

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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THE GREAT WORK

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—Eds.]

THE BODY through which the Messenger of the trans-Himalayan Adepts for the 19th-20th century laboured for humanity was born at midnight hour on the 11th of August, 1831. That body has been known to the world under the name of H. P. Blavatsky. The embodied one was known among her followers as “H.P.B.”; “but otherwise to us,” wrote the Mahatma K.H. This accredited Agent of the Great Lodge has been insulted, derided and rejected by men and women of our cycle, but as the same Mahatma wrote: “There is no likelihood of our finding a better one for years to come.”

Humbly and reverently the Theosophical student should reflect upon some pertinent sayings of the Great Masters, and how H.P.B. exemplified them in herself, in her words and in her works.

“I am but a slave of my Masters,” wrote the Mahatma K.H. How truly and thoroughly this peculiar, or shall we say, “unique,” slavery was the guiding force of the entire life-activity of H.P.B.!

Again, the same Master said: “It is men, not ceremony-masters, we seek; devotion, not mere observances.” H.P.B.’s devotion was unconventional in two directions: she was not a social ceremonialist and she broke many a meaningless taboo; but in breaking conventions she showed invariably the real spiritual or esoteric basis of action. Just as in her stories, collected under the caption *Nightmare Tales*, profound hints and information regarding the laws of Occult Science are given, so also in acting unconventionally she conveyed instruction, indirectly when not directly. Her deeds were never formal observances; they were ever acts of wisdom, of charity, or of sacrifice.

In another place the Mahatma asks and answers: "Whom can Masters trust under *all* circumstances? One whose faithful service is pledged to us, come well, come ill." This mark of the true Chela H.P.B. evinced every year, every week, every hour of her incarnation. Her profound devotion never wavered; she had no thought, no feeling, no energy, for anything outside the Lines of her Mission, laid down for her by the Great Lodge. Like the Masters, she, too, "never whined over the inevitable but tried to make the best of the worst."

Neither a demagogue nor an exploiter, H.P.B. in her profound writings followed faithfully the pattern of the Great Instructors: "Provoke men to correct thinking and a correct life." By precept and by example she conveyed mighty, majestic and deathless truths to humanity at large. Working with the mind of the race as she found it, she was provocative; she awakened the minds of thousands, and did succeed in changing the race-mind. She had wisdom, and so she was humble. The important aspect of that wisdom referred to in *The Voice of the Silence* is enshrined in the aphorism "Thus have I heard." The Mahatma once wrote:

Abstract enquiries into the most puzzling problems did not arise in the brain of Archimedes as a spontaneous and hitherto untouched subject, but rather as a reflection of prior enquiries in the same direction and by men separated from his days by as long a period — and far longer — than the one which separates you from the great Syracusan.

In her article, "Occult or Exact Science?" (reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XII, February-June 1942),¹ she reiterated this teaching and explained:

This brings us back to an old axiom of esoteric philosophy: "*nothing of that which does not exist somewhere, whether in the visible or invisible kosmos, can be reproduced artificially, or even in human thought.*"

"What nonsense is this?" exclaimed a combative Theosophist upon hearing it uttered. "Suppose I think of an animated tower, with rooms in it and a human head, approaching and talking with me — can there be such a thing in the universe?"

"Or parrots hatching out of almond shells?" said another sceptic. Why not? — was the answer — not on this earth, of course. But how do we know that there may not be such beings as you

¹ Reprinted also in Vol. xxxiv, July-September 1964.—Eds.

describe — tower-like bodies and human heads — on some other planet? Imagination is nothing but the memory of preceding births — Pythagoras tells us. You may yourself have been such a “tower man” for all you know, with rooms in you in which your family found shelter like the little ones of the kangaroo. As for parrots hatching out of almond shells — no one could swear that there was no such thing in nature, in days of old, when evolution gave birth to far more curious monsters. A bird hatching out of the fruit of a tree is perhaps one of those countless words dropped by evolution so many ages ago, that the last whisper of its echo was lost in the Diluvian roar.

In this era when “originality” is so much prized and honoured, the duty of the Theosophical propagandist is not to overlook this vital idea. It contains a great truth and is capable of leading a sincere and earnest mind to a new line of research. The Astral Light, divine and devilish, is the library of true records of Immortal Ideas as of passing fancies. The phenomena of remembrance, recollection, reminiscence, of receiving “bolts from the blue” or being struck, as by lightning, by a flash of intuition, are all related to the world of Prototypes, of Archetypes, etc.

H.P.B. was trained not only to read the cipher language of symbols recorded in the architecture and literature of the physical plane, but also to decipher the images in the Astral Light and the Formless Forms of the Divine Astral or *Akasa*. Let us be as careful, patient, cautious and painstaking in studying what she has recorded for us in her living books and articles, as she was in preparing them for our benefit. We must labour on, remembering the words of H.P.B.:

The Occultist waits and bides his time.

I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water is thirsty.

You do not see that the Real is your home, and you wander from forest to forest listlessly!

Here is the truth! Go where you will, to Benares or to Mathura; if you do not find your soul, the world is unreal to you.

—KABIR

“ISIS UNVEILED” IN SEARCH OF THE TRUE

The pupil must regain *the child-state he has lost* ere the first sound can fall upon his ear.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

IN the *Gospel according to St. John*, Pilate is made to ask Jesus: “Art thou a king then?” The answer of Jesus (the inner God of each one) is significant for all time: “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” Then follow words that each aspirant should take to heart. Said the Christ: “Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” (xviii. 37-38)

And Pilate asked: “What is truth?” — and not waiting for a reply, he delivered Jesus to the *hoi polloi* and the brooders of evil to pass judgment. In each man’s life, there comes a time when he faces the Christos within himself, and unless he has reached a certain stage of development he will fail to see its glory, and so failing, will question its credentials and try to judge them by that part of himself which can neither know nor recognize the truth. He will then fail to pay his homage to the inner voice which is the voice of his Master and his King.

Towards the close of the first volume of *Isis Unveiled*, H.P.B. asks the reader to take note of the fact that fanaticism has the inevitable effect of blinding the senses. She therefore warns the student and he of the missionary zeal, that it would ever be a useless exercise to argue with a fanatic. The inquirer of the occult, who has so far persisted in his reading, will, if he is sincere, pause and ask himself whether in his own make-up there do exist the germs of fanaticism. For, if they do, then is he prone to refuse acceptance of that truth which goes against his rigid and crystallized beliefs. Like Pilate, he will ask, What is truth? — and if the truth offends his fanatic moorings, he will turn his back on his Lord and King. For the edification of those who glibly call themselves ardent searchers of the true, H.P.B. quotes from an address delivered by Sergeant Cox, who says:

There is no more fatal fallacy than that the truth will prevail by its own force, that it has only to be seen to be embraced. In fact the desire for the actual truth exists in very few minds, and the capacity to discern it in fewer still. When men say that they are seeking the truth, they mean that they are looking for evi-

dence to support some prejudice or prepossessions. Their beliefs are moulded to their wishes. They see all, and more than all, that seems to tell for that which they desire; they are blind as bats to whatever tells against them. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 615)

A mind that has hardened under the influence of creeds and rituals is apt to make devils of angels and spurn the truth and call it a lie. Against disbelief no truth nor charity nor argument can suffice. The doors by which truth can enter are shuttered and barred. Therefore it is that when the earnest inquirer desires to go deeper into the realms of the occult he is expected to pause and take stock of those qualities in him which may shut him off from any appreciable progress. There are and have been at all times students who are sincere in their desire to plunge into the higher life, but who find that even after years of effort they have not gone beyond the exercise of marking time. This state should indicate to the aspirant that some hindrance lurks deep within. Mostly, this condition supervenes because, on some vital theorem of life, the student has remained wedded to his past beliefs in regard to the origins of man, of religion, or of life's mission. Adjustments of thought are then called for and must be made. It is of the essence that the mind has to be made plastic to the Soul's potency. The clay has to be made ready to be moulded and shaped for the Master's plans. The promise contained in the statement, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," has no relevance for a Pilate, a Judas or a Caiaphas.

