father and chiefly myself by her undivided devotion. And, oh, how I loved and revered her, time but strengthening this earliest family affection! They who maintain that no atheist, as such, can be a true friend, an affectionate relative, or a loyal subject, utter — whether consciously or unconsciously — the greatest calumny and lie. To say that a materialist grows hard-hearted as he grows older, that he cannot love as a believer does, is simply the greatest fallacy.

There may be such exceptional cases, it is true, but these are found only occasionally in men who are even more selfish than they are sceptical, or vulgarly worldly. But when a man who is kindly disposed in his nature, for no selfish motives but because of reason and love of truth, becomes what is called atheistical, he is only strengthened in his family affections, and in his sympathies with his fellow men. All his emotions, all the ardent aspirations towards the unseen and unreachable, all the love which he would otherwise have uselessly bestowed on a suppositional heaven and its God, become now centred with tenfold force upon his loved ones and mankind. Indeed, the atheist's heart alone—

... can know,

What secret tides of still enjoyment flow
When brothers love. . . .

It was such holy fraternal love that led me also to sacrifice my comfort and personal welfare to secure her happiness, the felicity of her who had been more than a mother to me. I was a mere youth when I left home for Hamburg. There, working with all the desperate earnestness of a man who has but one noble object in view — to relieve suffering, and help those whom he loves — I very soon secured the confidence of my employers, who raised me in consequence to the high post of trust I always enjoyed. My first real pleasure and reward in life was to see my sister married to the man she had sacrificed for my sake, and to help them in their struggle for existence. So purifying and unselfish was this affection of mine for her that, when it came to be shared among her children, instead of losing in intensity by such division, it seemed only to grow the stronger. Born with the potentiality of the warmest family affection in me, the devotion for my sister was so great, that the thought of burning that sacred fire of love before any idol, save that of herself and family, never entered my head. This was the only church I recognized, the only church wherein I worshipped at the altar of holy family affection. In fact this large family of eleven persons, including her husband, was the only tie that attached me to Europe. Twice, during a period of nine years, had I crossed the ocean with the sole object of seeing and pressing these dear ones to my heart. I had no other business in the West; and having performed this pleasant duty, I returned each time to Japan to work and toil for them. For their sake I remained a bachelor, that the wealth I might acquire should go undivided to them alone.

We had always corresponded as regularly as the long transit of the then very irregular service of the mail-boats would permit. But suddenly there came a break in my letters from home. For nearly a year I received no intelligence; and day by day I became more restless, more apprehensive of some great misfortune. Vainly I looked for a letter, a simple message; and my efforts to account for so unusual a silence were fruitless.

“Friend,” said to me one day Tamoorá Hideyeri, my only confidant, “Friend, consult a holy Yamabooshi and you will feel at rest.”

Of course the offer was rejected with as much moderation as I could command under the provocation. But, as steamer after steamer came in without a word of news, I felt a despair which daily increased in depth and fixity. This finally degenerated into an irrepresible craving, a morbid desire to learn — the worst, as I then thought. I struggled hard with the feeling, but it had the best of me. Only a

few months before a complete master of myself — I now became an abject slave to fear. A fatalist of the school of D'Holbach, I, who had always regarded belief in the system of necessity as being the only promoter of philosophical happiness, and as having the most advantageous influence over human weaknesses, I felt a craving for something akin to fortune-telling! I had gone so far as to forget the first principle of my doctrine — the only one calculated to calm our sorrows, to inspire us with a useful submission, namely, a rational resignation to the decrees of blind destiny, with which foolish sensibility causes us so often to be overwhelmed — the doctrine that *all is necessary*. Yes; forgetting this, I was drawn into a shameful, superstitious longing, a stupid, disgraceful desire to learn — if not futurity, at any rate that which was taking place at the other side of the globe. My conduct seemed utterly modified, my temperament and aspirations wholly changed; and like a weak, nervous girl, I caught myself straining my mind to the very verge of lunacy in an attempt to look — as I had been told one could sometimes do — beyond the oceans, and learn, at last, the real cause of this long, inexplicable silence!

One evening, at sunset, my old friend, the venerable Bonze, Tamoorā, appeared on the verandah of my low wooden house. I had not visited him for many days, and he had come to know how I was. I took the opportunity to once more sneer at one whom, in reality, I regarded with most affectionate respect. With equivocal taste — for which I repented almost before the words had been pronounced — I enquired of him why he had taken the trouble to walk all that distance when he might have learned anything he liked about me by simply interrogating a Yamabooshi? He seemed a little hurt, at first; but after keenly scrutinizing my dejected face, he mildly remarked that he could only insist upon what he had advised before. Only one of that holy order could give me consolation in my present state.

From that instant, an insane desire possessed me to challenge him to prove his assertions. I defied — I said to him — any and every one of his alleged magicians to tell me the name of the person I was thinking of, and what he was doing at that moment. He quietly answered that my desire could be easily satisfied. There was a Yamabooshi two doors from me, visiting a sick Shinto. He would fetch him — if I only said the word.

I said it and *from the moment of its utterance my doom was sealed*. How shall I find words to describe the scene that followed! Twenty

minutes after the desire had been so incautiously expressed, an old Japanese, uncommonly tall and majestic for one of that race, pale, thin and emaciated, was standing before me. There, where I had expected to find servile obsequiousness, I only discerned an air of calm and dignified composure, the attitude of one who knows his moral superiority, and therefore scorns to notice the mistakes of those who fail to recognize it. To the somewhat irreverent and mocking questions, which I put to him one after another, with feverish eagerness, he made no reply; but gazed on me in silence as a physician would look at a delirious patient. From the moment he fixed his eyes on mine, I felt — or shall I say, saw — as though it were a sharp ray of light, a thin silvery thread, shoot out from the intensely black and narrow eyes so deeply sunk in the yellow old face. It seemed to penetrate into my brain and heart like an arrow, and set to work to dig out therefrom every thought and feeling. Yes; I both saw and felt it, and very soon the double sensation became intolerable.

