

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psυχical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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POINTS OF VIEW

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—EDS.]

You are looking at things from your own point of view.

MOST of the troubles of life come from the clash of human relationships, and our “daily life ledger” shows many an entry on the debit side caused by wrong response to others. Many a plan has failed because the promoter looked at it “from his own point of view” and did not take into consideration the reactions of the environment which would surround his action. Fortunately for our spiritual evolution, but unfortunately for our personal happiness, our way lies *with* people. Other human beings are necessary to us, for without them we should go along with only “our own point of view” until we wake up to find ourselves like the “haughty fool” who had climbed a lofty tower thereon to sit “in prideful solitude and unperceived by any but himself.” It is our contact with people, whether physically or with their ideas through the written word, that enables us to see ourselves as we appear to them and to see what evil in our character is brought to light through them. We can put our opinions alongside theirs, and realize that no true understanding is a matter of opinion, because it is the fact itself that is true, and all each man can do is to regard it from “his own point of view.” As H.P.B. says, we view everything from the standpoint of our “own experience, knowledge and consciousness.”

Mr. Judge tried to make this plain when he said that all efforts were useful and any sincere worker for the Cause should be allowed to try out his ideas. The U.L.T. makes this plain in its method of platform work. The student-teacher gives out the philosophy itself and not his opinion on it, and thus learns to view the philosophy from the viewpoint of Those who gave it to us. It is a sobering thought that "outside of initiation" there is a limit to knowledge, for we like to think that "we know." How thankful we should be that our pathway through life is surrounded by people with *their* own points of view!

Life is like a road along which many motorcars pass. Accidents are frequent if each driver looks at his driving "from his own point of view." He gains skill in driving through the practice of adapting his views to harmonize with others' points of view! He learns adaptability in offsetting the bad driving of others and pursuing his course unruffled by the hindrances they cause.

In our struggle for life we have each developed a sense of "I-ness" and as great a sense of the rights that should be accorded to that "I." But we have to learn to drive that "I-ness" with the same care as we drive an ordinary motorcar, realizing all the time that the roadway of life is *crowded* with other "I-nesses," with good and bad drivers at fast and slow speeds, and with many an accident to block the way. The power to adapt ourselves to others' viewpoints is an application of the right to freedom of conscience. It is so easy to demand freedom for oneself, so difficult to admit it to others! Yet each rebuff or hardship is like an initiation if we can pass through it unscathed. Initiations are not examinations in the form of tests, but are the culminating factor when strength attained enables us to pass on. It is the strength attained through the contact with others that opens for us the doors of the different stages of Life. And we never develop strength by looking at things only from "our own point of view" unless it is the strength of the road-hog who smashes all weaker cars in his way and finally comes to grief when he meets one larger and better than his own.

Adaptability is said to be a great spiritual virtue; we can begin to develop it by looking at all our actions, feelings and desires,

and thoughts from the points of view of those in the environment in which they are to take place. We know the phrase "Man proposes, God disposes," but we do not live up to it. Its meaning is that no matter what we plan there are so many side-issues connected with the environment that often the results are totally unexpected. If we act in terms of the environment and take note of possibilities we stand less chance of being broken. Instead of "our own point of view" we must put harmlessness as the background of our activities. Harmlessness implies that we have recognized the presence of others on our roadway and have admitted their rights.

The Masters are ever careful never to infringe the rights of another human being. Our first step in Their direction is to cease seeing things "from our own point of view."

THE ONE LIFE is closely related to the one law which governs the World of Being—KARMA. Exoterically, this is simply and literally "action," or rather an "effect-producing cause." Esoterically it is quite a different thing in its far-fetching moral effects. It is the unerring LAW OF RETRIBUTION. To say to those ignorant of the real significance, characteristics and awful importance of this eternal immutable law, that no theological definition of a personal deity can give an idea of this impersonal, yet ever present and active Principle, is to speak in vain. Nor can it be called Providence. For Providence, with the Theists (the Christian Protestants, at any rate), rejoices in a personal male gender, while with the Roman Catholics it is a female potency, "Divine Providence tempers His blessings to secure their better effects," Wogan tells us. Indeed "He" tempers them, which Karma—a sexless principle—does not At the first flutter of renascent life, Svabhavat, "the mutable radiance of the Immutable Darkness unconscious in Eternity," passes, at every new rebirth of Kosmos, from an inactive state into one of intense activity; that it differentiates, and then begins its work through that differentiation. This work is KARMA.

COMPANIONS NOW AND OF THE FUTURE

It is the Master's work to preserve the true philosophy, but the help of the companions is needed to rediscover and promulgate it.

—W. Q. JUDGE

Who are the companions to whom Mr. Judge refers in his above-quoted words from *The Ocean of Theosophy*, and by what means are they expected to "rediscover" the philosophy? Even before these questions can get answered, the student has to ask himself: Am I convinced that this philosophy that is spoken of is the true philosophy that was transmitted to men by the Sons of Light who brought it unaltered from the higher spheres where nothing but the truth abides?

In 1889 Madame Blavatsky wrote: "What I do believe in is (1) the unbroken oral teachings revealed by living *divine* men during the infancy of mankind to the elect among men; (2) that it has reached us *unaltered*; and (3) that the MASTERS are thoroughly versed in the science based on such uninterrupted teaching."¹ Unless the student accepts Theosophy as a valuable chapter culled from the perennial philosophy, he will not have that conviction which must radiate through his effort at promulgation. He may grasp some of the great tenets intellectually, but his heart will not have accepted them as the truth, the unadulterated truth and nothing but the truth. He makes himself a companion only when he makes for himself the momentous discovery that he has at last been blessed with the truth.

To help the student to acquire an unshakable faith in the philosophy, he is given the objective of "studying Aryan and other scriptures, of the world's religion and sciences, and of vindicating the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely, of the Brahmanical, Buddhist and Zoroastrian philosophies."² A comparative study of religions carried out without any personal bias or reservations will reveal to him, as no other study can, that

¹ *Lucifer*, October 1889, p. 157.

² *The Key to Theosophy*, Indian ed., p. 39.

the Wisdom-Religion was ever one and was therefore the last word of possible human knowledge. By such study he would discover the sameness of primitive religious philosophy and would find conviction in the fact that identical doctrines were taught to the Initiates during the Mysteries, which at one time was a universally diffused institution.³ The sameness and identity found in the philosophies among peoples separated by vast periods of time and among civilizations which flourished in antipodal regions afford convincing proof that passing through the infancy of humanity, through ancient and prehistoric times down to our day, the same philosophy exists and can be found "in the almost countless volumes of Brahmanical, Chinese and Tibetan temple-literature."⁴ In one sense the search for the ancient Wisdom-Religion becomes a voyage of discovery which traverses continents and eras of which modern history has hardly any records. It is this act of rediscovery undertaken by oneself—a profound delving into the new and the old that has to be entered upon and carried over from one incarnation to another—that bears rich and abundant harvests. It is life's class-work that matters—not the vacation periods of after-death states that intervene in between.

Students of the 20th century have an advantage which those of the previous centuries did not possess. Both Mme. Blavatsky and Mr. Judge have left records of their rediscoveries in their books and articles. Add to these the great boon conferred by the Masters of Wisdom when for a few years from 1875 onwards they cautiously gave out the philosophy in letters and in passages they wrote for *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*. In these, the modern student has in black on white portions of the true Wisdom-Religion. With these as guides, the student has to carry on his own research in the ancient philosophies to sift out the truth buried for ages from under the accumulated debris of all the pasts. In *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* are set forth some of the assertions of the philosophers and scientists of the 19th century and commented upon wherever they are found in variance of the true teachings. Can the student through the exer-

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴ *The Secret Doctrine*, I. xxiii.

cise of his own intuition affirm to himself convincingly that what Theosophy says is right and that modern thought and science err when they propound something that does not coincide with the ancient teaching? Study of Theosophy increases knowledge. Applying these teachings to discriminate between the true and the false increases perception, and that is an essential faculty required to carry conviction to minds that are wholly intellectual.