The greatest obstacle to impartial thought is the deep-rooted prejudice that modern religious fanaticism generates. "We are God's chosen few," exclaims the bigot, and starts acting in accordance with his belief. Those of other faiths he considers as inferiors — heathens who are enemies of God and aliens upon his earth. Even if such an one embraces Theosophy, he cannot expect any great progress unless he purges from himself the lie and lust of self. Though he may speak glibly of Masters and Karma and the Higher Self, there may still remain a dark corner of his mind where he hides his icons and idols, and at the first anguish he may rush to them for propitiation and favours.

Isis Unveiled is replete with comparisons between the numerous faiths that dominated men at one time or another. But H.P.B. does not content herself with showing the identity of their philosophical origins. She takes up art and architecture, astronomy and physics, alchemy and magic, and demonstrates that all these prevailed in ancient times and in some respects were so far advanced as to outstrip our modern learn-

ing. The Indian and Egyptian civilizations were of sufficient antiquity for H.P.B. to quote their achievements to prove that the ancients were far advanced in all branches of knowledge than what either science or established religion was prepared to concede. But there were other civilizations equally advanced. About these, she says:

Besides others whose history is at present shut in behind the mists of antiquity — such as the prehistoric races of the two Americas, of Crete, of the Troäd, of the Lacustrians, of the submerged continent of the fabled Atlantis, now classed with myths — the deeds of the Phoenicians stamp them with almost the character of demi-gods. (I. 545)

Out of the innumerable instances cited by H.P.B. to restore in our minds the glories and grandeurs of ancient civilizations, the following are culled by way of example.

I. As far back as we can glance into history, to the reign of Menes, the most ancient of the kings that we know anything about, we find proofs that the Egyptians were far better acquainted with hydrostatics and hydraulic engineering than ourselves. The giant work of turning the course of the Nile and bringing it to Memphis was accomplished during the reign of that monarch. (I. 516)

II. If we consult Chinese records, we find Artesian wells to have been in common usage before the Christian era. (I. 517)

III. Of Karnak, the sole representative of the glory of Thebes, Champollion says: "One is astounded and *overcome by the grandeur* of the sublime remnants, the prodigality and magnificence of workmanship to be seen everywhere. . . . In one of its halls, the Cathedral of Notre Dame might stand and not touch the ceiling, but be considered a small ornament in the centre of the hall." (I. 523)

IV. Tracing back the knowledge of thunder and lightning possessed by the Etruscan priests, we find that Tarchon, the founder of the theurgism of the former, desiring to preserve his house from lightning, surrounded it by a hedge of the white bryony, a climbing plant which has the property of averting thunderbolts. (I. 527)

V. The Egyptians made paper so excellent in quality as to be time-proof. The papyrus found in the tomb of the queen's mummy, and another found in the sarcophagus of the "Chambre de la Reine," at Ghizeh, present the appearance of the finest glossy white muslin, while possessing the durability of the best calf-parchment. (I. 529)

VI. The secret of the malleable glass, which, if supported by one end by its own weight, in twenty hours dwindles down to a fine line that you can curve around your wrist, has yet to be rediscovered. (I. 50)

VII. Sound has an attractive property; it draws out disease, which streams out to encounter the musical wave, and the two, blending together, disappear in space. Asclepiades employed music for the same purpose, some twenty centuries ago. (I. 215)

VIII. The Romans preserved lights in their sepulchres for countless years by the oiliness of gold. One of such ever-burning lamps was found brightly burning in the tomb of Tullia, the daughter of Cicero, notwithstanding that the tomb had been shut up fifteen hundred and fifty years (I. 224)

IX. The astronomical observations of the Chaldeans extended back to within a hundred years of the flood; and Bunsen fixes the flood at no less than 10,000 years before our era. (I. 241)

Having pointed to the achievements in arts, sciences and philosophy of the ancient Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Greeks and others, H.P.B. turns to India to show that "modern science has little or no reason to boast of originality." She tabulates the achievements of the ancient Indians in philosophy, astronomical science, mathematics, physics, chemistry, medicine, pharmacology, surgery, grammar, poetry, music, architecture, and concludes by saying:

Such were the results attained by this ancient and imposing Brahmanical civilization. What have we to offer for comparison? Besides such majestic achievements of the past, what can we place that will seem so grandiose and sublime as to warrant our boast of superiority over an ignorant ancestry? Besides the discoverers of geometry and algebra, the constructors of human speech, the parents of philosophy, the primal expounders of religion, the adepts in psychological and physical science, how even the greatest of our biologists and theologians seem dwarfed! Name to us any modern discovery, and we venture to say, that Indian history need not long be searched before the prototype will be found of record. (I. 620)

Yielding to the Ancients their rightful place in the scheme of things, H.P.B. goes on to say:

If modern masters are so much in advance of the old ones, why do they not restore to us the lost arts of our postdiluvian forefathers? Why do they not give us the unfading colours of

Luxor — the Tyrian purple; the bright vermilion and the dazzling blue which decorate the walls of this place, and are as bright as on the first day of their application? The indestructible cement of the pyramids and of ancient aqueducts; the Damascus blade, which can be turned like a corkscrew in its scabbard without breaking. . . ?

Why should we forget that, ages before the prow of the adventurous Genoese clove the Western waters, the Phoenician vessels had circumnavigated the globe, and spread civilization in regions now silent and deserted? . . . Do not the relics we treasure in our museums — last mementos of the long “lost arts” — speak loudly in favour of ancient civilization? And do they not prove, over and over again, that nations and continents that have passed away have buried along with them arts and sciences, which neither the first crucible ever heated in a mediaeval cloister, nor the last cracked by a modern chemist have revived. . . ? (I. 239-40)

Such a look-back into the past gives to the moderns their much-needed humility. The first volume of *Isis Unveiled* ends with the words attributed to the ancient Hindu sage Narada:

“Never utter these words: ‘I do not know this — therefore it is false.’”

“One must study to know, know to understand, understand to judge.”

THE PRESENT is the Child of the Past; the Future, the begotten of the Present. And yet, O present moment! knowest thou not that thou hast no parent, nor canst thou have a child; that thou art ever begetting but thyself? Before thou hast even begun to say “I am the progeny of the departed moment, the child of the past,” thou hast become that past itself. Before thou utterest the last syllable, behold! Thou art no more the Present but verily that Future. Thus, are the Past, the Present, and the Future, the ever-living trinity in one — the Mahamaya of the Absolute is.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

RANDOM NOTES FROM "THE THEOSOPHIST"

CHRISTIANITY AND THEOSOPHY

[In a communication on "The Status of Jesus," a correspondent wrote: "The long procession of martyrs, who we may say died for the love of Jesus, is, so far as I know, unknown in the history of Buddhism"; and asked: "What is the exact position given to Jesus by the Mahatmas, in the sacred order of adepts departed from the earth?... Would Jesus now be termed... a Dhyan Chohan, a Buddha, or a Planetary Spirit? And is he now... interested or concerned at all with the progress of humanity on the earth?" H.P.B. replied:]

"THERE IS often greater martyrdom *to live* for the love of, whether man or an ideal, than *to die* for it" is a motto of the Mahatmas.

The position THEY give to Jesus, *as far* as we know, is that of a great and pure man, a reformer who would fain have lived but who had to die for that which he regarded as the greatest birthright of man — *absolute* Liberty of conscience; of an adept who preached a universal Religion knowing of, and having no other "temple of God" but man himself; that of a noble Teacher of esoteric truths which he had no time given to him to explain; that of an initiate who recognized no difference — save the moral one — between men; who rejected caste, and despised wealth; and who preferred death rather than to reveal the secrets of initiation. And who, finally, lived over a century before the year of our vulgar, so-called, Christian era.

We do not know which of the Buddhas our correspondent is thinking of, for there were many "Buddhas." They recognize in him one of the "Enlightened," hence in this sense a *Buddha*; but they do not recognize Jesus at all in the Christ of the Gospels. Such questions, however, can hardly be answered in a public journal. Our correspondent seems to be ignorant of the fact, that though we live in India, surrounded by 250 millions of human beings, whose devotion and reverence to their respective avatars and gods is not less intense or sincere than that of the handful of Christians who grace this country to their Saviour, yet while it is deemed respectable and lawful to laugh at and abuse by word, and insult in print every one of the gods of our *heathen* Brothers, that journal which would presume to deny the Godship of Jesus and speak of him as he would of Buddha or Krishna, would immediately lose caste and have a hue and cry raised against it by its Christian sub-

scribers. Such are Christian ideas of justice and Brotherhood.