To break the spell I defied him to tell me what he had found in my thoughts. Calmly came the correct answer — Extreme anxiety for a female relative, her husband and children, who were inhabiting a house the correct description of which he gave as though he knew it as well as myself. I turned a suspicious eye upon my friend, the Bonze, to whose indiscretions, I thought, I was indebted for the quick reply. Remembering, however, that Tamoorā could know nothing of the appearance of my sister's house, that the Japanese are proverbially truthful and, as friends, faithful to death — I felt ashamed of my suspicion. To atone for it before my own conscience I asked the hermit whether he could tell me anything of the present state of that beloved sister of mine. The foreigner — was the reply — would never believe in the words, or trust to the knowledge of any person but himself. Were the Yamabooshi to tell him, the impression would wear out hardly a few hours later, and the inquirer find himself as miserable as before. There was but one means; and that was to make the foreigner (myself) see with his own eyes, and thus learn the truth for himself. Was the enquirer ready to be placed by a Yamabooshi, a stranger to him, in the required state?

I had heard in Europe of mesmerized somnambules and pretenders to clairvoyance, and having no faith in them, I had, therefore, nothing against the process itself. Even in the midst of my never-ceasing mental agony, I could not help smiling at the ridiculous nature of the operation I was willingly submitting to. Nevertheless I silently bowed consent.

III

PSYCHIC MAGIC

The old Yamabooshi lost no time. He looked at the setting sun, and finding, probably, the Lord Ten-Dzio-Dai-Dzio (the Spirit who darts his Rays) propitious for the coming ceremony, he speedily drew out a little bundle. It contained a small lacquered box, a piece of vegetable paper, made from the bark of the mulberry tree, and a pen, with which he traced upon the paper a few sentences in the *Naiden* character — a peculiar style of written language used only for religious and mystical purposes. Having finished, he exhibited from under his clothes a small round mirror of steel of extraordinary brilliancy, and placing it before my eyes, asked me to look into it.

I had not only heard before of these mirrors, which are frequently used in the temples, but I had often seen them. It is claimed that under the direction and will of instructed priests, there appear in them the Daij-Dzin, the great spirits who notify the enquiring devotees of their fate. I first imagined that his intention was to evoke such a spirit, who would answer my queries. What happened, however, was something of quite a different character.

No sooner had I, not without a last pang of mental squeamishness, produced by a deep sense of my own absurd position, touched the mirror, than I suddenly felt a strange sensation in the arm of the hand that held it. For a brief moment I forget to “sit in the seat of the scorner” and failed to look at the matter from a ludicrous point of view. Was it fear that suddenly clutched my brain, for an instant paralysing its activity—

... that fear

When the heart longs to know, what it is death to hear?

No; for I still had consciousness enough left to go on persuading myself that nothing would come out of an experiment in the nature of which no sane man could ever believe. What was it then, that crept across my brain like a living thing of ice, producing therein a sensation of horror, and then clutched at my heart as if a deadly serpent had fastened its fangs into it? With a convulsive jerk of the hand I dropped the — I blush to write the adjective — “magic” mirror, and could not force myself to pick it up from the settee on which I was reclining. For one short moment there was a terrible struggle between some undefined, and to me utterly inexplicable, longing to look into the depths of the polished surface of the mirror and my pride, the ferocity of which no-

thing seemed capable of taming. It was finally so tamed, however, its revolt being conquered by its own defiant intensity. There was an opened novel lying on a lacquer table near the settee, and as my eyes happened to fall upon its pages, I read the words, "The veil which covers futurity is woven by the hand of mercy." This was enough. That same pride which had hitherto held me back from what I regarded as a degrading, superstitious experiment, caused me to challenge my fate. I picked up the ominously shining disk and prepared to look into it.

While I was examining the mirror, the Yamabooshi hastily spoke a few words to the Bonze, Tamoorā, at which I threw a furtive and suspicious glance at both. I was wrong once more.

"The holy man desires me to put you a question and give you at the same time a warning," remarked the Bonze. "If you are willing to see for yourself now, you will have — under the penalty of *seeing for ever, in the hereafter, all that is taking place, at whatever distance, and that against your will or inclination* — to submit to a regular course of purification after you have learnt what you want through the mirror."

"What is this course, and what have I to promise?" I asked defiantly.

"It is for your own good. You must promise him to submit to the process, lest, for the rest of his life, he should have to hold himself responsible, before his own conscience, for having made an *irresponsible* seer of you. Will you do so, friend?"

"There will be time enough to think of it, if I see anything" — I sneeringly replied, adding under my breath — "something I doubt a good deal, so far."

"Well you are warned, friend. The consequences will now remain with yourself," was the solemn answer.

I glanced at the clock, and made a gesture of impatience, which was remarked and understood by the Yamabooshi. It was just *seven minutes after five*.

"Define well in your mind *what* you would see and learn," said the "conjurer," placing the mirror and paper in my hands, and instructing me how to use them.