A study of philosophy like the study of any other branch of knowledge requires a wholly dispassionate state of the mind specially prepared for such study. No bias has to be allowed to creep in just because the subject under study presents a view that is at variance with the teachings garnered from terrestrial knowledge. Prejudice and predilection have to be eliminated *in toto*. A person who sets out to learn an unfamiliar language would be called foolish if he argued about the suitability of the shape of its alphabet characters or if he rebelled against the rules of its grammar because he feels that in comparison with other languages these are laborious and irksome. So too with the newcomer to Theosophy. He comes as a learner and it is a prerequisite that he brings a clean slate. To be a true student he has to orient himself so that he neither criticizes nor condemns. This is brought out forcefully in Chapter IX of the *Gita* where Sri Krishna says: "Unto thee who findeth no fault I will now make known this most mysterious knowledge. . . ." This can mean only one thing—there exists no yardstick to measure the perennial philosophy. This has to be so because it itself is the yardstick. This initial truth has to be discovered by the aspirant for himself. The true philosophy can be judged by no system of thought emanating from a human mind, nor can its wisdom be judged by the ever-changing dicta of modern science. All existing religions, philosophies and sciences have to be weighed, tested and verified by testing their proximity to or variance from Theosophy. This demands the arousing of an unflinching faith that gathers strength as Theosophy is found and, shall it be said, "rediscovered" as consistent in all its parts. In *Isis Unveiled, The Secret Doctrine* as well as in her articles Mme. Blavatsky often sets forth the

true doctrine and juxtaposes it against doctrines propounded by popes and priests, philosophers and philosophicules, scientists and experimenters of their ilk. The student has to invoke that knowledge which will enable him to sift the false from the true, the divine wisdom from its terrestrial counterpart. It is this new orientation cultivated over the years, pursued over hours of laborious searchings and maintained without the shadow of doubt or despair that leads in time to a lasting companionship with other like-minded aspirants in the common effort to enlighten others. This orientation does not come suddenly, nor is it easily acquired, for, though mortal knowledge is ever shifting and therefore worthless, it has a glamour of its own. Experience and self-awareness alone can show that the earthly knowledge is devilish, for though it does put forth blossoms which delight the senses, it, at the same time, injects a lethal virus that eats away the blossom's heart. In order to escape the glamour of the terrestrial, the gaze of the aspirant has to be so trained that, if not now, then in future eras it may gain the power to "penetrate into the very kernel of matter, and record the soul of things there, where an ordinary profane, however learned, would have perceived the external work of form."⁵

One more consideration. He who has not become a friend and devotee of TRUTH, one who therefore retains even a vestige of prejudice, cannot become the ideal promulgator, for he will either promulgate that which is not the correct philosophy or create a disharmony in himself because his word and his action are not in tune. His presentation will lack that conviction and enthusiasm which alone can leave a lasting impression on the minds of the multitude. The basic truth that underlies karma and re-incarnation has to be searched for not only in books and ancient oriental philosophies but in the experiences that life brings each day to the man who hungers for wisdom. A study of the ancient wisdom requires the leading of an ethical life devoted to the interest of others—the interest that centres round the awakening of the inner man—and this devotion is unattainable unless the Soul frees itself for appreciable lengths of time from personal

⁵ *The Secret Doctrine*, I. 272.

hungers and automatic passional reactions to outside stimuli. All vices, all limitations of mind and thought and feeling are the progeny of the personal and the egotistic man who desires things for himself. How then can a man so afflicted understand and appreciate the impersonal and therefore the universal? The right basis for morality and ethics, their roots and *raison d'être* are to be found nowhere else save in the impersonal and divine part of the individual. He who can reach that haven within himself becomes a companion and a valuable promulgator of the TRUE. It is part of the mission of Theosophy to gather such companions and band them into a nucleus of Brotherhood that can be used for helping Humanity.

BEING

This state of "being" that we know,
 What is it in its ebb and flow?
 We who are no mere migrant birds
 Coming and going as the seasons pass,
 (For these it is that fly too fast, alas!)
 Cannot our human mind find words
 To solve the mystery and show
 What "being" is, before we go?

Before we go! For time is brief,
 Of moments, hours and years the thief;
 Our present soon, too soon, must flee
 Into those voids of space beyond recall
 That now allure and now, again, appall.
 What waiteth there for such as we,
 Our journey past? Release? Relief?
 A glad acclaim? A timeless grief?

THE "GITA"—ITS UNIVERSAL APPEAL

DURING THIS MONTH of August, Hindus of all castes and classes will celebrate the Natal Day of Krishna, the Hindu Logos, *Shabda-Brahman*, the Word made Flesh. The Hindus look upon Krishna as *Purna-Avatara*, the complete Incarnation of Divinity, just as Christians do upon Christ. The orthodox of both religions claim this unique position for their respective Saviours. Leaving them to their disputes, we can only appeal to the thoughtful few, who have emancipated themselves from the slavery of blind belief, not only to read but to study the greatest of Lord Krishna's gifts, His message of Theo-Sophia enshrined in the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

Even a casual reading shows that the *Gita* is not a creedal scripture; its appeal is universal. As a textbook for those who aspire to live nobly, the *Gita* is most helpful, inasmuch as it contains instructions for every mind, from that which is childlike in its innocence to that which is profound in its penetration of the mysteries of Nature. Moreover, the *Gita* has the distinction of containing a masterly survey of the various philosophical points of view, followed by an exposition which reconciles the truth in each of them by uniting them with the truth which is not in any of them. Its metaphysics are as lofty as its ethics are noble and both become the foundation for practice in daily life. Thus it is suited to those who desire to have clear perception of the universals and ultimates before they handle the particulars of life, as to those who desire to begin now and here without troubling about metaphysical abstractions.

The fundamental propositions of the *Gita* may be summarized thus:

I. Every man, every woman, irrespective of creed, colour or class holds within the heart the Light of Divinity.

II. That Light is not able to shine forth because the heart, which holds the Light, has not been made active by the human mind. The function of the mind is to activate the heart so that the Light may radiate through it to the senses, transforming the body into a Temple of Light. Thus only does the individual become the Master and the Servant of all Nature. But forgoing

its own duty the mind has activated the senses and become involved with the objects of sense; it is now reaping the nemesis of being misled by the false values it has assigned to the things of the world.

Herein we see the course of human evolution described, and also its deflection by the faulty action of the mind. To enable man to extricate himself from this self-made destiny the *Gita* continues its instruction.

III. As long as the mind persists in its mistaken policy of false valuations it must go from bad to worse. Because of the Law of Polarity which is active in Nature, the mind separated from the Light of the Heart will create out of the senses and the body a demoniac entity, in place of the Divinity which it should and could have manifested in unison with that Light in the heart. The propelling force which drags the mind to the demoniac state is triple in character: Lust, Anger and Greed are the Gates of Hell. The mind must free itself from this triad. It cannot do so without a recognition of the forgotten principles to which the mind owes its duty. It must therefore abandon the path of going away from the Light and take the Path of Return—the Path of duty to the Light in the Heart. However arduous and protracted this labour, no one need despair.

The message of the *Gita* is the message of war which leads to victory—and permanent peace. The courage, the chivalry, the glory of war which attract and even inspire so many today, if rightly practised on the Field of Duty as the Master Krishna taught His Chela Arjuna, would precipitate the kingdom of heaven on earth. But dictators are like Duryodhanas—they want to loot others instead of conquering their own puny selves.

Indeed the *Bhagavad-Gita* has a message for the world—both for the Hindus who pay lip-reverence to it without practising its teachings, and for the non-Hindus who are ignorant of its message. The assurance is given (II. 40):

Even a little of this practice delivereth a man from great risk.

THE MIDDLE WAY

THEORIES of modern psychology, and especially those propounded by psychoanalysts, on the subject of repression, are diametrically opposed to those we find taught in such books of life-discipline as the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Buddha's *Dhammapada*. Adepts like Lao Tzu and Confucius, Jesus and St. Paul, dealt with the subject of sense-control and self-discipline in a manner contrary to that which has been brought into vogue by Freud and others. Today, suppression of evil tendencies, repression of vice, restraint of sense-instinct, arrest of sex impulses, are not generally regarded as sound and healthy, for they are supposed to do violence to the human system. In the name of science the animal in man is allowed full sway, and therefore man cannot befriend the angel in him. The howling of the wild beast without drowns the still small voice of the angel within, and in most cases "the songster mute and torpid sits, and of exhaustion dies." Large masses of people neglect to heed their own consciences, and find ways and means to indulge in animalism as natural to man.