(July 1883)

[The following note was appended to a letter by "E.C." on "Theosophy and Christianity."]

We have nothing of importance to object to the above letter. If all "Christians" would define the term "Christianity" in the same manner as E.C., in that case the "Christians," instead of opposing the "Theosophists," would unite and co-operate with them, because a true and enlightened Christian, or a true and enlightened Brahmin, or Jew, or Parsee, or member of any other church, if he seeks for the truth, unhampered by superstition and fear, necessarily becomes a Theosophist; because there can be only *one* truth; and whether that *one* truth or light is tinted by the colour of the ray of light coming from Buddha or Christ, or Confucius or Sankaracharya, makes no essential difference. But unfortunately the majority of "Christians" have an entirely different conception of the term "Christianity." They believe Christianity to mean a certain set of church-dogmas and ceremonies, at the head of which stands a personal saviour, who saves them by vicarious atonement, if they will accept a certain proposed "plan of salvation." Those Christians refuse to look behind the absurdities of their own myths and allegories, and prefer to take them in their literal sense. It is those "Christians" that belittle and calumniate other religious systems, and desire to "convert" better and more enlightened men and women to their narrow creeds. It is only the superstitions and the bigotry of nominal Christians, that we contend against; but pure Christianity, enlightened by wisdom, is nothing else but Theosophy.

(June 1884)

[In a letter to the Editor of *The Theosophist*, the writers of *The Perfect Way*, Dr. Anna B. Kingsford and Edward Maitland, stated: "We are profoundly convinced that the Theosophical Society . . . would exhibit both wisdom and learning by accepting the symbology of the West as it does that of the East. . . . We invite . . . the Theosophical Society to recognize the equal claim of the Catholic Church with the Buddhist, Brahman and other Eastern churches to the possession of mystical truth and knowledge." H.P.B. appended the following note.]

It is most agreeable to us to see our Reviewer of *The Perfect Way* and the writers of that remarkable work thus clasping hands and waving

palms of peace over each other's heads. The friendly discussion of the metaphysics of the book in question has elicited, as all such debates must, the fact that deep thinkers upon the nature of absolute truth scarcely differ, save as to externals. As was remarked in *Isis Unveiled* [II. 639], the religions of men are but prismatic rays of the one only Truth. If our good friends, the Perfect Wayfarers, would but read the second volume of our work, they would find that we have all along been of precisely their own opinion that there is a "mystical truth and knowledge *deeply* underlying" Roman Catholicism, which is identical with Asiatic esotericism; and that its symbology marks the same ideas, often under duplicate figures. We even went so far as to illustrate with woodcuts the unmistakable derivation of the Hebrew Kabala from the Chaldean — the archaic parent of all later symbology — and the Kabalistic nature of nearly all the dogmas of the R.C. Church. It goes without saying that we, in common with all Asiatic Theosophists, cordially reciprocate the amicable feelings of the writers of *The Perfect Way* for the Theosophical Society. In this moment of supreme effort to refresh the moral nature and satisfy the spiritual yearnings of mankind, all workers, in whatsoever corner of the field, ought to be knit together in friendship and fraternity of feeling. It would be indeed strange if any misunderstanding could arise of so grave a nature as to alienate from us the sympathies of that highly advanced school of modern English thought of which our esteemed correspondents are such intellectual and fitting representatives.

(January 1883)

[In an article entitled "Indra," the writer having described the attributes of this Hindu deity and some of the deeds ascribed to him by his worshippers, H.P.B. remarked:]

The attentive reader of the Christian Bible is constantly impressed with its strong resemblance to the Aryan sacred writings, and since the Hebrews are a far younger nation than the Aryas, it is a fair inference that if their literature was not copied from, it was at least inspired by, the primitive sublime model. Compare the Vedic conception of Indra, for instance, as alike the protector of his worshippers and the destroyer of cities, with these passages from the *Psalms* of David.

[H.P.B. then quotes from *Psalms* xxxviii, xvii, xxix, xviii, lxxviii, lxxxix, xevi, and cxxxv, and closes by saying:]

Scores of similar passages might be quoted to show that the thunder-

hurling, martial tutelary deity of the Hebrews, JAH or JAHVE, who was adopted by the Christians as the chief personage of their Trinity and made the putative father of their second personage, Jesus, was almost if not quite a reminiscence of the Aryan Indra.

(February 1880)

[In a letter to the Editor of *The Theosophist*, published under the title "Self-Contradictions of the Bible," Lakshman Singh said among other things: "The Rev. Missionary accuses me in his letter that I had always been buying anti-Christian works from a scholarship which I was getting from the school." This refers to troubles in connection with the Rawalpindi Mission School authorities. H.P.B. remarked:]

And where's the offence even were the charge true? If, as every Missionary, the Rev. Mr. Newton had an eye to converting his *heathen* pupils to Christianity, he was himself, in honour bound, to furnish Lakshman Singh with means of ascertaining the real superiority and worth of the religion offered him as a substitute for that of his ancestors. How can a thing be proved good, unless both its outward and inward value are found out? Truth need fear no light. If Christianity be true, it ought to welcome the strictest and closest of investigations. Otherwise "conversion" becomes very much like selling damaged goods — in some dark back-room of a shop.

(February 1883)

[The following was published as an untitled note.]

Most opportunely there comes a communication upon the missionary question, which will be found elsewhere. . . . A false delicacy has hitherto prevented this matter from being gone into as its importance deserves. It is a pity to see so many sacrifices made by good people in the West merely to support a party of inefficients in the profitless because hopeless occupation of trying to persuade the people of India and other Asiatic countries to relinquish their ancestral faith for one which the missionaries are utterly unable to defend when questioned by even tolerably educated "heathen." The money is sorely needed at home to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and rescue the vicious from their state of lawlessness and degradation. It does no good here — except to the missionary.

(January 1880)

[Munshi Samarthadan, having given an authentic report of a debate which took place at Ajmere, on November 28, 1878, between Pandit Dayananda Saraswati and the Rev. Dr. Gray, H.P.B. commented upon it as follows.]

The above affords a fair example of Missionary tactics in India. Open debate with learned natives before audiences is avoided whenever practicable, and their work, as a rule, confined to the lowest and most ignorant castes. Teachers in mission schools and sectarian colleges even avoid discussing theological questions put by bright native youths, before the classes, bidding them come to them privately and have their interrogatories answered. The fact forces itself upon the attention of every unprejudiced visitor to India that the Oriental missionary scheme is a wretched failure, and the millions contributed to it by the benevolent are virtually wasted. This appears to be the opinion of most old Anglo-Indians of all ranks. It is intended to publish testimony upon this very important subject in these pages and communications are invited.

(January 1880)

[Commenting on attorney M. E. Billing's publication, "The Crimes of Preachers in the United States," H.P.B. says in a footnote:]

We have been repeatedly and unjustly accused of bearing ill-will to the Western Clergy, and while copying all the evil reports about them we can find, not to have taken notice of the good they do. We can copy but what we find in the news and — no more. We bear no ill-will to any creed especially, and are ready to publish reports of the *remarkable* doings of *any* class of men whatever. Hence, we do not see why we should be more particularly careful not to hurt the feelings of the class of men under notice, than those of any other class of men. The subject has a distinct bearing upon the cause we advocate and represent, and it is our special object to find out which of the four great world-religions is the more likely to promote morality among men.

(December 1881)

[In the course of a discussion between the Editor of *The Epiphany* and H. C. Niblett, President, Prayag Psychic Theosophical Society, the following passage occurs in the comments of the Editor: "May we ask you whether 'we *must* remain apart in our views,' is a principle of Theosophy? You regard Christianity as an antiquated and superstitious creed, and we regard the practical

side of Theosophy, the side apart from what the term obviously presents, as pernicious. If Theosophists say that this gap must remain as wide as ever, they point to a most woeful state of affairs. Surely they do not aim at that complete 'equality, fraternity and liberty' which is aimed at by Christianity." This drew from H.P.B. the following remark.]