His instructions were received by me with more impatience than gratitude; and for one short instant, I hesitated again. Nevertheless, I replied, while fixing the mirror:

"*I desire but one thing — to learn the reason or reasons why my sister has so suddenly ceased writing to me.*"

Had I pronounced these words in reality, and in the hearing of the two witnesses, or had I only thought them? To this day I cannot decide the point. I now remember but one thing distinctly: while I sat gazing in the mirror, the Yamabooshi kept gazing at me. But whether this process lasted half a second or three hours, I have never since been able to settle in my mind with any degree of satisfaction. I can recall every detail of the scene up to that moment when I took up the mirror with the left hand, holding the paper inscribed with the mystic characters between the thumb and finger of the right, when all of a sudden I seemed to quite lose consciousness of the surrounding objects. The passage from the active waking state to one that I could compare with nothing I had ever experienced before, was so rapid, that while my eyes had ceased to perceive external objects and had completely lost sight of the Bonze, the Yamabooshi, and even of my room, I could nevertheless distinctly see the whole of my head and my back, as I sat leaning forward with the mirror in my hand. Then came a strong sensation of an involuntary rush forward, of *snapping* off, so to say, from my place — I had almost said from my body. And then, while every one of my other senses had become totally paralysed, my eyes, as I thought, unexpectedly caught a clearer and far more vivid glimpse than they had ever had in reality, of my sister's new house at Nuremberg, which I had never visited and knew only from a sketch, and other scenery with which I had never been very familiar. Together with this, and while feeling in my brain what seemed like flashes of a departing consciousness — dying persons must feel so, no doubt — the very last, vague thought, so weak as to have been hardly perceptible, was that I must look very, *very* ridiculous. This *feeling* — for such it was rather than a thought — was interrupted, suddenly extinguished, so to say, by a clear *mental vision* (I cannot characterize it otherwise) of myself, of that which I regarded as, and knew to be my body, lying with ashy cheeks on the settee, dead to all intents and purposes, but still staring with the cold and glassy eyes of a corpse into the mirror. Bending over it, with his two emaciated hands cutting the air in every direction over *its* white face, stood the tall figure of the Yamabooshi, for whom I felt at that instant an inextinguishable, murderous hatred. As I was going, in thought, to pounce upon the vile charlatan, my corpse, the two old men, the room itself, and every object in it, trembled and danced in a reddish glowing light, and seemed to float rapidly away from “me.” A few more grotesque, distorted shadows before “my” sight; and, with a last feeling of terror

and a supreme effort to realize *who then was I now, since I was not that corpse* — a great veil of darkness fell over me, like a funeral pall, and every thought in me was dead.

IV

A VISION OF HORROR

How strange! Where was I now? It was evident to me that I had once more returned to my senses. For there I was, vividly realizing that I was rapidly moving forward, while experiencing a queer, strange sensation as though I were swimming, without impulse or effort on my part, and in total darkness. The idea that first presented itself to me was that of a long subterranean passage of water, of earth, and stifling air, though bodily I had no perception, no sensation, of the presence or contact of any of these. I tried to utter a few words, to repeat my last sentence, "I desire but one thing: to learn the reason or reasons why my sister has so suddenly ceased writing to me" — but the only words I heard out of the twenty-one, were the two, "*to learn,*" and these, instead of their coming out of my own larynx, came back to me in my own voice, but entirely outside myself, near, but not in me. In short, they were pronounced by my voice, not by my lips.

One more rapid, involuntary motion, one more plunge into the Cymmerian darkness of a (to me) unknown element, and I saw myself standing — actually standing — underground, as it seemed. I was compactly and thickly surrounded on all sides, above and below, right and left, with earth, and *in* the mould, and yet it weighed not, and seemed quite immaterial and transparent *to my senses*. I did not realize for one second the utter absurdity, nay, impossibility of that *seeming* fact! One second more, one short instant, and I perceived — oh, inexpressible horror, when I think of it now; for then, although I perceived, realized, and recorded facts and events far more clearly than ever I had done before, I did not seem to be touched in any other way by what I saw. Yes — I perceived a coffin at my feet. It was a plain, unpretentious shell, made of deal, the last couch of the pauper, in which, notwithstanding its closed lid, I plainly saw a hideous, grinning skull, a man's skeleton, mutilated and broken in many of its parts, as though it had been taken out of some hidden chamber of the defunct Inquisition, where it had been subjected to torture. "Who can it be?" — I thought.

At this moment I heard again proceeding from afar the same voice —

my voice: "...*the reason or reasons why*..." it said; as though these words were the unbroken continuation of the same sentence of which it had just repeated the two words "to learn." It sounded near, and yet as from some incalculable distance; giving me then the idea that the long subterranean journey, the subsequent mental reflexions and discoveries, had occupied no time; had been performed during the short, almost instantaneous, interval between the first and the middle words of the sentence, begun, at any rate, if not actually pronounced by myself in my room at Kioto, and which it was now finishing, in interrupted, broken phrases, like a faithful echo of my own words and voice.

Forthwith, the hideous, mangled remains began assuming a form, and, to me, but too familiar appearance. The broken parts joined together one to the other, the bones became covered once more with flesh, and I recognized in these disfigured remains — with some surprise, but not a trace of feeling at the sight — my sister's dead husband, my own brother-in-law, whom I had for her sake loved so truly. "How was it, and how did he come to die such a terrible death?" — I asked myself. To put oneself a query seemed, in the state in which I was, to instantly solve it. Hardly had I asked myself the question, when, as if in a panorama, I saw the retrospective picture of poor Karl's death, in all its horrid vividness, and with every thrilling detail, every one of which, however, left me then entirely and brutally indifferent. Here he is, the dear old fellow, full of life and joy at the prospect of more lucrative employment from his principal, examining and trying in a wood-sawing factory a monster steam engine just arrived from America. He bends over, to examine more closely an inner arrangement, to tighten a screw. His clothes are caught by the teeth of the revolving wheel in full motion, and suddenly he is dragged down, doubled up, and his limbs half severed, torn off, before the workmen, unacquainted with the mechanism, can stop it. He is taken out, or what remains of him, dead, mangled, a thing of horror, an unrecognizable mass of palpitating flesh and blood! I follow the remains, wheeled as an unrecognizable heap to the hospital, hear the brutally given order that the messengers of death should stop on their way at the house of the widow and orphans. I follow them, and find the unconscious family quietly assembled together. I see my sister, the dear and beloved, and remain indifferent at the sight, only feeling highly interested in the coming scene. My heart, my feelings, even my personality, seem to have disappeared, to have been left behind, to belong to somebody else.