Unless a reaction sets in, our civilization is bound to grow more and more corrupt until finally it becomes extinct. But signs are not wanting that such a reaction will set in. Thoughtful people everywhere are beginning to recognize the dangers of overpowering desires, and are advocating the necessity of discipline. A difficulty arises, however, by reason of the fact that people too often mistake asceticism for discipline. One important constituent of real discipline is avoidance of extremes—the neglect of the body for the sake of the soul, or *vice versa*. Strange as it may seem, asceticism is twin to licence, and a man is apt to go from the one to the other. The Indian fakir who tortures his body for the good of his soul suffers from the same disease as the Occidental who indulges the senses believing that there is no soul, or that his consciousness is the product of his brain and blood and evaporates on the death of the body. Both classes suffer from a lack of correct knowledge concerning the make-up of man.

The constitution of man is very clearly explained in Asiatic psychology: Mind is not only not the product of the brain, but

is itself to be distinguished from the Thinker, the Soul, whose tool it is in reality. Thus self-consciousness is regarded as an entity which uses the mind. Similarly, the teaching about the human body and brain is different from that offered by modern physiology and biology. According to ancient Eastern science, the body with its senses and organs rests on the foundations of a subtle form called in Sanskrit *Linga Sharira* (Design Body), and is so named because it provides the foundation-plan and the model on which the gross body is built. Its existence was recognized by many schools even in the Western world, as its names Doppelgänger, Perispit, the Double, etc., signify. More generally it is known as the Astral Body—but that term has been loosely used in recent years causing confusion to many. The substance of which this *Linga Sharira* is composed has a starry luminosity of its own, hence the name "Astral." It is part of the Personal Man, or Personality, since it forms the mask of the self-conscious thinker and of its tool, the mind. It becomes the playground of a double set of forces: (a) impressions received from the Universe *via* the senses and the brain, and (b) impressions received from within, from the self-conscious soul through its vehicle, the mind. Between this pair of duads exists the assemblage of desires, good and bad, which play the part of the angel or the devil in man.

An understanding of these constituents removes confusion and prevents a man from falling into the error either of tortuous asceticism or of sensuous indulgence. Putting the sure finger of knowledge on what is to be disciplined and on who is the disciplinarian, the student of Asiatic psychology seeks the method of discipline and finds important clues; here is such a clue offered by the *Gita*:

For those enjoyments which arise through the contact of the senses with external objects are wombs of pain, since they have a beginning and an end; O son of Kunti, the wise man delighteth not in these. (V. 22)

Neither the senses nor the objects of sense hinder the attainment of happiness, but their contact—excessive or meagre, defective or disproportioned—does. Discipline does not consist in the

torture of the fleshly senses nor in the hatred of worldly objects, but in the treatment of those longings which unite in wedlock incompatible entities, thus producing confusion and pain, leading to divorce. The ascetic blames the senses and starves them, the libertine indulges them; the former looks upon the worldly life as *maya*, the latter thinks it to be the only reality—and both go to excess. The verse from the *Gita* quoted above offers a clue to what is to be disciplined and, read in conjunction with the following verses, the student learns not only the method of discipline but also who the disciplinarian is.

This divine discipline, Arjuna, is not to be attained by the man who eateth more than enough or too little, nor by him who hath a habit of sleeping much, nor by him who is given to overwatching. The meditation which destroyeth pain is produced in him who is moderate in eating and in recreation, of moderate exertion in his actions, and regulated in sleeping and waking. When the man, so living, centres his heart in the true Self and is exempt from attachment to all desires, he is said to have attained to Yoga. (VI. 16-18)

The tranquillity of an enlightened heart, the peace of a controlled mind, the rhythmic activities of purified senses, are produced in man when he exercises himself according to these instructions, and only then is real happiness experienced.

THE INFINITE WONDERS of the universe are revealed to us in exact measure as we are capable of receiving them. The keenness of our vision depends not on how much we can see, but on how much we feel. Nor yet does mere knowledge create beauty. Nature sings her most exquisite songs to those who love her. She does not unfold her secrets to those who come only to gratify their desire of analysis, to gather facts, but to those who see in her manifold phenomena suggestions of lofty, delicate sentiments.

—HELEN KELIER

MADAME BLAVATSKY IN AMERICA

[The following contribution to the early history of the Theosophical Society appeared in the *New York Times*, January 2, 1885, and was reprinted in the *Supplement to The Theosophist*, March 1885.—Eds.]

A PROMULGATION was received only a few days ago by the Rochester Branch of the Theosophical Society, from Col. H. S. Olcott, the President of the Society. Its address was in London, where he and the founder of the Society, Mme. Blavatsky, were recently visiting, if indeed they are not still there. The communication is called the "Special Orders for 1884," and is signed by the President, and countersigned and attested by M. M. Chatterji, his private secretary. It is an elaborate system of regulations to govern the formations of the new branches of the Society which it is expected will be shortly in working order in various American cities.

This intelligence is interesting to the general reader, mainly as it serves to recall a most curious phase of modern thought. Its development nearly ten years ago in New York attracted much attention. The doings of the strange society mentioned, in the French flat at Eighth Avenue and Forty-seventh Street, where they had their headquarters, were widely noticed by the press, and some influence on the thought of certain classes of men and women undoubtedly emanated from the small circle who gathered there.

This influence was beyond a question the result of the strange personal power of Mme. Blavatsky—a woman of as remarkable characteristics as Cagliostro himself, and one who is today as differently judged by different people as the renowned Count was in his day. The *Pall Mall Gazette* recently devoted a half column to the lady. By those who know her only slightly in this country she was invariably termed a charlatan. A somewhat better acquaintance developed the thought that she was a learned, but deluded, enthusiast. And those who knew her intimately and enjoyed her friendship were either carried away into a belief in her powers or profoundly puzzled, and the longer and

more intimate the friendship was, the firmer the faith or the deeper their perplexity became. The closest study of a trained New York reporter failed for over two years to convince him that she was either a fraud or self-deluded, or that her seeming powers were genuine. That she wrought miracles will be denied flatly, of course, by all persons whom the world calls sober-minded, yet there are scores of people who will swear today that she did work them in New York.

A lady whose brother was an enthusiastic believer in the wonderful Russian, but who was herself a devout Methodist and thoroughly antagonistic to Theosophy (as the new system of thought was then beginning to be called) was induced to make Mme. Blavatsky's acquaintance. They became friends though they continued widely opposed in belief. One day Mme. Blavatsky gave the other lady a necklace of beautifully carved beads of some strange substance that looked like, but was not, hard wood. "Wear them yourself," she said. "If you let anyone else have them they will disappear." The lady wore them constantly for over a year. Meantime she moved out of the city. One day her little child, who was sick and fretful, cried for the beads. She gave them to him, half laughing at herself for hesitating. The child put them around his neck and seemed pleased with his new toy, while the mother turned away to attend to some domestic duty. In a few minutes the child began crying, and the mother found him trying to take the beads off. She removed them herself and found that they were nearly one-third melted away and were hot, while the child's neck showed marks of being burned. She tells the story herself, and in the same breath denies that she believes in "any such things."

One of Mme. Blavatsky's friends, an artist, sat with her in her parlour, one day, when she suddenly said, "Make a sketch for me and I will see if I can control you." He began sketching without, he says, knowing exactly what he should draw, but thinking presently that he would make a picture of an Oriental head, he drew one. When he had finished she unlocked a drawer and showed him a facsimile of what he had drawn, excepting that the headdress was slightly different in the two pictures. The

pose, features and expression of the two could not be told apart. The artist solemnly declares that he never saw the picture and never thought of the peculiar type of face before. Such stories could be repeated by dozens, and for each one a reputable witness could be produced to swear to the truth of it. It was not, however, by the working of tricks or miracles, whichever the reader may choose to regard them, that Mme. Blavatsky made the impress she certainly made on the thought of the day. It was by the power of her own personality, vigour of her intellect, freedom and breadth of her thought, and the fluency and clearness of her powers of expression. Her mental characteristics were as remarkable as her appearance. A more impetuous or impulsive person than she never lived. She was generous and hospitable to a fault. To her intimate friends her house was Liberty Hall, and while there was nothing sumptuous or pretentious about her mode of life, she lived well and entertained constantly. She seemed physically indolent, but this was on account of her great size, which made bodily exertion onerous. Nothing like mental indolence could be noticed in her conversation, and if such a trait had ever been attributed to her, the publication of *Isis Unveiled*, her work on Eastern mysteries and religions, would have exonerated her from the charge. Without discussing the merits of the book it may be asserted that the labour involved in its production was very great.