Most assuredly we do, and much more effectively than "Christianity," since with us the last word, "liberty," means what it conveys, *i.e.*, a full and unconditional liberty of conscience in all matters of faith, while in Christianity on the other hand, it becomes a paradox. No one *outside* of the pale of the Christian church — or even a Christian of a rival denomination, for the matter of that, will ever be regarded as a "Brother" by another orthodox Christian. Setting the laity aside, when we shall be shown the Roman Catholic clergy *fraternizing* and on perfectly equal terms with the Protestants, then will there be time for us to confess — "Verily — see, how these Christians love each other!" Until then, the less said of "equality, fraternity and liberty" in Christianity — the better.

(*Journal of the Theosophical Society*, February 1884)

[Under the title "On 'Theosophism' in India," H.P.B. commented on various slanderous remarks by a missionary organ with regard to India and the alleged mischief caused by "Theosophism." The writer had said that "there is *straitness in Christian morality*; there is little scope for audacious speculation in a system whose prime requisite is that the recipient should become as a little child . . ." To this H.P.B. remarked:]

A very little one we should say; one not old enough to question the moral regenerating influences of opium-eating and toddy-drinking, and all that follows suit hand in hand with civilization.

[Her closing Editorial Note is as follows:]

That will suffice for one pious and charitable article, the merely slanderous portions of which we have omitted, and some of whose sentences we have italicized. Let us hope that the "conceited," "learnedly ignorant," marvel-swallowing Hindus may now see, if they never did before, with what benevolent respect they are regarded in England by the Church Missionary Society. How could their "sceptical and unregenerate minds," "demoralized by the secular training of Indian universities," do otherwise than turn from the proffered blessings of a religion which has sent to India such a host of exemplars of the "straitness in

Christian morality"? Even the "charlatancy" of "Theosophism" is better than that; for the Theosophists neither drink, nor smoke opium, nor insult their feelings, nor make money out of them, nor baptize the starving babies of dead or dying parents and call them fancy names, such as "brands plucked from the burning," etc. If the London *Padris* want to stop India from turning Theosophist they must adopt fairer measures than abuse and slander.

(January 1882)

[While on a visit to Ceylon, Col. Oleott visited Colombo. He wrote in part: "I lectured at the College last evening to an audience of about five hundred. . . . I had in my hand a paper on which the High Priest, the Rev. Sumangala, had entered all the lies about the Theosophical Society I was to refute. . . . I defied everybody, Christian or otherwise, that had anything to say either about the Theosophical Society or ourselves, to come on the platform like men and say it to my face. . . . But . . . *not a soul dared open his mouth.*" H.P.B. remarked:]

And the Missionary organs, like the *Lucknow Witness* and others, denounce us yet for our lack of sympathy for the *padris* and Christian converts! For six years we have to fight step by step, falsehoods, slanders and vilification invented with the sole object of making the public lose every confidence in the Theosophical Society. And all that in the name of the *Bible*, which commands — "Thou shalt not bear false witness," and in that of Christ, of Him who, represented as the meekest and the most forgiving of all men, is said to have died for humanity to save the world from sin! Verily more crimes are perpetrated, and *false* evidence daily given in the name of the "meek Nazarene" by His followers, than there ever was among those Jews and heathens He called — a "generation of vipers"! Can TRUTH ever need *such* weapons?

(*Supplement*, July 1881)

[Printing the text of an appeal for the redemption of the Pariahs, issued from Bangalore and signed by several prominent individuals, H.P.B. made the following remarks in an introductory note.]

A noble movement, one of a most redeeming and high character, is set on foot by several native gentlemen of Southern India, namely, a Society for the Regeneration of the Pariah classes. Hitherto, these hapless outcastes, or rather, creatures of no-caste, rejected by all their fellow-

men, thought that their only way to social and political rather than religious salvation, was by lending a willing ear to the liberal promises made to them by the Missionaries; and thus — they fell an easy prey to these universal waylayers. Had the Padris while baptizing (which does not always mean converting) them, done anything in the way of moral regeneration for this unfortunate class, we would be the first to applaud their efforts. As it is, every European having the misfortune to deal with native converts (of any caste, not only the Pariahs) whether as servants or anything else, will bear out our testimony when saying that Missionary proselytism has done a thousand times more harm to those natives who have succumbed to it than any kind of idolatry or fetishism. Useless to go over a too well beaten ground and repeat that which has been said and better said even by a few honest Christian missionaries themselves. Therefore we applaud most sincerely to the noble undertaking. Once that the Pariahs, among whom there are as many intelligent young men as among any other class, are made to enjoy the benefits of an education that will enable them to think for themselves, the abuses of proselytism must cease. . . .

(October 1883)

[In *A Personal Statement of Religious Belief*, a pamphlet published in Bombay, the author, Mr. G. C. Whitworth, wrote that he had “come to the conclusion that it is better that every man’s opinions, whether right or wrong, should be known”; and feeling that he would “never reach that state of straightforwardness and simplicity of conversation and conduct” after which he was striving, and since he did not wish to remain any longer “in a false position,” he was renouncing Christianity publicly and in print. H.P.B. commented:]

All honour to the man who is brave and honest in this century of sham beliefs and shameful hypocrisy, who, regardless of all dangers — and such an act entails more than one — throws off the mask of false pretence that stifles him, with the sole motive of doing what he deems his duty to himself and those who know him. . . .

We verily believe that, though Mr. Whitworth gives no name to his deity, and simplifies his religion, so as to make it appear to be hardly a religion at all, yet he is a truer religionist than any church-going dogmatist. His religion recognizes and worships but the latent divinity indwelling in himself. Like Elijah, he sought for the Lord in the strong wind — but *the Lord was not in the wind*; nor was he in the *earthquake*,

nor yet in the *fire*. But he found Him in the "still small voice" — the voice of his own CONSCIENCE, the true tabernacle of man. The author without belonging to our Society is yet a true-born Theosophist — a God-seeker.

(April 1880)

[A correspondent's statement that "the Theosophists put down Roman Catholicism in their monthly journal" drew the following remark.]

We do no such thing. We do not try to put *down* Catholicism, but to raise it up and purify it. We want to make the Catholic Church still more Catholic; instead of wishing her to remain only *Roman* Catholic, we want her to become *universal* Catholic; but to become such she must have priests instead of bigots, knowledge instead of relics, love instead of hate, freedom instead of tyranny, truth instead of superstition, and a pope who is endowed with supreme wisdom. If she arrives at that point, we will join her in her efforts to extend her dominion all over the earth.

If we attempt to cleanse a noble statue from filth, do we destroy the statue, or destroy the filth? If we try to remove superstition and ignorance, which hide the truth, do we try to put down the truth? Forms change, principles are lasting. He who adores a form is an idolater; he who admires the principle is the true worshipper. The Roman Catholic Church is getting old; the principle has left, the form remains. The priests have lost the key to their sanctuary; they cannot explain their own mysteries and do not want them explained. They worship forms, out of which the spirit has fled, and unless they awake from their slumber, a new and universal religion will arise and conquer the world, while the mummified body of the Roman Catholic Church will be laid away in its tomb and forgotten, like the dried up old body of St. Francis Xavier in its shrine at Goa.

(June 1884)

I found Him very easily among the pots and pans.

—ST. THERESA

IDENTITY

That which first appeared
Was not yet form
But, formless, was the progenitor
Of that which was to come.

As the shadow precedes
That which is not shadow,
So the perception of form
Is contained in the perceiver.

I am the pious beginner,
The principle of form,
The shadow within the form
And the form of that shadow.

The original design,
Substance in form,
The essence of identity,
Supports me.

A sheath,

It covers me.

Without it I would be as wind,
The face of what is yet to come.

This trophy of myself
Travels with me
Where I go
And rejects me not
But bears the imprint of myself,
Leaving illusion behind,
Worlds that are not my own
But that will come to me.

By the emotions,

I react.

This is my function.

Desire is my motive

And will is my master.

Your feelings are

My actions.

I am to you as bone

Is to flesh,

As skin is to the body.

I cannot act without you
And you cannot be without me.
I am that which you are
And that which you will become.
Moulded by will and force,
That which is aerial
Can develop substance.
I am of the earth, earthy,
And of the spirit, divine.
That which is earthy
Responds to pain and pleasure.
That which is divine
Is of itself apart.

Everything reveals itself.
This is the motion
Of identity.

It is in the recognition
Of the revelation
That mankind
Can exceed itself.

As the seed reveals
The lotus,
As the egg reveals
The swan.