There "I" stand, and witness her unprepared reception of the ghastly news. I realize clearly, without one moment's hesitation or mistake, the effect of the shock upon her. I perceive clearly, following and recording, to the minutest detail, her sensations and the inner process that takes place in her. I watch and remember, missing not one single point.

As the corpse is brought into the house for identification I hear the long, agonizing cry, my own name pronounced, and the dull thud of the living body falling upon the remains of the dead one. I follow with curiosity the sudden thrill and the instantaneous perturbation in her brain that follow it, and watch with attention the worm-like, precipitate, and immensely intensified motion of the tubular fibres, the instantaneous change of colour in the cephalic extremity of the nervous system, the fibrous nervous matter passing from white to bright red and then to a dark red, bluish hue. I notice the sudden flash of a phosphorus-like, brilliant Radiance, its tremor and its sudden extinction followed by darkness — complete darkness in the region of memory — as the Radiance, comparable in its form only to a human shape, oozes out suddenly from the top of the head, expands, loses its form and scatters. And I say to myself: "This is insanity; life-long, incurable insanity, for the principle of intelligence is not paralysed or extinguished temporarily, but has just deserted the tabernacle for ever, ejected from it by the terrible force of the sudden blow. The link between the animal and the divine essence is broken." And as the unfamiliar term "divine" is mentally uttered my "THOUGHT" — laughs.

Suddenly I hear again my far-off yet near voice pronouncing emphatically and close by me the words "...*why my sister has so suddenly ceased writing...*" And before the two final words "*to me*" have completed the sentence, I see a long series of sad events, immediately following the catastrophe.

I behold the mother, now a helpless, grovelling idiot, in the lunatic asylum attached to the city hospital, the seven younger children admitted into a refuge for paupers. Finally I see the two elder, a boy of fifteen, and a girl a year younger, my favourites, both taken by strangers into their service. A captain of a sailing vessel carries away my nephew; an old Jewess adopts the tender girl. I see the events with all their horrors and thrilling details, and record each, to the smallest detail, with the utmost coolness.

For, mark well: when I use such expressions as "horrors," etc., they are to be understood as an after-thought. During the whole time of the

events described I experienced no sensation of either pain or pity. My feelings seemed to be paralysed as well as my external senses; it was only after "coming back" that I realized my irretrievable losses to their full extent.

Much of that which I had so vehemently denied in those days, owing to sad personal experience I have to admit now. Had I been told by anyone at that time, that man could act and think and feel, irrespective of his brain and senses; nay, that by some mysterious, and to this day, for me, incomprehensible power, *he* could be transported *mentally*, thousands of miles away from his body, there to witness not only present but also past events, and remember these by storing them in his memory—I would have proclaimed that man a madman. Alas, I can do so no longer, for I have become myself that "madman." Ten, twenty, forty, a hundred times during the course of this wretched life of mine, have I experienced and lived over such moments of existence, *outside of my body*. Accursed be that hour when this terrible power was first awakened in me! I have not even the consolation left of attributing such glimpses of events at a distance to insanity. Madmen rave and see that which exists not in the realm they belong to. My visions have proved *invariably correct*. But to my narrative of woe.

I had hardly had time to see my unfortunate young niece in her new Israelitish home, when I felt a shock of the same nature as the one that had sent me "swimming" through the bowels of the earth, as I had thought. I opened my eyes in my own room, and the first thing I fixed upon, by accident, was the clock. The hands of the dial showed seven minutes and a half past five! I had thus passed through these most terrible experiences, which it takes me hours to narrate, *in precisely half a minute of time!*

But this, too, was an after-thought. For one brief instant I recollected nothing of what I had seen. The interval between the time I had glanced at the clock when taking the mirror from the Yamabooshi's hand and this second glance, seemed to me merged in one. I was just opening my lips to hurry on the Yamabooshi with his experiment, when the full remembrance of what I had just seen flashed lightning-like into my brain. Uttering a cry of horror and despair, I felt as though the whole creation were crushing me under its weight. For one moment I remained speechless, the picture of human ruin amid a world of death and desolation. My heart sank down in anguish: my doom was closed; and a hopeless gloom seemed to settle over the rest of my life for ever!

V

RETURN OF DOUBTS

Then came a reaction as sudden as my grief itself. A doubt arose in my mind, which forthwith grew into a fierce desire of denying the truth of what I had seen. A stubborn resolution of treating the whole thing as an empty, meaningless dream, the effect of my overstrained mind, took possession of me. Yes; it was but a lying vision, an idiotic cheating of my own senses, suggesting pictures of death and misery which had been evoked by weeks of incertitude and mental depression.

“How could I see all that I have seen in less than half a minute?” — I exclaimed. “The theory of dreams, the rapidity with which the material changes on which our ideas in vision depend, are excited in the hemispherical ganglia, is sufficient to account for the long series of events I have seemed to experience. In dream alone can the relations of space and time be so completely annihilated. The Yamabooshi is for nothing in this disagreeable nightmare. He is only reaping that which has been sown by myself, and, by using some infernal drug, of which his tribe have the secret, he has contrived to make me lose consciousness for a few seconds and see that vision — as lying as it is horrid. Avaunt all such thoughts, I believe them not. In a few days there will be a steamer sailing for Europe. I shall leave tomorrow!”

This disjointed monologue was pronounced by me aloud, regardless of the presence of my respected friend the Bonze, Tamoorā, and the Yamabooshi. The latter was standing before me in the same position as when he placed the mirror in my hands, and kept looking at me calmly, I should perhaps say looking *through* me, and in dignified silence. The Bonze, whose kind countenance was beaming with sympathy, approached me as he would a sick child, and gently laying his hand on mine, and with tears in his eyes, said: “Friend, you must not leave this city before you have been completely purified of your contact with the lower Daij-Dzins (spirits), who had to be used to guide your inexperienced soul to the places it craved to see. The entrance to your Inner Self must be closed against their dangerous intrusion. Lose no time, therefore, my son, and allow the holy Master, yonder, to purify you at once.”