As a friend Mme. Blavatsky was steadfast and devoted to an unusual degree. Credulous by nature, she had been imposed upon by so many that she learned to limit her circle, but up to the time she left America she was always liable to imposition on the part of any designing person.

She was unconventional, and prided herself on carrying her unconventionality to the utmost extremes. Born, so it is said, of the best lineage in Russia, she had been bred and educated not only as a lady but as an aristocrat. Discarding, as she did, the traditional belief of her family, she discarded at the same time the entire system of European civilization. During her residence in America at least, for the writer claims to know no more about her than was developed here, she protested against our civiliza-

tion as vigorously as against the Christian religion. The criticism she drew on herself by this course was merciless.

Those who knew her best believe her to have been entirely incapable of a mean act or a dishonest one. The honesty of her utterances was often questioned, but never by those who knew her well enough to understand how she was often carried away by her own eagerness and credulity.

A case in point. A ghost story was started some eight years ago by some unknown person on the east side of town, near the river. It was declared that the disembodied spirit of a watchman who had been known in his lifetime as "Old Shep" had been seen around where he had worked, and that it came to a certain dock every night in a ghostly boat. Many people in the neighbourhood of Thirtieth Street professed to have seen this, and among these persons were several policemen. Mme. Blavatsky was one of a party who visited the river front one midnight in hope of seeing the ghost. No ghost appeared, and a careful investigation of the story (which was made) failed to develop anything like respectable evidence of its truth. Yet Mme. Blavatsky always insisted that the story was true—insisted angrily when the story was ridiculed. "There are ghosts, and ghosts," she said once to the writer, when she was questioned about "Old Shep." The air that we breathe is permeated by a subtler fluid that corresponds to it, as the soul corresponds to the body of man. It is the astral fluid, and in it are the thoughts of all men, the possibilities of all acts—as in the photographer's plate there are images that remain unseen until revealed by chemical action. So the last dying thought of any person, if it be intense enough, becomes objective, and, under favourable conditions, is very apt to be seen. Only a little while ago the newspapers of this city reported the case of a man who committed suicide in his bathroom. A friend ran for a doctor against the earnest remonstrance of the dying man. On the way the friend was startled by seeing, for a moment only, the image of the dying man, clad only in his night shirt, grasping his pistol and bleeding from his death wound. This was at a considerable distance from the house where the suicide was, and the apparition disappeared almost instantly.

“That was merely the intense desire of the dying man to stop his friend. It became objective and visible when the astral man left the physical. So it is with many other apparitions. In haunted houses the last thought of the victim of a crime may remain, and the tragedy may be re-enacted thousands of times before it fades away. It is likely in the case of ‘Old Shep,’ the watchman, that he does not know he is dead, and his last thought was probably that he was going his rounds. So he will continue to go his rounds until that thought fades away, and under certain conditions he will be visible to the physical eyes of those around him. Many persons do not know when they are dead, and they go around afterward in great perplexity, sometimes for several days, because no one pays any attention to them. They feel as well as ever and talk to their friends, and are almost frantic at not being able to get any answers.” It will readily be seen from this discourse how impossible it was for anyone to hold controversy successfully with Mme. Blavatsky. Accepting as demonstrated facts, things and thoughts that seem to everyday mortals to be ingenious dreams, and flatly denying, as she did, what are held ordinarily to be the fundamental proved facts of human knowledge, there was no common ground of argument between her and most of her antagonists.

It will be asked, “What did this singular woman really believe? What was the exact ground she occupied as a controversialist?” The answer is difficult. It could, possibly, be made by digesting *Isis Unveiled*, and stating the import of that book in a sentence, if that were a possible task. Probably no one could do that satisfactorily excepting the author herself. She would say, “Science is a true and beautiful thing, but these modern scientists have not found out what it is. They borrow theories from the ancients, and dress them up in beautiful, eloquent language, and pass them off for their own productions. The ideas that Huxley advanced while he was in America are all taken from the ancients, as I shall show in my book. But they don’t any of them know what they are talking about—Huxley, Tyndall, and the rest. They refuse to investigate things which are absolutely demonstrated, and they break their noses over the origin of matter,

which is a correlation of spirit, and they reach, for a conclusion, the annihilation of man." "I am a Buddhist," she said, in reply to the obvious question which followed the statement, but "Buddhism does not hold out annihilation as the last best good. That is one of the misrepresentations of ignorant theologians. The Buddhists teach that whatever is beyond the power of human language to describe, beyond the reach of human intellect to conceive, whatever is impossible in any measure to understand, is, so far as man is concerned, nonexistent, and what we term God is therefore nonexistent. You see, it is merely a refinement of metaphysics. And we believe in the triple nature of man. We believe we are a material body, an astral body, and pure soul, or *nous*, as the Greek terms it. After the death of the material body we lead a dual existence, and finally, when purified, the soul enters *nirvana*. The astral body I spoke of is not spirit, and yet not the matter with which we are familiar. It is imponderable matter, and ordinarily is imperceptible to the senses. It is what St. Paul called 'the spiritual body.' "

Speaking of Spiritualism and its alleged manifestations, Mme. Blavatsky in the same conversation said: "The phenomena that are presented are perhaps often frauds. Perhaps not one in a hundred is a genuine communication of spirits, but that one cannot be judged by the others. It is entitled to scientific examination, and the reason the scientists don't examine it is because they are afraid. The mediums cannot deceive me. I know more about it than they do. I have lived for years in different parts of the East and have seen far more wonderful things than they can do. The whole universe is filled with spirits. It is nonsense to suppose that we are the only intelligent beings in the world. I believe there is latent spirit in all matter. I believe almost in the spirits of the elements. But all is governed by natural laws. Even in cases of apparent violation of these laws, the appearance comes from a misunderstanding of the laws. In cases of certain nervous diseases, it is recorded of some patients that they have been raised from their beds by some undiscoverable power, and it has been impossible to force them down. In such cases it has been noticed that they float feet first with any cur-

rent of air that may be passing through the room. The wonder of this ceases when you come to consider that there is no such thing as the law of gravitation as it is generally understood. The law of gravitation is only to be rationally explained in accordance with magnetic laws as Newton tried to explain it, but the world would not accept it.

“The world is fast coming to know many things that were known centuries ago, and were discarded through the superstition of theologians,” she continued. “The church professes to reprobate divination, and yet they chose their four canonical Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John by divination. They took some hundred or so of books at the Nicene Council and set them up, and those that fell down they threw aside as false, and those that stood, being those four, they accepted as true, being unable to decide the question in any other way. And out of the 318 members of the Council only two—Eusebius, the great forger, and the Emperor Constantine—were able to read.”

Talking thus by hours together when the right listener was present, and speaking always “as one having authority,” it is small wonder that Mme. Blavatsky made her modest apartments a common meeting ground for as strange a group of original thinkers as New York ever held. Not all who visited her agreed with her. Indeed, there were only a few who followed her teachings with implicit faith. Sensitive as Mme. Blavatsky was to personal ridicule and to slander, she was truly liberal in matters of opinion, and allowed as great latitude in the discussion of her beliefs as she took in discussing the beliefs of others.

The apartment she occupied was a modest flat of seven or eight rooms in West Forty-seventh Street. It was furnished plainly but comfortably, but of the furniture properly so-called, it was hard to get an exact idea, for the rooms, especially the parlours, were littered and strewn with curios of most varied description. Huge palm leaves, stuffed apes, and tiger's heads, Oriental pipes and vases, idols and cigarettes, Javanese sparrows, manuscripts, and cuckoo clocks were items only in a confusing catalogue of things not to be looked for ordinarily in a lady's parlour.