Identity is the recognition
Of the formless
Within the form.

The man who recognizes
His own thoughts
Can recognize me.

An architect needs the builder.
From the dialogue between the two
Comes the mystery of form,
Energy that vitalizes.

Body within body,
Form without form,
Knowing beyond knowledge,
The idea precedes the design.

The moon is my heritage,
 That shadow of another shadow,
 Breath that was bestowed
 And essence transferred.

There is a bridge,
 Easy to cross over
 But hard to find.
 This is the knowing.

Indiscriminate of that which is evil
 Or of that which is good,
 I respond to choice
 But do not, myself, choose.

Those who know me least,
 Blame me.

Those who know me best,
 Use me.

With the one I am passive
 And with the other I am active.

The closer you approach me
 The stronger I become.

I am sensitive
 To that which is high
 As I am sensitive
 To that which is low.
 Seek that which is higher,
 Or that which is lower
 Will claim me as its own.
 The closer I become
 To that which I truly am,
 The less dangerous is
 My path in life.

Those who reach me
 Through the spirit
 Attain to the good.

Those who reach me
 By my weakness
 Attain to that level.

There is within me that

Which cannot be touched
And there is within me that
Which can be touched,
The one unchangeable
And the other changeable.
That which cannot be changed
Is approached through that
Which can be changed.

Do not be entranced
By that which pleases or
By that which does not please.
Let all things be equal,
But know that which is advancement
And that which cannot advance
That mankind may profit.

Seek to know,
For learning is memory
And time diminishes.
Let time become timeless.
Fear not the unknown
And do not be chained
By the known.

My spirit is one,
My aspects several,
The visible being aerial
And the invisible ethereal.
True fulfilment
Comes from proper use
Of that which I am.
Subjugating matter,
It is the power to visualize.

There is no thing that
Can be imagined
Which does not have existence,
And there is no expression of myself
Beyond that of imagination.
It permits sight to be seen
And the word to be heard.

Without it,
 What I hear
 I cannot know
 And what I see
 I cannot feel.

It is the action
 Of the cell and the
 Cell within the cell,
 Mind expressing itself
 Through matter
 Which has been formed
 Out of my needs.

The force within
 And the force without,
 Focused, produce the picture
 Of that which is life.
 The picture, once formed,
 Can be altered by
 The engraving tool
 Of the imagination.

Right imagination
 Perfects.
 Incorrect imagination
 Destroys.

This expression of myself
 Is not further from me than
 Breath in the body.

As fluid as ether,
 As reversible as wind,
 It is attached to me
 As I am to it,
 No less itself
 Than I am,
 More of me in it
 Than it is in me.

It can escape me
 And I cannot escape it.
 It can express
 That which is beyond

All knowing,
For it is mind
Beyond mind.

Expressed by the shape of desire,
It is composed of things beyond
All proper description.
It is the image you make of it
And the image I bring to it.

I can be lifted beyond
All estimate of myself,
Purposely put forward
As desire is
Put forward,
Gone far from
Where I am.

The original intent,
Released by the power
Of imagination
Becomes itself
And no other.

Having reproduced its likeness,
I become that likeness,
Changing outwardly,
While remaining the same
Inwardly, my status
Depending upon the eye of
The beholder.

Beware of false images,
The doctrine of illusion.
Truth breeds truth,
The doctrine of disillusion.
He who sees not,
Knows not.

I am what I am
But what I am
Is beyond me,
Sufficient unto itself.

The eye that perceives

Is not my eye
 But uses my eye
 For its perception.

I cannot see that
 Which is not to be seen,
 But by imagination
 May be deceived.

Many there are
 That imagine.

Only a few
 Produce imagination.

That which is imagined
 Is not always imagination
 But is its counterpart,
 Fantasy.

When the bell tolls,
 It is not I
 Who set the sound
 In motion
 But that other whose instrument
 I am.

As the ray reflects,
 So am I that
 Reflection,
 And will perform for another
 That which is performed for me.

I have but one destiny.
 I can reach it
 As a martyr or a brute;
 I can elevate
 Or I can destroy;
 The destiny remains the same.

Choice dictates the path
 I will follow.

The force of will decides
 The quality of that path.

One path will lead to the right
 And one will lead to the left,

Different paths

To the same end.

One path is hard,

The results infinite.

The other path is easy,

The results evident.

The past directs the present

And the future responds to both.

I am the connecting point

For the motive

And the means

That dictate the future.

Destiny performed

Is better than

Destiny not performed.

Even loss has merit.

Inaction is without

Either gain or merit.

My needs form my destiny,

They are my destiny.

The offering is the need,

The interpretation is the answer.

The need does not change;

Only the answer can change.

I am limited

And yet without limit.

As the artist is trapped

By his talent,

The talent itself

Is without limit.

As the circle diminishes

A substance is formed,

A substance to be used,

The shape of identity.

The object sees the eye

And the object is not changed.

There is within me

That which will call me again.

What I have learned
 Will serve as a balance
 For that which
 I am yet to learn.
 Of the elements,
 To the elements
 I will go
 Except that within me
 Which has neither beginning
 Nor ending.

Whatever is of the lower element,
 Adheres to that element.
 Whatever is of the spirit,
 Adheres to the divine.

*Are you not then a god?
 Do you not see as a god?
 Do you not speak as a god?
 If godhead is within you,
 Why, then, do you hesitate?*

*Search for that which
 Does not search.*

ESTEEM those to be eminently your friends, who assist your soul rather than your body.

Consider both the praise and reproach of every foolish person as ridiculous, and the whole life of an ignorant man as a disgrace.

Understand that no dissimulation can be long concealed.

The unjust man suffers greater evil while his soul is tormented with a consciousness of guilt, than when his body is scourged with whips.

He who is depraved does not listen to the divine law; and on this account lives without law.

A just man, who is a stranger, is not only superior to a citizen, but is even more excellent than a relation.

No one is free who has not obtained the empire of himself.

Make trial of a man rather from his deeds than his discourses; for many live badly and speak well.

FORDING THE RAPIDS

THE SUN rose crimson and gold, heralding the dawn as it had done in *Kalpas* without number. The pilgrim walked among men, watching them crawl like insects upon Life's moving wheels, blind to the light, and deaf to the music, of the wakening skies. He saw them water the foliage, neglecting its roots in decay and death. He saw them reject the concealed grain and feed upon the chaff with relish. In the mighty sweep of Time, they died every hour, like drooping lilies in the summer heat.

He wandered among them as one Awake, in the land of the Sleeping, seeking a path that would lead him towards Those whose ever vigilant eyes watched over all the pilgrims who stumbled, yet dared darkness and peril in order to reach Them. As he left the land and walked on, the track became unfamiliar and unknown terrors closed in upon him. Chased by voices and visages, terrifying in their distraction, he ran ahead with close-shut eyes till he reached the edge of a wood. Here he stopped, tired and exhausted, and resting under a tree, looked back and remembered how the wild mirages of an unknown desert had beckoned him; how the storms, thunders and moaning winds followed him on his track; how Despair marked him out for its prey; how under its influence he had put on the garb of an animal and turned ferocious; how he had swooned time and again, lost in his bearings. But there was always a strange Light that twinkled on the path, showing him the way.

Now as he sat down for rest, he saw the swirling rapids before him, the fording of which would take him to the other shore, to his destination. Weariness came over him and tears trickled down his cheeks and fell on the earth at his feet. Other footprints were there, of those who travelled but could go no further. There was neither boat nor boatman, but only a Voice — a Voice that called incessantly. But could the Voice build a boat? How could he traverse these rushing streams, perilous and dangerous? The Teacher can but point out the Way, but the effort lies with the pilgrims. "Try, Try," came the Voice from the Beyond. The Point of Choice had been reached when the pilgrim had either to respond to the Call and swim ahead, or to linger by the lonely shores, out of terror of the stream. He knew he himself was the boat and the boatman. Could he dare to take the plunge? The winds carried the Voice that echoed through the forests and the glades. "Try, Try," it whispered loud, as it had done through countless ages.

WHAT IS "A FACT"?

[This article by H. P. Blavatsky is reprinted from *The Theosophist*, December 1881.—Eds.]