But nothing can be more deaf than anger once aroused. “The sap of reason” could no longer “quench the fire of passion,” and at that moment I was not fit to listen to his friendly voice. His is a face I can

never recall to my memory without genuine feeling; his, a name I will ever pronounce with a sigh of emotion; but at that ever memorable hour when my passions were inflamed to white heat, I felt almost a hatred for the kind, good old man; I could not forgive him his interference in the present event. Hence, for all answer, therefore, he received from me a stern rebuke, a violent protest on my part against the idea that I could ever regard the vision I had had, in any other light save that of an empty dream, and his Yamabooshi as anything better than an impostor. "I will leave tomorrow, had I to forfeit my whole fortune as a penalty" — I exclaimed, pale with rage and despair.

"You will repent it the whole of your life, if you do so before the holy man has shut every entrance in you against intruders ever on the watch and ready to enter the open door," was the answer. "The Daij-Dzins will have the best of you."

I interrupted him with a brutal laugh, and a still more brutally phrased enquiry about the *fees* I was expected to give the Yamabooshi, for his experiment with me.

"He needs no reward," was the reply. "The order he belongs to is the richest in the world, since its adherents need nothing, for they are above all terrestrial and venal desires. Insult him not, the good man who came to help you out of pure sympathy for your suffering, and to relieve you of mental agony."

But I would listen to no words of reason and wisdom. The spirit of rebellion and pride had taken possession of me, and made me disregard every feeling of personal friendship, or even of simple propriety. Luckily for me, on turning round to order the mendicant monk out of my presence, I found he had gone.

I had not seen him move, and attributed his stealthy departure to fear at having been detected and understood.

Fool! blind, conceited idiot that I was! Why did I fail to recognize the Yamabooshi's power, and that the peace of my whole life was departing with him, from that moment for ever? But I did so fail. Even the fell demon of my long fears — uncertainty — was now entirely overpowered by that fiend scepticism — the silliest of all. A dull, morbid unbelief, a stubborn denial of the evidence of my own senses, and a determined will to regard the whole vision as a fancy of my overwrought mind, had taken firm hold of me.

"My mind," I argued, "what is it? Shall I believe with the super-

stitious and the weak that this production of phosphorus and grey matter is indeed the superior part of me; that it can act and see independently of my physical senses? Never! As well believe in the planetary 'intelligences' of the astrologer, as in the 'Daij-Dzins' of my credulous though well-meaning friend, the priest. As well confess one's belief in Jupiter and Sol, Saturn and Mercury, and that these worthies guide their spheres and concern themselves with mortals, as to give one serious thought to the airy nonentities supposed to have guided my 'soul' in its unpleasant dream! I loathe and laugh at the absurd idea. I regard it as a personal insult to the intellect and rational reasoning powers of a man, to speak of invisible creatures, '*subjective intelligences*,' and all that kind of insane superstition." In short, I begged my friend the Bonze to spare me his protests, and thus the unpleasantness of breaking with him for ever.

Thus I raved and argued before the venerable Japanese gentleman, doing all in my power to leave on his mind the indelible conviction of my having gone suddenly mad. But his admirable forbearance proved more than equal to my idiotic passion; and he implored me once more, for the sake of my whole future, to submit to certain "necessary purificatory rites."

"Never! Far rather dwell in air, rarefied to nothing by the air-pump of wholesome unbelief, than in the dim fog of silly superstition," I argued, paraphrasing Richter's remark. "I will not believe," I repeated; "but as I can no longer bear such uncertainty about my sister and her family, I will return by the first steamer to Europe."

This final determination upset my old acquaintance altogether. His earnest prayer not to depart before I had seen the Yamabooshi once more, received no attention from me.

"Friend of a foreign land!" — he cried, "I pray that you may not repent of your unbelief and rashness. May the 'Holy One' [Kwan-On, the Goddess of Mercy] protect you from the Dzins! For, since you refuse to submit to the process of purification at the hands of the holy Yamabooshi, he is powerless to defend you from the evil influences evoked by your unbelief and defiance of truth. But let me, at this parting hour, I beseech you, let me, an older man who wishes you well, warn you once more and persuade you of things you are still ignorant of. May I speak?"

"Go on and have your say," was the ungracious assent. "But let me warn you, in my turn, that nothing you can say can make of me a be-

liever in your disgraceful superstitions." This was added with a cruel feeling of pleasure in bestowing one more needless insult.

But the excellent man disregarded this new sneer as he had all others. Never shall I forget the solemn earnestness of his parting words, the pitying, remorseful look on his face when he found that it was, indeed, all to no purpose, that by his kindly meant interference he had only led me to my destruction.

"Lend me your ear, good sir, for the last time," he began. "Learn that unless the holy and venerable man, who, to relieve your distress, opened your 'soul vision,' is permitted to complete his work, your future life will, indeed, be little worth living. He has to safeguard you against involuntary repetitions of visions of the same character. Unless you consent to it of your own free will, however, you will have to be left in the power of *Forces* which will harass and persecute you to the verge of insanity. Know that the development of 'Long Vision' [clairvoyance] — which is accomplished *at will* only by those for whom the Mother of Mercy, the great Kwan-On, has no secrets — must, in the case of the beginner, be pursued with the help of the air Dzins (elemental spirits) whose nature is soulless, and hence wicked. Know also that, while the Arihat 'the destroyer of the enemy,' who has subjected and made of these creatures his servants, has nothing to fear, he who has no power over them becomes their slave. Nay laugh not in your great pride and ignorance, but listen further. During the time of the vision and while the inner perceptions are directed toward the events they seek, the Daij-Dzin has the seer — when, like yourself, he is an inexperienced tyro — entirely in its power; and for the time being *that seer is no longer himself*. He partakes of the nature of his 'guide.' The Daij-Dzin, which directs his inner sight, keeps his soul in durance vile, making of him, while the state lasts, a creature like itself. Bereft of his divine light, man is but a soulless being; hence during the time of such connection, he will feel no human emotions, neither pity nor fear, love nor mercy."