THE HARMONY WITHIN

AT AN EARLY STAGE in the career of every aspirant, time comes when he recognizes the achievement of integration in his own being as his most urgent need. The ordinary good man who has not awakened to his higher possibilities tries to follow his conscience, to be sure, but he is content to act on the personal basis of good feelings, and is not conscious of lack of integration. That consciousness marks the entrance into the depressing No-Man's-Land that stretches between goodness and spirituality, between the personal and the individual consciousness, and that has to be crossed, sooner or later, by every human soul. One of its most painful characteristics is the apparent conflict of duties which inevitably arises and which will never be completely resolved until integration on the basis of the higher nature is achieved.

When the caterpillar comes to the end of a leaf, it reaches forth to another foothold and draws itself over to it. The man who has lost his integration on the basis of the personal nature and has not yet achieved integration centred in his higher nature is in the uncomfortable position of the caterpillar suspended, as it were, in space, with secure foothold neither on the leaf he is trying to leave behind nor on that to which he is stretching out.

No matter how limited the perception, if the consciousness but functions as a unit there is a certain consistency in action, a sense of orientation in a known direction, of *belonging* in the world and where one finds oneself, that is the envy of the man who has lost his orientation on the basis of the personal nature and has not yet achieved the new in terms of his immortal Self. He finds himself speaking, acting, feeling, thinking, in a manner which he recognizes as being not in harmony with his true nature. Sometimes the inharmonious nature of his thought, feeling or action strikes him at once with the acute discomfort of a clanging discord. In other cases he recognizes the disharmony only when he attempts to review his day in the light of the Higher Self and of the great virtues which are the pattern to which he seeks to make his life conform. But whenever the recognition comes, it brings with it an almost intolerable sense of violated in-

tegrity, of what one might describe as psychic disjointedness, and a passionate wish, as Mr. Crosbie puts it, "to work as the god-man, perfect in all his parts, instead of the present sectional operation which obtains."

For the fact that lack of integration is a stage through which all must at some time pass does not justify resignation to it; in fact, the more intensely the disjointedness in consciousness is felt, the more unbearable does it become and the stronger grows the urge to achieve integration at whatever cost.

This is one aspect of the abyss which the aspirant finds behind himself, unaware of having crossed it, and over which there is no retreat. Sometimes having forced himself into the circle of ascetics he is not cognizant of the fact that he has come unprepared; and so he goes round and round his old grooves of thought, his old movements of feelings, his old modes of speech and his old ways of acting, all the time fancying that he is making progress. Thus valuable time is wasted which might have been put to real use. Till Arjuna saw his duty he was not able to take up his bow and arrow and perform it.

Once the need for integration is perceived, what can one do to hasten its achievement? Of course every effort to control the lower nature and to make it responsive to the higher has integration as its ultimate aim, but there is a right way and a wrong way of going about the achievement of such control. Theosophy gives us some valuable hints. One is that we assert firmly and often that we are not the instruments which make up our personality, any more than we are the circumstances that surround those instruments—not overlooking, however, that we ourselves forged those instruments and we ourselves created those circumstances. The way to control is not by attack in detail, adopting the modern approach, from particulars to universals, but the ancient way of going from universals to particulars. Writes Mr. Crosbie:

Begin with the idea, attitude, and purpose of control in all things that concern the vassals of our house. The advance would then be all along the line, and the habit of control established, the

balance preserved. It sums itself up in my mind as the establishment of control itself, irrespective of the things controlled

Take the position that you never fail nor fall nor slip back, but that you have not been constant and careful in guidance of your responsive, but irresponsible instrument; hence, you feel the effects through it of your lack of care. Get hold of it, take care of it, guide it, use it, but be the Self—"The man that is, that was, that ever shall be," to whom all these things are but fleeting shadows.

TOO MANY PEOPLE regard prayer as a formalized routine of words, a refuge for weaklings, or a childish petition for material things. We sadly undervalue prayer when we conceive it in these terms, just as we should underestimate rain by describing it as something that fills the birdbath in our garden. Properly understood, prayer is a mature activity indispensable to the fullest development of personality—the ultimate integration of man's highest faculties. Only in prayer do we achieve that complete and harmonious assembly of body, mind, and spirit which gives the frail human reed its unshakable strength Prayer is not only worship; it is also an invisible emanation of man's worshipping spirit—the most powerful form of energy that one can generate. The influence of prayer on the human mind and body is as demonstrable as that of secreting glands. Its results can be measured in terms of increased physical buoyancy, greater intellectual vigour, moral stamina, and a deeper understanding of the realities underlying human relationships.

If you make a habit of sincere prayer, your life will be very noticeably and profoundly altered. Prayer stamps with its indelible mark our actions and demeanour. A tranquility of bearing, a facial and bodily repose, are observed in those whose inner lives are thus enriched. Within the depths of consciousness a flame kindles. And man sees himself. He discovers his selfishness, his silly pride, his fears, his greeds, his blunders. He develops a sense of moral obligation, intellectual humility. Thus begins a journey of the soul toward the realm of grace.

—ALEXIS CARREL

ON REINCARNATION

THE CENTRAL simple idea underlying Reincarnation is that the Soul in man does not come for the first time into a human body of flesh and blood when it sees the light of day in this life. That Soul was before the birth of the body, and it has lived on this earth in other human bodies learning its lessons and garnering its experiences; then at death taking a vacation, a rest, to come back again in a new body and continue its task in this mightiest of all schools.

Each Soul attracts to itself its natural conditions. There is no misfit; healthy or ill body, beautiful or ugly disposition, a noble or mean character, an easy or difficult environment—all, all are attracted by each one of us according to Karma, our past deeds and words and feelings and thoughts. But we attract all these not in a fatalistic way to be drowned and submerged by them. Why then? So that we may learn through them; grow in purity, thus making our environment pure; control all that we attract, so that those very desire-elementals, the very devil in us, may be transformed into spiritual energies, may be raised to the stage of Divinity.

Reincarnation means Justice, unerring justice that is not human justice but Nature's Justice which acts impersonally and universally, and which therefore is also merciful and compassionate.

Reincarnation means Contentment, for what has come to us has come because of our own deeds of body or speech or mind; whatever condition is ours today, that condition is exactly what we ourselves desired—a difficult concept but a true one.

Reincarnation means Progress. From a simple life we have come to where we now are. The saints and sages of today were sinners yesterday; we will become saints and sages tomorrow.

Reincarnation means Effort, for the Soul goes from one condition to another by self-endeavour. In daily life we see this; he who wants to earn must labour; he who wants to know must learn; he who wants to serve must sacrifice.

Reincarnation means Divinity, for in our innermost nature we are Godlike, nay, we are verily Gods, and by effort and knowledge we want the "Father in Heaven" to incarnate fully and wholly in the Temple of the Body. Birth of the body is a miracle; the second birth of the twice-born, the *Dwija*, is a greater miracle still. By right action, by the true observance of the Law of Fate and Free Will or Karma, we shall attain to that Second Birth.

COURAGE and perseverance have a magical talisman, before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish into air.

—JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

THERE IS no road too long to the man who advances deliberately and without undue haste; there are no honours too distant to the man who prepares himself for them with patience.

—JEAN DE LA BRUYERE

GREAT WORKS are performed not by strength but by perseverance.

—SAMUEL JOHNSON

DID YOU ever hear of a man who had striven all his life faithfully and singly toward an object and in no measure obtained it? If a man constantly aspires, is he not elevated?

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

PERSEVERANCE is a great element of success. If you only knock long enough and loud enough at the gate, you are sure to wake up somebody.

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

THE DIVINE DISCIPLINE CALLED YOGA

THE WORD YOGA as used here signifies the method by which man can unite his finite self with the Infinite Self. The path of yoga is an inner path and too much concern with what others have said or written is apt to be more of a hindrance than a help. Though much of a general nature may undoubtedly be learnt from the study of the books, yet too much attention to them is apt to degenerate into mere theorizing about the meaning of the words, instead of trying to find out by actual experience what the facts really are. When it comes to real practice we must adventure for ourselves along the pathway whose gate is in our hearts.