ONCE fairly started on a friendly discussion — not “quarrelling,” we hope — with *Light*, we may just as well set matters right regarding another topic, about which it seems to us to use a rather faulty argument. Remarking in another paragraph that it desires to treat its “friends, the Theosophists, perfectly fairly, and to give them the fullest credit for honesty and sincerity of purpose,” it adds — “Spiritualism, we say, *is* a fact. Theosophy, we also say, *may be* a fact for aught we know, but at present we are without sufficient proof.”

Now to this we must take exception. We find ourselves forced to reply as follows: Either both Spiritualism and Theosophy are “facts” or — neither. For how is either of them “a fact” except through its respective votaries? As an existing and, we may say, an effective organization, a society — Theosophy is as much of a “fact” as Spiritualism is, and certainly no less so than any of the established recognized bodies, and sects, whether they be in the domain of philosophy or religion. As regards phenomena produced — limited to a very small fraction of our Society — the manifestations stand, or fall, along with those of the Spiritualists. We may suppose, then, that, when asserting Spiritualism to be a “fact,” the writer had in his mind the “Spiritual” manifestations, or rather the agency, the disembodied intelligences claimed to be at work in their production? If so, then once again *Light* used an incorrect, or we should say, an incomplete expression. For, if the theory of communicating “spirits” is an undeniable axiom for Spiritualists, it is yet an open question, or oftener, positive delusion in the eyes of the majority of non-Spiritualists, and skeptics. Moreover, the manifestations which even to the Theosophists are a truth, are considered illusory and impossible to a much larger portion of the people in the world.

Again we, the Theosophists, though accepting the phenomena as a fact, refuse to accept it as a “fact” that such manifestations are produced only by the spirits of persons deceased. As with Spiritualism, so with the Occultism of Theosophists; to some persons it is a fact, and to others it is not. Spiritualism and Theosophy are both forms of belief, and nothing more; inasmuch as there are persons who believe in them, they are both facts. In the same way Christians, Brahmans and Mohammedans are an existing fact, while neither Christianity, nor Brahmanism,

nor Mohammedanism are "facts" *per se*, or for those who are opposed to these creeds. The divine inspiration of Mohammed and his direct communion with Allah is an undeniable "fact," for about 300 millions of the followers of the Prophet, but is rejected as the grossest error and imposture by as many Christians. The phenomena of the Spiritualists being a genuine, proven, incontrovertible reality — whether many or few believe in it — so far the "facts" of Spiritualism have a far better claim to acceptance than those of dogmatic Christianity or of any other creed, based exclusively on blind faith. Their personal views, however, the orthodox theories regarding "spirits," being not a matter of fact but of opinion and simply a belief, they can no more claim to be regarded as a "fact" than any other emotional belief. If the physical senses, intellect and reason of the Spiritualists testify to them that "Spirits" are at work in their phenomena, the physical senses, intellect and reason of the Occultists testify to them, in their turn, that the subjective world outside and around us containing a great variety of *non-human* intelligences, and beings, more associated with humanity than Materialism, Positivism and even Spiritualism will ever consent to admit — most of these manifestations are produced by Forces and Powers quite outside and beyond the calculations of the orthodox Spiritualist.

In so far as the existence of higher, pure Spirits outside of our sphere of physical senses is concerned, the Theosophists and Spiritualists agree. But they entirely disagree in their respective theories regarding the nature and cause of the so-called "communicating intelligences." Our friends, the Spiritualists, who are visited by them, are pleased to call the latter the spirits of deceased persons; and, notwithstanding their contradictory statements, they believe what these "spirits" tell them and regard it as a revelation and a "fact." Our mystics are visited by what every one of them knows to be living men of flesh and blood, whose wisdom can scarcely be denied (even by those who disbelieve in their powers), and who tell us quite a different tale of the weird visitors of the Spiritualists from that given by the "spirits" themselves at their *séances*. The assertions of the "spirits" and "Brothers," however, are, and can be accepted as "facts" by only their respective believers. No one would ever think of offering these assertions to the world as something mathematically demonstrated. Spiritualists and Theosophists may dispute interminably without convincing each other, and the facts of one will probably for ever continue a delusion in the eyes of the other. Alleged gods — Avatars and Incarnations — have descended from time to time on earth, and every word they uttered remained a fact and a gospel

truth for those who believed in them. Yet these dogmatic utterance have made their respective votaries neither happier, better, nor wiser. Quite the contrary; for they have often proved conducive of strife and misery, of fratricidal wars, and of interminable crimes due to fanaticism and bigotry. Men naturally disagree on most subjects, and we cannot hope to force others to accept as facts the things that appear so to us. But what we can do is, to show more mutual tolerance and abstain from dogmatism and bigotry as there is too much of it already outside of our two unpopular and equally tabooed systems.

One undeniable fact exists on earth; a sad, a tacitly and universally recognized yet as universally ignored "Fact," namely — that MAN is man's worst enemy. Born helpless, ignorant, and doomed to a lifelong struggle through that ignorance, surrounded by intellectual darkness which no amount of scientific or spiritual research can entirely dispel, instead of helping each other in that life struggle, one half of humanity is ever striving to create obstacles over which the other half may trip, stumble and even break its neck, if possible. Were we wise, instead of boasting of our partial knowledge, we ought to unite and act on the principle common to the Books of Wisdom of all nations; on the sublime precept taught by all sages; by Manu, Confucius and Buddha alike, and finally copied into the Christian Gospels: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Time alone will show who of us is right, and who wrong, in the matter of Spiritualism; or, perchance, the great problem might be doomed forever to remain unsolved for the majority, while the minority will go on explaining it, each according to its light and understanding. Still, instead of abusing and endeavouring to annihilate each other, as Protestants and Roman Catholics do on account of their faiths, we ought to confine ourselves to a correct presentation of our facts and of the theories we found on them, allowing everyone to accept or reject what he pleases and quarrel with no one on that account.

This is the position we of the Theosophical Society, composed of so many different creeds and beliefs, have always desired to take. In our turn, firmly convinced of "the honesty and sincerity of purpose" of the Spiritualists, if *The Theosophist* has occasionally derided some of their too tricky mediums, it has ever, on the other hand, defended those it knew to be genuine; and the journal has never insulted or tabooed their whole body, as the Spiritualists have our Society. Some of our best and most devoted members are Spiritualists, and very prominent ones,

who have ever been the best friends and supporters of the movement. This has not prevented the London *Spiritualist* (see every *weekly* number since the beginning of last July) from denouncing, mocking, laughing and allowing its *contributors* to revile us individually and collectively. We need not mention the American so-called "Spiritual" organs in this connection. They, with the single exception of the *Banner of Light*, have been throwing every impermissible missile at us for the last seven years. From its beginning, *The Theosophist*, if it has not always advocated, has, at least, warmly defended Spiritualism, as a careful perusal of its back numbers will show. It has defended it from the attacks of Science, of Journalism, and against the denunciations of private individuals, while the *Spiritualist* has never lost an opportunity of caricaturing us. With Spiritualists, as a body, we have never quarrelled, nor do we ever mean to quarrel. Let our esteemed contemporary *Light* give credit for so much at least to those who profess themselves the enemies but of BIGOTS, HYPOCRITES AND PHARISEES.

IF, in spite of the great knowledge we have accumulated, we are still in a perilous state, in an unhappy predicament, it is because we are indifferent to the higher laws of the universe. What is it that prevents the use of the great inventions for making the world into a happier and better place than it is? The passions of the human heart, stupidity, cussedness, vileness and wildness. We must tame the savageness of man. Even if a nuclear war is prevented, without sufficient progress in human nature, we will stagger to a standstill, a stalemate. It is here that the tradition of our country is of value. We must restore the truths of spirit to the central place in the minds of men. They must transform us, give us liberality, understanding, freedom. The minds and hearts of the people require to be altered. We must be able to make the right choice. This depends on the perceptions and ideas of men and women, on the moral judgments of the community, on the inner compulsions which control us. We must train not only the intellect but bring grace into the heart of man. If we are truly spiritual, we will cut off with a drastic hand so much that has come down to us in the name of religion which is repugnant to our mind and heart.

ROBERT CROSBIE SPEAKS

X.—ABOUT PERSONALITY AND ITS OPPOSITE

THE question of PERSONALITY is so large that it might seem as though its successful solution should resemble the working out of a complicated mathematical problem. But the greatest truths are the simplest. And if we reflect a moment on what IMPERSONALITY *is not*, perhaps that will help us to see what it *is*.