"Hold!" I involuntarily exclaimed, as the words vividly brought back to my recollections the indifference with which I had witnessed my sister's despair and sudden loss of reason in my "hallucination." "Hold! But no; it is still worse madness in me to heed or find any sense in your ridiculous tale! But if you knew it to be so dangerous why have you advised the experiment at all?" — I added mockingly.

"It had to last but a few seconds, and no evil could have resulted from it, had you kept your promise to submit to purification," was the

sad and humble reply. "I wished you well, my friend, and my heart was nigh breaking to see you suffering day by day. The experiment is harmless enough when directed by *one who knows*, and becomes dangerous only when the final precaution is neglected. It is the 'Master of Visions,' he who has opened an entrance into your soul, who has to close it by using the Seal of Purification against any further and deliberate ingress of..."

"The 'Master of Visions' forsooth!" I cried, brutally interrupting him, "say rather the Master of Imposture!"

The look of sorrow on his kind old face was so intense and painful to behold that I perceived I had gone too far; but it was too late.

"Farewell, then!" said the old Bonze, rising; and after performing the usual ceremonials of politeness, Tamoorā left the house in dignified silence.

(*To be continued*)

FELLOWSHIP with saints is the root of the tree of joy and fortune; perfection is its fruit and all the means thereto its flowers.

The heart is like the sea; genius like an oyster-shell and Saraswati, the rain that falls under Swati-nakshatra into the shell, causing the birth of a pearl. If a goodly shower of inspiration falls, each verse (of a poet) becomes a lovely pearl.

Faith is the provision for life's journey.

Evil association makes smoke into soot, but the same may be made into fine ink and used for writing a Purana; and the same smoke, when combined with water and fire and air, becomes a world-reviving cloud.

Wicked men are like hailstones. They can sacrifice their own lives like the hailstones that melt when they have destroyed a crop.

There are many in the world like ponds or rivers which overflow in time of rain, but very few are those good men who resemble the ocean that swells when it sees the full moon.

—TULSIDAS

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The revolution in astronomy, which began half a century ago, has in the past decade taken on explosive proportions. New information now pouring forth in ceaseless torrents is shattering the ideas about the universe hitherto held. Astronomy is today said to be in a golden age. For students of Theosophy, especially, it is significant to note how much of the *Secret Doctrine* teaching in this and many other fields is being vindicated by current research. One is left wondering if all this is a portent of more momentous breakthroughs to come.

A glimpse into our "incredible universe" can be had from Kenneth F. Weaver's article in the May *National Geographic*, a few extracts from which follow:

Far from the land of everyday, out in the distant curves of the universe, lie strange and fantastic realms, unlike anything in our wildest dreams. Hidden by the barriers of time and space, they have lived forever beyond the reach of man, unknown and unexplored.

But now, just now, the cosmic barriers have begun to lift a little. Man has had his first glimpse of these once-secret domains, and their bizarre ways have left him stunned. They challenge his very notions of matter and energy....

In those far reaches of the universe, in those bewildering worlds, are places...

Where a teaspoon of matter weighs as much as 200 million elephants...

Where a tiny whirling star winks on and off thirty times a second...

Where a small mysterious object shines with the brilliance of ten trillion suns...

Where matter and light are continually sucked up by devouring black holes, never to be seen again.

Small wonder that the late British scientist J. B. S. Haldane could say, "...the universe is not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we *can* suppose."...

Today we know that galaxies are as common as blades of grass in a meadow. They number perhaps a hundred billion. The huge 200-inch Hale reflector on Palomar Mountain — the world's largest optical telescope — can see as many as a million galaxies inside the bowl of the Big Dipper alone.

How does one comprehend the incredible size of this galaxy-filled universe? For such awesome distances astronomers think in terms of time, and use the telescope as a time machine. They measure space by a unit called the light-year, the distance light travels in one year at the rate of 186,282 miles a second — about six trillion miles.

But even then comprehension is difficult; how can the human mind deal with the knowledge that the farthest object we can see in the universe is perhaps ten billion light-years away? Imagine that the thickness of this page represents the distance from earth to sun (93,000,000 miles, or about eight light-minutes). Then the distance to the nearest star ($4\frac{1}{3}$ light-years) is a 71-foot-high sheaf of paper. And the diameter of our own galaxy (100,000 light-years) is a 310-mile stack, while the edge of the known universe is not reached until the pile of paper is 31 million miles high — a third of the way to the sun!

Not only did Hubble vastly extend the measure of the universe, but he also ended the notion that the heavens are constant and unchanging. In 1929 he proved that the universe is steadily expanding, like a balloon. He showed that the galaxies are all in motion, flying apart from each other at speeds proportional to their distance. . . .

A new window has opened on the universe. Now scientists can analyse two kinds of energy beaming from stars and galaxies — light and radio — and each has its own amazing stories to tell. The vibrations of radio, captured by metal dishes sometimes hundreds of feet in diameter, revealed a different kind of universe than we had ever seen, one in which the most frightfully violent events were taking place. These explosions and collapses released amounts of energy that make our sun look like a candle.

Still later another window was opened to the universe. It was discovered that a tiny crystal of germanium, cooled almost to absolute zero by liquid helium and sent to high altitudes by plane or rocket, could detect the whole range of infrared, or heat, emissions. So the message of the stars now came in three forms, all vibrations in the electromagnetic spectrum, which ranges all the way from radio to gamma rays. . . .