The first thing to be considered before setting out on that journey is its motive. The motives which impel a man to the practice of yoga may be divided into three.

The first is the desire to escape from the burdens of life. Such a motive, however, though it is generally thought to have the sanction of famous names, is definitely an inferior one, for it is based on fear. And everyone knows that fear is a weakening emotion. In this quest, all the strength of the soul is needed, for, as the Upanishad says, "Not by the weak is this *Atman* to be attained." Courage is one of the necessary qualifications of the aspirant and it cannot grow in the soil of a timid flight from the stresses and strains of worldly life.

A second motive is the desire for psychic powers and strange experiences. This, too, will not lead to the true goal, for it is rooted in self and so strengthens the ego, the very thing that yoga aims at utterly transcending.

The third and only satisfactory motive is the love of the Eternal, the aspiration towards that white radiance which, dimly sensed, is yet "the fountain light of all our day." Fear may cause us to shrink back, turtle-like, from the contacts of life, curiosity may help us to expand ourselves into the remotest corners of the manifested universe, but only with the wings of an ardent

love can we soar upon the Swan's Path to the Sun beyond the darkness.

The love which is here referred to is, however, not a love for the purely transcendent Eternal alone, but for that Eternal as manifested in the universe. Quite early on the path the aspirant comes to see, if only dimly, that the one Eternal is within the hearts of all that live, within even those things that we call dead. Therefore, he who seeks to tread the way of self-transcendence must cease to think of any proud and exclusive treading of the path for his own self alone. There have been those who have made of their knowledge a barrier between themselves and their fellow-men. This path is one which all will some day tread, few though there be at any given moment. Therefore the aspirant must seek to share such knowledge as he has with his fellows or else he will build up barriers of illusion around himself, the great illusion of separateness. All life is one and he who wishes to save his own soul shall lose it.

So much for the motivation of the quest; we have now to consider the means to be employed. The cause of bondage lies in the mind, for, as we read in *Maitri Upanishad*: "The world is verily the mind; therefore the latter should be purified with all effort. As a man's mind is, so he becomes; this is the eternal secret." It is by the mind that the whole mass of suffering that we call the world has been evolved, and it is in the mind that the dread spectre must be exorcized, so that in its stead the vision of harmonious Reality may dawn.

The web of fate has been woven in our own minds and it is there that it must be rent if we are to stand in our own true nature and cease to be what Hermes termed mere processions of Fate. But it is not by any sudden wrench that the task can be accomplished. Rather, the woven tissue must be unpicked thread by thread and therefore the first task that faces us is to train ourselves to think clearly, to turn the light of clear consciousness upon the very thought processes themselves as they twine and untwine, weaving the web of the world.

With most people thought is but the servant of desire. Thoughts come and go, obeying, not their own laws, but those of

the sub-mental desire nature. But it is not necessary that thought should be the slave of desire in this manner. If it is trained to follow its proper laws, the laws inherent in its own higher nature, it is capable of revealing the truth (at least upon its own plane, for there is that which is still higher) and of becoming the rudder of the soul, enabling the latter to cleave a passage through the waters of desire, regardless of their hostile currents. Therefore it is taught that we should live a life full of thought so that by degrees the mind may learn to be the master in its own house.

For this to happen, though, it is necessary for the thought to be always clear. An unclear thought can no more be a safe guide than a crooked line can be said to point in any particular direction. We must above all check the tendency to allow vague and woolly thoughts to pursue one another in our minds like so many sheep. Such confused thinking is quite useless. Each thought must stand out clearly like an object seen in bright sunshine, for only then will it be able to resist the fatal downward pull and to escape the monsters of desire which are ever waiting with open mouths to drag it into the depths below.

At the same time care must be taken to guard against an egoistic pride, the besetting vice of the ordinary intellectual, who is only too prone to fancy himself a being apart and to look down on those struggling beneath him. The aspirant must therefore guard himself carefully against any tendency to separate himself from his fellows. This he can do only by an effort of imaginative sympathy. He must strive always to feel himself into the hearts of those he meets in his daily life, to see things from their point of view, to feel the impact of events and particularly the impact of his own actions as they would feel them. In this way he will learn to understand instead of blaming his fellow-men, and will learn also that his enemies are not the villains that he previously supposed them to be but merely rather foolish people, prone to deceive themselves about their motives as is he himself.

Training himself in this way the aspirant gradually breaks down the barriers that separate him from his fellow beings and

will acquire the power of thinking and acting in an impersonal manner, for he will no longer concern himself solely with his own point of view. His actions will become those that are best for all concerned and so his body will become an instrument for the fulfilment, not of his own selfish desires, but of the needs of all. That which embraces all will act through him, though those for whom he acts may know it not.

To return to the mind and its thought processes, the Upanishad quoted above goes on to say, "It is the mind that is the cause of the bondage or liberation of men." By listening to the voices of desire the mind has led us into all this suffering. Its winged freedom has been lost by stooping to the lure of the senses and its feet have become entangled in the sticky lime. This being so, some have sought to free it by a forcible asceticism; they torture the body in the hope of freeing the soul. This self-torture may take many forms, from the crudely sensational fastings and beds of spikes to the more subtle puritanism which treats all bodily joys as something evil to be avoided.

It is true that, by weakening the body, visions and psychic experiences may result, but it is also true that those visions are deceitful mirages which have misled many, for the tormented body reacts upon the mind and warps its visions so that it mistakes the distorted images of its own desires for truth. Many of the grotesque and fanatical cults that have arisen in the world owe their being to this very cause and many a would-be mystic has lost himself among self-created illusions.

The best means of freeing the mind is not by weakening the body but by strengthening the mind itself by constant exercise. Whatever is not clear, whatever puzzles one in life should be meditated upon constantly until the answer comes. If, on the other hand, the attempt is given up because of its difficulty and the subject is allowed to sink back into the limbo of unsolved problems, the mind will be correspondingly weakened. This strengthening and perfecting of mind is of the utmost importance because it is the mind that is the gateway to the real Consciousness, and as said in the *Kathopanishad*, "By the mind is It [the *Atman*] to be attained."

The next step is to detach oneself from the mind. One should ask oneself the question, "Whose is this mind and what is the 'I' who has found out and is contemplating it?" One must be able to view the mind as something separate and distinct from the viewer of the mind.

Having detached oneself from the mind, one has to watch calmly the flux of thoughts as they come and go, to observe them with the same impartial objectivity with which one would observe a stream of passers-by outside one's window. The aspirant must carefully observe how the thought stream coheres together and what are its laws. Just as he would observe that in the street a band (of a certain recognizable sort) is nearly always followed by soldiers, and a dead body by a procession of mourners, so he must observe that certain states of mind, which he must learn to recognize, are always followed by certain other ones, beneficial or harmful.

Having observed the varying results of the different thoughts and feelings that flow through the mind, the next step, an obvious one, is to bend one's energies to the task of guiding them. Mental states which are known to have harmful effects must be nipped in the bud before those effects have time to manifest, and the easier method of doing this is to deliberately invoke their opposite states. Thoughts, on the other hand, which have been seen to be beneficial should be encouraged. Once more it must be emphasized that this is an individual process. No set of rules in books, no hard and fast ethical codes are adequate to replace living personal experience. There must be complete freedom from conventional ethical prepossessions if this practice is not to lapse into sterility.

One habit in particular must be carefully checked—that of allowing the mind to run on aimlessly from one thing to another, of letting it take sudden flights from one subject to another and then back to the first without any control at all. Such a habit of mind is fatal for yoga for it is the way of the mind when being led by desire, from which leading-strings it is the object of yoga to free it. Deep and dark run those, mainly unconscious, currents and when the mind is jumping about aim

lessly it is always a sign that their sinister guidance is in operation and should be checked. Whatever one is thinking about should form the sole object of the mental processes, and, as said before, however many times it may be necessary to come back, the effort to understand should not be abandoned till the problem becomes quite clear. Incidentally, the way to deal with a jumping or drifting mind is to stand back from it and observe whither it is drifting and why. Once that is found out, it will usually be relatively easy to bring it into control once more; mere attempts to hold it steady by force are not likely to be very successful. As in the Japanese art of jujitsu, not brute strength but skill is what is required.