What is the opposite and corrective of PERSONALITY? Nothing less than IMPERSONALITY which seeks nothing for itself and everything for the Cause of Theosophy pure and simple.

IMPERSONALITY means freedom from PERSONALITY, but none of us are going to attain that, right away; we are doing well enough if we are persistently, albeit slowly, overcoming.

What all need is intelligent devotion to Masters' cause, which involves the subservience of the PERSONAL self. It is always PERSONAL divagations that throw students off the Philosophy and "the straight and narrow path." . . . It is never what one would like to do in this or that condition — but what should be done.

Is it not true that when the PERSONAL self is suppressed, the higher finds expression? There is a leaning back, as it were, on the great Ocean of Life — the SELF — and identification with personal ideas and feelings becomes non-existent. When such times come we must beware of self-gratulation; the lower feeds and waxes strong on this, and very often without our being sensible of it — yes, even when we are trying to guard against it, or think we are.

We have to stand all tests alike — praise as well as blame. Oft-times praise is the hardest to stand, because it is so easily applied to the "PERSONAL idea," while blame is easier cast aside. . . . We should not be elated by praise or success, nor cast down by blame or failure, because either of these is an application of the "PERSONAL idea" — an identification of oneself with the event.

To make ourselves "better able to help and teach others" is the task. The PERSONALITY naturally either rebels or is depressed — or both. But we may expect that and can be prepared for the reaction if we are wise and have confidence in Masters' teaching. We want to know, to be, and to go forward, and we know that every little assertion of "PERSONAL ideas" is a hindrance, and that these ideas and their particular "feel-

ing" are very easily disturbed and hurt. . . . We have to watch all along the line.

We so desire PERSONAL assurance that all will be well with the PERSONAL self that we distrust ourselves and all others, if we do not get it; and all the time we know that we should rely upon the law that works for righteousness. What, then, is needed is a greater faith and confidence, a stronger courage.

The power of the PERSONALITY is great and insidious. It retains its hold very often when the aspirations and efforts are noble in character. It is the most difficult thing to be overcome in *our* race, where the training is all in accentuation of it. . . . "PERSONALITY" is the last foe to be conquered.

Theosophists often speak of "getting rid of the PERSONALITY," and, so far as observed, do not appear to have any clear idea of what they mean. Without PERSONALITIES, there would be no field, no evolution. It is not the PERSONALITY that is in the way, but the PERSONAL idea in regard to it. This is particularly fostered by the present civilization based on *Samvritti* (relative truth), "origin of all the world's delusions."

The fight against the PERSONAL idea is a long one. The PERSONALITY has to be watched that it does not insidiously take to itself what *it* has no claim to.

To "forego and forget PERSONALITIES" means to regard *truth*, only, by whomsoever presented. So it seems wise that we should not think ill of PERSONALITIES, and this includes our own. If they are our weakness, by doing our duty, which is in our case the promulgation of truth, pure and undefiled, our weakness will finally become our strength.

The strength shown by any worker is not that of the PERSONALITY, which has none, of itself: it lies in the words, the ideas, the conviction of truth held by the inner man.

Having done your duty as you see it, resign all PERSONAL interest in the results.

REFERENCES: *The Friendly Philosopher*, pp. 127, 407, 127, 377, 119, 18-19, 113, 84, 41-42, 38, 100, 39, 373.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The debate continues on whether and how to control genetic engineering, especially the attempts to splice or join together different organisms' genes — controlling agents for all inherited characteristics — in order to produce entirely new organisms. No code of conduct has yet been evolved. There are bitter opponents who justifiably fear the worst, and equally zealous supporters.

The development of what is known as the “recombinant DNA technique” is hailed by scientists as having ushered in a new era of genetic engineering — but not without its perils. The organism that currently plays the largest role in the process, because its genetic structure has been so well studied, is the *E. coli* bacterium — a laboratory derivative of a common inhabitant of the human intestine. In laboratory experiments, scientists are combining segments of *E. coli's* DNA (the genetic code-carrier) with the DNA of plants, animals and other bacteria. By this process, they may well be creating forms of life different from any that exist on earth.

Under the title “Tinkering With Life,” the American newsmagazine *Time* (April 18) gives coverage to the current research in this field of genetic engineering, its implications and the furor it has evoked, as the following excerpts bear out:

Appearing before a Senate subcommittee on behalf of the Carter Administration, HEW Secretary Joseph Califano . . . called recombinant DNA “a scientific tool of enormous potential.” He also warned about possible — though unknown — hazards and concluded: “There is no reasonable alternative to regulation under law.” Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, involved in the controversy over genetic-engineering projects at Harvard and M.I.T., argued for the public right to regulate the research. Said he: “Genetic manipulation to create new forms of life places biologists at a threshold similar to that which physicists reached when they first split the atom. I think it is fair to say that the genie is out of the bottle.”

The issue, stated simply, is whether that genie is good or evil. Proponents of this research in DNA — the master molecule of life — are convinced that it can help point the way toward a new promised land — of understanding and perhaps curing cancer and such inherited diseases as diabetes and hemophilia; of plants that draw their nitrogen directly from the air rather than from

costly fertilizers; of a vastly improved knowledge of the genetics of all plants and animals, including eventually even humans. . . .

Opponents of the new research acknowledge its likely bounty, but fear that those benefits might be outweighed by unforeseeable risks. What would happen, they ask, if by accident or design, one variety of re-engineered *E. Coli* proved dangerous? By escaping from the lab and multiplying, their scenario goes, it could find its way into human intestines and cause baffling diseases. Beyond any immediate danger, others say, there are vast unknowns and moral implications. Do not intervene in evolution, they warn in effect, because "it's not nice to fool Mother Nature." Caltech's biology chairman, Robert Sinsheimer, concludes: "Biologists have become, without wanting it, the custodians of great and terrible power. It is idle to pretend otherwise." . . .

The concern of Sinsheimer is partly philosophical — some might even say mystical. He fears the unpredictable consequences of breaching what he calls nature's "evolutionary barrier" between different kinds of creatures — the genetic incompatibility that in most cases prevents one species from breeding with another. In the same vein, retired Columbia Biochemist Erwin Chargaff asks: "Have we the right to counteract, irreversibly, the evolutionary wisdom of millions of years in order to satisfy the ambition and the curiosity of a few scientists?" . . .

Scientists clearly do not have any diabolical intent, but their emotional and unusually public debate over DNA has made ordinary citizens sit up and take notice. Newspaper and magazine articles have carried such chilling headlines as: NEW STRAINS OF LIFE — OR DEATH, SCIENCE THAT FRIGHTENS SCIENTISTS and MAN-MADE BACTERIA COULD RAVAGE EARTH.

In brief, there is a genuine fear shared by many scientists that if work on genetic engineering, as practised at present, continues unabated, the chances of releasing new and dangerous bacteria and disease organisms will be so great as to nullify any advantages that the research might bestow. It hangs over humanity like a Damoclean sword, in very much the same manner as the release of nuclear energy. In a limited sense, the latter was a useful development, although we could have got on very well without it since there are numerous other energy resources. But consider the havoc it has caused: death and destruction, persistent terror and war psychosis, waste of money, skills and manpower — all for what? It is too late to reverse the nuclear trend, but at least as far as genetic tinkering is concerned, there is still time to show restraint.

Taking all known and foreseeable factors into consideration, it is prudent to stop this work at once.

In a new book, *Phobias and Obsessions*, author Joy Melville provides a list of 241 seemingly ordinary objects and situations which can strike terror into the hearts of some men and women, in many cases crippling their lives. Phobias are broadly classified into three categories — fear of a specific object, such as cats or spiders, fear of a specific situation, such as a crowded place, a restaurant, or an aeroplane, and fear of a specific illness or of death itself.

Phobias are not new. Some are quite bizarre and irrational, such as the fear of the knees suddenly bending the wrong way (kneebophobia), fear of home surroundings (ecophobia), fear of oneself (autophobia), fear of beards (pogonophobia). But Miss Melville concentrates mainly on the more common phobias such as fear of heights, of flying, and of leaving the safety of the home (agoraphobia), which is described as the most disabling of all. Many agoraphobes are completely housebound and unable to hold down a job, others reduced to nervous wrecks when they have to tackle such simple tasks as shopping, travelling by public transport or crossing busy streets.