Using improvements like these, astronomers probe farther and farther into space to learn how fast the universe is expanding and whether that expansion is slowing down. With such knowledge they hope to solve riddles of the universe that man has pondered since the time of the Babylonians. . . .

Quasars [quasi-stellar radio sources] have doubled the horizons of the observable universe in just a decade. As Professor John Wheeler, the distinguished theoretical physicist at Princeton, puts it, "Quasars are the beacons that light up the far away and long ago." Inevitably this new class of heavenly bodies has aroused vigorous controversy as well as intriguing mystery . . . the quasars are remarkably small, celestially speaking. But if they are so small, and yet we can see them at such prodigious distances, they must be emitting energy at an unheard-of rate. In fact, some quasars produce more energy than a hundred large galaxies, totaling as many as ten thousand billion stars. In one second a typical quasar throws out enough energy to supply all earth's electrical needs for billions of years. . . .

While quasars pour out their unprecedented energies at cosmological distances, startling and more readily observable events are taking place much nearer home. They involve the violent collapse of stars within our own galaxy. . . . Their deaths are of special interest to astrophysicists, for stellar corpses become some of the strangest objects in the universe, and the explosions during stellar death throes fill space with stardust from which new stars and planets are born.

It may come as a shock to learn that nearly all the atoms in your body and in the earth were once part of a star that exploded and disintegrated. And probably those same atoms were once the debris of still an earlier star.

With our rapidly growing understanding of the universe has dawned the profound belief that we are not alone. . . . Intelligent life elsewhere does not have to be like human beings. Scientists say, in fact, that it certainly will not have developed in forms just like us. . . . Since other galaxies are believed to have, on the average, as many stars (and therefore planets) as the Milky Way, and since there are an estimated hundred billion galaxies, the number of extraterrestrial civilizations could be truly astronomical! . . .

How it all began and how it will all end — those are the cosmological questions that stir men's minds most deeply. Only a few years ago the astronomical world was vigorously engaged in debate on origins. One school said the universe began in a single titanic explosion, the "big bang," and has been expanding ever since. The other said yes, there is expansion, but there was no big bang. New matter is constantly being created to replace that lost by expansion, so everything is in a steady state. Today most astronomers regard the steady-state theory as dead. . . .

And how will it all end? Allan Sandage believes that the universe might collapse in on itself eventually. . . . By one set of his calculations the expansion could go on for nearly 30 billion more years, and then the contraction would take another 40 billion.

We have an indication here of some of the lines of the evolution of ideas in astronomy, and an understanding of these is useful to us. If our hope is to widen the field of scientific and philosophical observation, as H.P.B. asks us to do, then we need not only a sound working knowledge of the Philosophy, but also some understanding of how, when and in what form it can supply the needs of the time.

It would therefore be wrong to dismiss the discoveries of Western astronomy as technical advances irrelevant to true philosophy. They have produced a profound transformation in physical perspective which must pervade subtly the mental outlook of our times. Anyone who troubles to contemplate the vastness of the universe must either make the effort to harmonize human values with cosmic magnitudes or find himself oppressed with a sense of the insignificance and futility of human life.

Scientists all over the world are now documenting ways in which temperature, atmospheric electricity, storms, winds and the cycles of the moon influence our minds, behaviour and health. This new speciality is known as meteor-psychiatry. The researchers have discovered, for instance, that car accidents increased considerably when the barometric pressure was falling; that conceptions were most numerous on days when there was an above-average number of sunny hours; that high peaks in the homicide rate coincided with phases of the full and new moon; and that a connection between the moon and lunacy actually does exist. While a full moon will not provoke the average, reasonably well-balanced person to violence, it can induce restlessness, nervousness, turmoil and unaccustomed feelings of strangeness.

What causes this? In an article, "Yes, Blame It on the Weather" (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., June 1974), Sidney Katz explains:

The moon exerts a powerful gravitational influence on the tides. Therefore it's unlikely that *we* escape the gravitational effect of the moon. After all, every human body is, to a remarkable degree, a miniature replica of the surface of the earth, composed of the same elements and in the same proportion: 80 per cent

liquids, 20 per cent organic and inorganic minerals. So it's reasonable to suggest that the flow of fluids in every cell can also be altered by the changes in the moon.

These "biological tides," say the researchers, might affect our mood, energy, tolerance and judgement. In the emotionally disturbed or very delicately balanced, they can trigger irrational or even violent behaviour. Not only is there a relation between the phases of the moon and lunacy, but it has also been found that there are more suicides on the day before the moon is closest to the earth. Investigators are now studying the influence of the moon on the timing of the menstrual cycle.

Meteor-psychiatrists also describe how we are affected by falling barometric pressure before a storm. In one study, arthritic patients were found to experience a severe worsening of their aches and pains during the first few hours of impending-storm conditions. Another study shows that when pressure is falling motorists are more likely to be uncomfortable, listless and distracted; hence the higher number of serious car accidents. The article explains:

What happens is that falling barometric pressure causes swollen tissues, a diminished flow of blood and increased pressure within the brain. Normally healthy people experience headaches, exhaustion, apathy and irritability. Extreme sufferers are unable to think rationally or exercise their normal inhibitions over their behaviour. . . .

One of the most intriguing meteorological variables to come under scrutiny is "atmospheric electricity." Invisible in the air about us are millions and millions of electrically charged atoms (ions). Some have a negative charge, others positive. The negative ions make you feel cheerful and fit; positive ions sap your strength and morale.

Usually, the negative and positive ions balance each other out. But at times — when a certain wind is blowing or a storm is approaching — the air is filled with a surplus of millions of positively charged atoms, and the people in the area, it is claimed, become depressed, listless and apathetic.