Next, whenever the mind is faced by two alternatives there is always present an intuition, even if it be but the dimmest sort of "feeling," that one of the ways is right and the other wrong or, at least, that one of them is better than the other and that, as the *Kathopanishad* puts it, the better (*Sreya*) is one thing and the pleasant (*Preya*) is another.

This intuition is always present, though, if not cultivated, it remains dim and we can easily blind ourselves to its presence. Nevertheless it is of the utmost importance, for it is the key to the door that leads from the lower mind to the higher and beyond. It must, therefore, be carefully cultivated and strengthened by paying attention to and following it. Just as the trained ear of the engineer recognizes even a small "knock" in his engines when nothing is perceptible to the ordinary untrained ear, so the aspirant must be always ready to listen for that subtle inner voice and, having heard it, he must always obey and allow that intuition to guide his other mental processes. Only in this way can he rise to a constant functioning in his higher mind. The path is extremely difficult and it is no wonder that many psychologists throw up their hands and proclaim that the mind is inevitably and permanently the slave of desire. But there is a way out of that slough of despond, and constant meditation along the above lines is the best way of treading it.

We now come to the problem of the control of the senses, a subject that many consider should be taken up at the very com-

mencement. In the classical statement of the four qualifications, however, *dama* or control of the senses follows and does not precede *sama* or control of mind. The senses are the offspring of the mind as the *Sankhya* philosophy taught long ago. To attempt to control the senses before the mind is in control is like trying to bale the water out of a leaky ship without first stopping the leak.

At this stage, however, they too must be brought under control and this is done by keeping them under the guidance of a mind that is itself controlled by the inner voice referred to above. This is also the method recommended in the *Kathopani-shad*, where, having compared the body to a chariot, the senses to the horses, the mind to the reins and the *buddhi* (the inner intuition, the faculty giving certain knowledge of right and wrong) to the charioteer, it goes on to say: "He who is possessed of *buddhi*, whose mind always firmly adheres (to that *buddhi*), his senses are under control like the good horses of a chariot driver."

It will thus be seen that the often advocated plan of attempting to control the senses first and then passing on to the mind is contrary to Upanishadic teaching. It is also contrary to the facts. Without control of the mind, sense control is an impossibility, but once the mind is trained to follow the inner voice, it becomes relatively easy.

The senses should not be allowed to work at their own will in a random manner. Whatever is experienced through or by the senses should have a definite purpose and that purpose should be clearly focused in thought before they are allowed to work. Later on the yogi will be able to withdraw his consciousness from his senses at will, leaving them perfectly inactive, but in these initial stages the aspirant will find that difficult, if not impossible, and he may content himself with allowing them to act under the discipline of the mind.

Above all, he should not try to kill out his senses by harsh treatment of them or by a forced inactivity. A wise moderation and not mortifying asceticism is what is needed. The latter has most disastrous results, for, while the outer senses are being deadened by torture, the inner senses, those that are manifest in dream

or phantasy, run riot and destroy all peace within the mind. The inner senses (which are connected with what some modern psychologists term the unconscious) will take a frightful revenge for any forcible suppression of their outer counterparts. Neurosis and even insanity may easily follow any such misguided attempts. Certainly no inner peace can be attained by such methods. At the same time, the mind itself must not be allowed to be invaded and captured by sensuous thoughts. The untrained mind is only too willing to allow itself to be mastered by the swarming phantasies which surge up from the desire nature, but the disciplined mind, knowing that that is the downward path and leads to danger, will carefully avoid such a state, and, however active the inner or outer senses may be allowed to be, will maintain its own watchfulness, calm and untouched by the sense life below.

The intuition-guided mind must be used as both compass and rudder to control the riotous phantasying of the inner senses, and, that being controlled, the outer sense life will come under control as well, just as the whole body of a horse is directed merely by turning his head. To give just one example, many aspirants fight a continuous losing battle against their sex desires simply because they try to control the outward manifestations while allowing the inner phantasy to play freely. The more they check themselves without, the more riotously surges the phantasy within, whereas, if they would first control the latter, the former would come quite naturally and easily to heel.

Finally, the aspirant should guard himself against any feeling of disappointment. This is one of the greatest snares on the path. The path is an arduous one, for the whole personality has to be remade so that it is centred above and not below. When we consider the countless lives we have spent upon the downward path and the fact that our whole environment, social, literary and scientific, is, in the majority of cases, of such a nature that it hinders rather than helps our struggles, it is small wonder that progress should be slow. All around us are those who say that the task is an impossible, even a chimerical one, and urge us to be content with the life of the senses. Even the so-called religious

people are of little help, for they say one thing with their lips but fear its opposite within their hearts. That is why it is inevitable that, from time to time, grey and despondent thoughts should steal into the heart, whispering that in all these years of practice no progress has been made.

But the seductive whispers are false and he who has strengthened his mind by yoga knows that they are false. If he will follow his proper technique and examine the causes for the arising of these moods he will find that they invariably arise from self-centred thoughts, hankering after recognition, super-normal powers and other outward shows, which have taken advantage of a weakened mental control to revenge themselves for past suppression by blackening everything within their reach.

The finest timber comes from the slowest growing trees, and he who expects to blossom into a yogi in a few months or even in a few years of practice is bound to be disappointed and had better leave the whole subject alone. He, however, who has the sincerity and courage to face whatever is in him, the persistence to go on with his struggle in the face of obstacles within and without, and the humility to recognize that all that he has done is to take the first few steps on a tremendous journey, is certain to achieve something which he would not give away in exchange even for the whole world.

I CONTEND that the death penalty is a relic of savagery, perpetuated by custom and in ignorance, maintained by false assumptions and consummated in a killing that is legal in name only; it is illogical and inconsistent with religion and morality; it condones in an act of an agent what would be murder for an individual; it carries out in secrecy what would be revolting in public; it is man-made and fallible and, therefore, subject to gross miscarriage of justice; it is ineffective and sets an example for murder; it violates the teachings of Jesus and the conscience of enlightened mankind.

—LEWIS LAWES (warden of Sing Sing)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

To some people, words are more than sounds, emotions more than feelings. To a synesthete, either can become physical sights. For instance, a woman who is not psychotic or a drug-addict, "sees" black cinders and coals spew from a short-tempered person's mouth, as he talks brusquely.

Such visions are part of a rare condition called synesthesia, says neurologist Richard Cytowic, president of Capitol Neurology Laboratories, in Washington, D.C. The strange "sensory cross talk" wherein sounds are "seen" and colours "heard" is neither normal nor abnormal, he notes. "It's like a bonus. Your senses give you more than you bargained for." (*Omni*, June 1983)

In its commonest form, Cytowic explains, synesthesia is "coloured-hearing," with sounds evoking colours or images. When 19th century French poet Arthur Rimbaud wrote about the precise hues of *A*, *E*, and *U*, for instance, he may have been expressing his synesthetic sense. But after studying the syndrome for years, Cytowic has also discovered unique cases: One man can even "feel" every flavour as a distinct geometric shape pressed against his face or hands.

As is usual with investigators who try to seek a physical explanation for out-of-the-ordinary faculties and phenomena, Cytowic recently conducted a series of cerebral blood-flow tests. Monitoring patients in mid-synesthesia, he traced the greatest blood flow and brain activity to the limbic system, the brain's emotional centre. "We were surprised," he confesses. "We expected to see this activity in the cerebral cortex, which governs thinking, imagination, and day-dreaming. The limbic system determines life-and-death responses beyond our control."

"One sense must certainly merge at some point into the other," says H.P.B. in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (p. 44), for "the senses are interchangeable once we admit correlation." There are references in the Vedas and Upanishads, she says, where sounds are said to be perceived. The phenomenon, therefore, has been known since millennia.