There is general lack of understanding about phobias by many doctors and also by friends and relatives of phobics, the author writes. In general, friends react to phobias with amusement or frank disbelief, and relations, who see more of the effects, are puzzled and irritated.

The causes of phobias differ, but they often follow a shock, or illness, or death of a close relative, or change of lifestyle, or a frightening experience such as being bitten by a dog or being trapped in a lift. But social phobics, with their fear of social situations, and agoraphobics, with their dread of going out into the street, have more complex reasons connected with anxiety.

Miss Melville lists the main techniques used to treat these illnesses. They include gradual desensitization, immediate confrontation with the phobic object, and group therapy. The number of phobics is apparently growing, she says, because as phobias are more widely discussed, more people admit to suffering from them, and also because general living stress is on the increase. It is estimated that there are some four-and-a-half million phobics in Britain alone. All such people “need both reassurance and help,” the author writes. “Without these the numbers will continue to grow.”

When the full effects of inharmonious mental attitudes are discovered by the public and by the medical profession, an important step will have been taken in diagnosing many an ill afflicting our civilization. The remedy lies in teaching men the truth about life and nature — the truth that worries and fears and phobias and the objects of sense which produce them belong to but a small and inconsiderable part of the whole being, and that regardless of what may seem to the personal man the crash of worlds, *Life* which is himself, will continue to exist of its own power and essence as it has existed through the past eternities.

An article by Michelle Galler Riegel in *Science News* for October 30, 1976, deals with pain control through hypnosis, as practised especially by Harold J. Wain, director of the Psychiatric Liaison Service at the Walter Reed Army Medical Centre in Washington. Though hypnosis in the control of pain is not a new concept, its role as a regular and major treatment at a modern, basically medical — as opposed to primarily psychiatric — treatment centre is looked upon as innovative. As the article states:

Hypnosis is used in more than 50 per cent of the cases at the Walter Reed pain clinic; 20 per cent of these are terminal illness cases. More physicians are referring patients to Wain for hypnotherapy than ever before, at times as an important adjunct to other psychotherapy. All of the psychiatric residents and the psychology interns now at the centre are learning hypnosis as part of their regular training.

Wain sees a formidable increase in the amount of direct requests from physicians for hypnotic pain control for their patients. And now getting under way is a research project whose end goal is to validate the success of hypnosis as a mode of treatment *before* starting patients on drugs or surgical procedures. "What has happened now," says Wain, "is that the staff of the pain clinic is totally supportive — 100 per cent. There has been much more acceptance by the medical staff but there are some who still look at it as the occult."...

He also extends a caveat to professionals and patients alike that hypnosis is a "double-edged sword" and when administered by the untrained can present a reaction perhaps as dangerous as many drugs. It is the kind of process that quacks could and do thrive on.

It is always right to try to alleviate suffering and pain whenever we

can, and to do our best for it, but to deprive a man of his free-will, even for his own good, calls for greater discrimination than can be expected from the average medical practitioner or even specialist. Mr. Judge wrote in *The Theosophical Forum* for December 1890 that in his opinion

hypnotism should be prohibited by law. No one but some very few high-minded and learned physicians should be allowed to practise it. I would as quickly prohibit the general mass of physicians from using it as the general mass of the public, for I regard it as a dangerous and injurious power. . . . In the present age of black selfishness I would vote for its total seclusion from use for the present. (Reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XV, p. 58)

It is believed that though hypnotism is dangerous when practised by the untrained, it is perfectly safe in the hands of the qualified. Is there no danger in the admitted fact that subjects become progressively easier to hypnotize? No danger in the reliance on suggestion? No danger in the peculiar bond of sympathy that is established between the hypnotist and the patient? Mr. Judge has written that the "influence of the operator once thrown on the subject will remain until the day of the operator's death."

Did Madame Blavatsky write too strongly at the end of Part II of the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*? She declared there that one of the "Seven Accursed Sciences — or the Seven Arts of enchantment of the Gnostics" was now before the public.

pregnant with danger in the present as for the future. The modern name for it is HYPNOTISM. In the ignorance of the seven principles, and used by scientific and ignorant materialists, it will soon become SATANISM in the full acceptance of the term. (II. 641)

"Name to us any modern discovery," H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 620), "and we venture to say, that Indian history need not long be searched before the prototype will be found of record."

Among India's gifts to the world of science is plastic surgery, says Ikbal Kaul in his article, "The Nose Menders," in *The Times of India* for June 19. Referring to the skill of the ancient Indian surgeons, he writes:

Research and experiments had proved to the Indian surgeons that facial tissues were tolerant of surgical interference. They had also realized that the human body rejects alien tissues and

that the graft must come from the patient's own body. They knew all this and more not by fluke but as a result of a long process of trial and error, research and experimentation, and the spirit of science obtaining in India then.

The first lucid and detailed description of Indian plastic surgery is contained in the encyclopaedic work of Susruta. The original Susruta text is lost and the extant one is believed to be a revision by the Buddhist scholar Vasubandhu. The *Susruta Samhita* was rendered into Pahalvi by Manka and was known as *Sasrad* or *Susrud*. . . .

The early Abbaside Caliphs (750–1050) were ably served by the scions of Pramukha (Parmak — Barmak — Barmakids), who was the high priest of Nova Vihara (Nawbahar) near Balkh. The place was conquered by the Arabs in 765, and its Buddhist population was converted. During the high tide of the Barmakids, not only were the Hindu sciences translated into Arabic but several Indians acted as royal physicians and superintendents of the Baghdad hospitals. By way of travellers, merchants and missionaries, the Indian sciences, including plastic surgery, reached Italy and Spain through the Arabs.

However, it fell to the lot of Dr. J. C. Carpue to internationalize Indian plastic surgery. It had reached Sicily, like other Indian sciences, before 1442. But for nearly 400 years it was forgotten and remained hidden because of strong opposition from the church.

“It is a curious fact,” declares V. S. Pramar in his article in *The Times of India* for July 3, “that those scholars who have specialized in Hindu architecture have not been able to unravel the mystery of the origin of the Hindu temple.” Basing his conclusions on anthropological data, the author traces the prototype of modern temples to the non-Aryan tribes of India who built artificial shelters to protect their deities.

The tribal, non-Aryan people of India [he writes] had an ancient belief that certain spirits dwell in the forest and reside in trees. When any portion of a forest was to be cleared for either settlement or agriculture, it became necessary to propitiate these forest spirits and to find them alternative dwellings, for it was their habitat which was being destroyed. For this purpose a grove of trees adjacent to a perennial supply of water was selected, and all the forest except for this grove was felled or burnt. The forest spirits were induced by suitable magical ceremonies to come and

reside permanently in the selected grove and it henceforth became their abode. These spirits were considered as guardians of the area and nothing could prosper in it without their goodwill. . . .

This custom of maintaining sacred groves was common to all the tribals of pre-Aryan India and the whole country must have been dotted with them. Each was the dwelling of a local deity, attended by local tribal priests, and presiding over a strictly limited geographical area. . . . Once the original grove began to decay, it became the custom to erect artificial shelters for the resident deity and the earliest such structures were simple columnar sheds of wood and grass. These are the real prototypes of the Hindu temple.

The author seems to overlook that the temples of India were originally seats of learning. Like some other architectural marvels of the world, they were "the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the 'Sons of God,' justly called 'The Builders'" (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 209 fn.). Temple architecture is one of the languages in which esoteric knowledge is recorded, hidden only from those who have not eyes to see.

"India is dotted with sacred shrines," says W. Q. Judge in his *Echoes from the Orient*, and these "places of pilgrimage are centres of spiritual force from which radiate elevating influences" perceptible only to the clear-eyed and the pure-hearted. He continues:

It is asserted by many, indeed, that at most of the famous places of pilgrimage there is an Adept of the same order to which the Theosophical Adepts are said to belong, who is ready always to give some meed of spiritual insight and assistance to those of pure heart who may go there. He, of course, does not reveal himself to the knowledge of the people, because it is quite unnecessary, and might create the necessity for his going elsewhere. . . . The Adepts founded these places in order to keep alive in the minds of the people the soul idea which modern Science and education would soon turn into agnosticism, were they to prevail unchecked. (p. 32)