Some hospitals have installed electronic devices in the rooms of surgical cases to hasten their healing by filling the air with negative ions. However, considerably more research is needed to draw firm conclusions about the effects of atmospheric electricity on human welfare.

Since human beings are highly complex, delicately balanced

organisms, it's reasonable to conclude that changes in the environment *do* modify the ways we feel and think. More precise knowledge of the phenomenon could yield rich rewards. In the future it could be used to combat physical and mental illness, reduce traffic and industrial accidents — and to improve our dispositions.

In Hamburg, surgeons are so convinced that there is a link-up between the results of operations and the weather prevailing at the time, that a daily bulletin is now issued by the Hamburg Central Bureau of Meteorology, advising the best time for operations.

Even the World Health Organization is devoting time and money to a study of the relationship between man and the weather. One view is that changes in hormones and their activity can be at the root of our changed behaviour.

“Life is Electricity,” said H.P.B., and since vital electricity is a living power, the connection between disease, bodily electricity, and thought will and feeling is clear enough. Students of Theosophy will recall H.P.B.’s article, “The Last Song of the Swan” (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, January 1941) in which she wrote:

It is not asserted for the first time now that all such mysterious epidemics as the present influenza are due to an abnormal exuberance of ozone in the air. . . . Oxygen becomes ozone. . . . What says Science with respect to ozone: “It is the exuberance of the latter under the powerful stimulus of electricity in the air, that produces in nervous people that uncomfortable feeling of fear and depression which they so often experience before a storm.” Again: “The quantity of ozone in the atmosphere varies with the meteorological condition *under laws so far unknown to science.*”

Science in the latter part of the last century and science today can be seen to dovetail in the above passages. It is worth noting also that the scientific statements quoted by H.P.B. are those which, she says, show investigators “proceeding on rather occult lines.”

An article by Barry Kramer in *Today's Health*, February 1974, describes a “mysterious illness” that assumes epidemic forms and that investigators ascribe to “mass hysteria.”

Last year, at an elementary school in Berry, Alabama, U.S.A., a third of the 400 children, and even some teachers, went into a frenzy of scratching, fainting, vomiting, numbness, crying and screaming, forc-

ing the closure of the school. One significant fact noted was that only those pupils got sick who actually saw someone else with the symptoms. The worrisome incident attracted many health investigators who made an exhaustive study of what had affected the schoolchildren and came to the conclusion that the epidemic was "no more than a classic case of mass hysteria." According to a psychological study made by a University of Alabama team, the children who suffered the symptoms tended to be more sensitive, to break down more under stress, to be attention seekers and more demanding. Also, typical of most such outbreaks, girls were considerably more prone to the illness than boys.

Similar incidents have happened elsewhere, in all ages. As the article in *Today's Health* states:

What happened at Berry is, in fact, an age-old human affliction that has popped up in various forms over the centuries. Its manifestations include the dancing manias of the Middle Ages, biting and mewing nuns in 15th-century European convents, and something known as the "phantom anesthetist" of Mattoon, Ill. In all cases, groups of people suffer bizarre symptoms of mental or bodily illness, for which there is no physical cause — only excess fear of some imagined danger.

Other epidemics of behavioural disorders include laughing manias, jumping and running manias, epilepsy-like attacks, tarantism, etc. There are even epidemics of crime, epidemics of mental and moral diseases. Investigators have time and again been baffled by these strange happenings. Says H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled*:

If we press these gentlemen for an explanation, which as pretended philosophers they are bound to give us, we are answered that it is a great deal more *scientific* to assign for such epidemics "agitation of the mind," "... a time of political excitement (1830)," "... imitation and impulse," "... excitable and idle boys," and "*hysterical* girls," than to be absurdly seeking for the verification of superstitious traditions in a hypothetical astral light. It seems to us that if, by some providential fatality, *hysteria* were to disappear entirely from the human system, the medical fraternity would be entirely at a loss for explanations of a large class of phenomena now conveniently classified under the head of "normal symptoms of certain pathological conditions of the nervous centres." Hysteria has been hitherto the sheet-anchor of skeptical pathologists. . . .

How often have powerful clairvoyants and adepts in mesmer-

ism described the epidemic and *physical* (though to others invisible) manifestations which science attributes to epilepsy, haemato-nervous disorders, and what not, of *somatic origin*, as their lucid vision saw them in the astral light. They affirm that the "electric waves" were in violent perturbation, and that they discerned a direct relation between this ethereal disturbance and the mental or physical epidemic then raging. But science has heeded them not, but gone on with her encyclopaedic labour of devising new names for old things. (I. 278-79)

Robert Crosbie, too, has something relevant to say:

Theosophy shows that there is a state of subtle substance that surrounds our earth, as it does every other, an envelope as it were, which is the receiver and container of the moral and physical emanations of the earth and its inhabitants; these are all converted into their subtlest essence, and radiated back intensified, thus becoming *epidemics* — moral, psychic and physical. Persons subject to epidemics, or any disease, are the very people who had a hand in producing them, either in this or a previous life.

Is capital punishment on the way out? On the contrary. A U.N. survey of 133 countries indicates that it may be becoming more prevalent worldwide (*Scientific American*, July 1973). Only nine countries included in the survey have no death penalty. Another 16 have abolished it for all but extraordinary crimes, such as treason or assassination of the head of state. Others, however, have recently extended the death penalty to "new" kinds of crime, such as trafficking in drugs and airline hijacking. The report says that capital punishment

is regarded by a considerable number of governments as an efficient or at least an acceptable way of getting rid of certain types of problems — whatever the experts may have to say about the lack of deterrent effect of this penalty. Moreover, it seems clear that in most cases governments satisfy public opinion by using this sentence.

The U.N. position, like that of Theosophy, is that capital punishment should be abolished.