Theosophy posits that our physical sense-organs serve simply as channels for the real inner senses which reside in the astral body. In Mr. Judge's words:

The eye cannot see nor the ear hear, of themselves. In the Upanishads the pupil is asked: "What is the sight of the eye, and the hearing of the ear?" replying, that these powers reside solely with inner organs of the soul, using the material body as the means for experiencing the phenomena of material life. Without the presence of this indwelling, informing, hearing and seeing power—or being—this collection of particles now deified as *body* is dead or blind. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 12)

H.P.B. deals with the subject of the interchangeability of the senses at some length, with actual examples, in her article "Occult or Exact Science?" (*THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, July, August and September 1964)

What makes plants sense seasonal changes? What alarm clocks wake them up when springtime arrives?

In the June *Science Digest*, it is noted that plants rely on myriad environmental signals to determine the time of the year. What is more, different plants—and even different parts of the same plant—may be responsive to different cues. It is admitted that exactly how external cues tip off a plant about the time of year is not known, though it is suspected that these cues initiate internal changes, such as a modification in the level of growth hormones.

Is it all so simple as that? Are internal changes and plant growth itself any more understood than the growth of any other organism? The last few decades, however, have seen many striking discoveries tending toward a distinct advance in the status of the vegetable world, which is now admitted to have a consciousness of its own.

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (pp. 97-98) we read:

The different variations of plants, etc., are the broken rays of one Ray. As the ray passes through the seven planes, it is broken on every plane into thousands and millions of rays down to the world of forms, every ray breaking into an intelligence on its own plane. So that we see every plant has an intelligence, or its own purpose of life, so to speak, and its own freewill, to a degree. This is how I, at any rate, understand it. A plant can be receptive or nonreceptive, though *every plant without an exception* feels and has a consciousness of its own. But besides the latter, every plant—from the gigantic tree down to the minutest fern or blade of grass—has, Occultism teaches us, an Elemental entity of which it is the outward clothing on this plane. Hence, the Kabalists and the mediaeval Rosicrucians are always found talking of Elementals. According to them, everything possessed an Elemental sprite....

H.P.B. goes on to explain that each plant has its Karma and it is on this that its growth depends. "This Karma proceeds from the lower Dhyān Chohans who trace out and plan the growth of the tree."

Perennially, the issue of intelligence in nature versus "blind force" comes up for discussion. Ruskin Bond's article in the *Sunday Review of The Times of India* for July 10 discusses the colour scheme of insects and the changes it undergoes when the surroundings make this necessary. No two species have precisely the same form and colour.

The stick insects are so formed as to closely resemble their surroundings and so escape notice. Leaf insects are coloured like a leaf, which may be green or dry. Many moths sit with expanded wings and their colour scheme blends so well with the bark on which they sit that the moth often escapes notice. Grasshoppers, too, have protective colouring. A young grasshopper that lives in green grass is green, but becomes dry-grass colour when the grass ripens and the insect becomes full grown. A caterpillar that sits on a leafy tree is green; but when it has to crawl down the

trunk to reach the ground and pupate, it becomes brown, as the green would make it conspicuous against the bark of the tree.

Insects that are distasteful to birds and other predaceous insects because of their taste, odour, or the oils they excrete, are often very brightly coloured. Their colour scheme is protective as a young insect-eating bird will remember an unappetizing insect by its vivid colours, and will leave it alone at the next encounter. It is believed that some insects which are tasty have copied the bright warning colours of the unpleasant insects, and so managed to survive! This is known as insect mimicry. Edible butterflies mimic nasty ones; moths mimic butterflies; flies mimic moths, bees or wasps.

The leaf butterfly is an interesting example of "deceptive" colouring. The upper wings are brightly coloured, and the insect in flight is conspicuous. But when it suddenly settles with wings folded, it exactly resembles a dead leaf. Many butterflies have distinctive marks on the tips of their wings; these are supposed to mislead a bird which attempts to seize them, the bird snatching at the bright spot on the wing and so missing the butterfly which may lose a part of its wing yet escape alive.

Some insects have a scheme of colouring that is meant to terrify an enemy or frighten it away. Such is the hawk moth caterpillar, which when alarmed suddenly exposes large eye-like spots and looks like a ferocious snake. Many caterpillars have such devices, coloured spots and stripes and waving hair-tassels.

In the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, H.P.B. shows that neither the natural selection theory nor the vitalistic theory of "protection" can account for the varied phenomena of imitation throughout the lower kingdoms. What, then, is the guiding intelligence in Nature? H.P.B. explains:

Every form, we are told, is built in accordance with the model traced for it in the Eternity and reflected in the DIVINE MIND. There are hierarchies of "Builders of form," and series of forms and degrees, from the highest to the lowest. While the former are shaped under the guidance of the "Builders," the gods, "Cosmocratores," the latter are fashioned by the Elementals or Na-

ture Spirits. As an example of this, look at the strange insects and at some reptiles and non-vertebrate creatures, which so closely imitate, not only in their colour but by their outward shape, leaves, flowers, moss-covered branches and other so-called "inanimate" things. Shall we take "natural selection" and the explanations of Darwinists as a solution? I trust not. The theory of natural selection is not only utterly inadequate to explain this mysterious faculty of imitation in the realm of being, but gives also an entirely false conception of the importance of such imitative faculty as a "potent weapon in the struggle for life." And if this imitative faculty is once proved—as it can easily be—an absolute *misfit* for the Darwinian frame; *i.e.*, if its alleged use, in connection with the so-called "survival of the fittest" is shown to be a speculation which cannot stand close analysis, to what then can the fact of this faculty be attributed? All of you have seen insects which copy with almost a mirror-like fidelity the colour and even outward form of plants, leaves, flowers, pieces of dead twigs, etc. Nor is this a law but rather a frequent exception. What then but an invisible intelligence *outside* the insect can copy with such accuracy from larger originals? (pp. 129-30)

A much larger conception of natural intelligence is thus needed to explain the patterning habits of Nature—one which includes the grand philosophical idea of an archetypal world of forms, the impersonal guiding intelligences which are the agents of the Divine Mind, and the lesser hierarchies or "builders" that execute the evolutionary design. In the words of *The Secret Doctrine*:

... what is called "unconscious Nature" is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (Elementals) guided by High Planetary Spirits (Dhyān Chohans), whose collective aggregate forms the manifested *verbum* of the unmanifested LOCOS, and constitutes at one and the same time the MIND of the Universe and its immutable LAW. (I. 277-78)

The *Bulletin of the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture* for June publishes an 1898 dialogue between Swami Vivekananda and Rai Rambrahma Sanyal Bahadur, Superintendent of the Zoo-

logical Gardens, Calcutta. Replying to the latter's questions about the Darwinian theory and the teaching of ancient Indian philosophers on the subject of evolution, Vivekananda explained the Sankhya-Yoga view:

You are certainly aware of the laws of struggle for existence, survival of the fittest, natural selection, and so forth, which have been held by Western scholars to be the causes of elevating a lower species to a higher. But none of these has been advocated as the cause of that in the system of Patanjali. Patanjali holds that the transformation of one species into another is effected by the "in-filling of nature" (*prakrityapurat*). It is not that this is done by constant struggle against obstacles. In my opinion, struggle and competition sometimes stand in the way of a being's attaining its perfection. If the evolution of an animal is effected by the destruction of a thousand others, then one must confess that this evolution is doing very little good to the world. Taking it for granted that it conduces to physical well-being, we cannot help admitting that it is a serious obstacle to spiritual development. According to the philosophers of our country, every being is a perfect Soul, and the diversity of evolution and manifestation of nature is simply due to the difference in the degree of manifestation of this Soul. The moment the obstacles to the evolution and manifestation of nature are completely removed, the Soul manifests Itself perfectly. Whatever may happen in the lower strata of nature's evolutions, in the higher strata, at any rate, it is not true that it is only by constantly struggling against obstacles that one has to go beyond them. Rather it is observed that there the obstacles give way and a greater manifestation of the Soul takes place through education and culture, through concentration and meditation, and above all through sacrifice. Therefore, to designate the obstacles not as the effects but as the causes of Soul-manifestation, and describe them as aiding this wonderful diversity of nature, is not consonant with reason. The attempt to remove evil from the world by killing a thousand evil-doers, only adds to the evil in the world. But if the people can be made to desist from evil-doing by means of spiritual instruction, there is no more evil in the world. Now, see how horrible the Western struggle theory becomes!

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DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that basis. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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