

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 psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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MACHINE MINDS VS. LIVING MINDS

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AS Theosophical ideas spread, enlivening the mind, the hollowness and the falsehood of the ways of modern life become clearer to us. There is a great deal of mental laziness and much mental ado about this discovery and that point of view in modern knowledge. Actual clear thinking is rare. A sign of this is the increasing number of publications of all kinds—newspapers, periodicals and books. People fancy that they are instructing their minds by perusing much of this output. Good books are a necessity, but there is as little discrimination in the selection of reading matter as there is in the choosing of foodstuffs. In spite of the fact that the school-master is abroad, a very large number of minds are not living minds; they are machine-minds—the column of a newspaper or the page of a book sets those machines working and as a consequence they pour out everywhere tons and tons of talk, mostly about nothing or about plans which lead often to worse than nothing.

We speak of this as the Machine Age; the most objectionable kind of machine is the modern brain-mind; human cerebration has become a mechanical, non-creative process. It is not wrong to call the minds of most people dead units; they have not begun to breathe or to live. The viability of the mind often results from bodily pain, and most from anguish of the heart. But though anguished hearts desire to know the meaning of conflict and the purpose of life, they often are misled; in nine cases out of ten, the inquirers go astray and though they pass from pain to pain they learn little and their afflictions not only continue but increase.

One of the difficulties is that many authors and columnists as-

sert that they are delivering messages for the healing of the nations. Among these "messengers" there are many sincere and earnest individuals. But their education has confused their own minds, which now need cleansing. The task, therefore, of the Theosophical worker becomes more complex. In addition to the slumbering minds which he encounters, he also comes upon ghost-minds—minds which are like the so-called "spirits" of the dead, who talk at random and who give messages which are meaningless and nonsensical. The Theosophical worker must be energetic and he must maintain the penetrating power of his own perceptions. It does little good to discuss what is wrong and how it is wrong; present the truth and leave it to the hearer to discern it. The practical difficulty is that often the Theosophical worker himself is not able to pierce through the crust of false ideas which conceal the mind of the inquirer; again, he is often not sufficiently well versed in his own philosophy to indicate the correct line of teaching. It is comparatively easy to enliven the uneducated and unsophisticated mind; to control the ghostly mind which shifts from subject to subject and which, having come to learn, remains to teach, is a far more difficult task. How can the devotee of Theosophy prepare himself to meet these difficulties?

He can prepare himself by enlivening his own mind, by making it viable, so that he may begin to live intelligently. The Theosophical life is the intelligent life, for in living it we have to use the rational explanations which the science of Occultism offers for all phenomena. What we eat must be intelligently eaten; what we read must be intelligently read; the exercise of body and of brain must be intelligently performed. Every turn in our day-to-day life should be intelligently taken. One who is not familiar with our philosophy can excuse a mistaken course by the plea, "I did the best I knew." Not so the student of Theosophy, for he has within reach doctrines which can afford him the right basis for action. That first requisite is not even the will to act but the knowledge of the nature of human consciousness, the realization of the mind as the organ of thought and of the Soul as the Perceiver of the mind's actions.

The world of phenomena is not only the world of objects, but also the inner, vital world wherein changes in those objects take place. For example, we observe a rock. That object is visible, but it has invisible properties which are continuously changing, thus affecting the character of the rock. So in all things. In us too the growth or the decay of the body takes place, and the process is invisible; only in the course of time do the changes produced be-

come visible. The grooves in the brain, the quality of its grey matter, are visible; but what made those grooves, what qualified that grey matter, is unknown to us. Occultism, however, informs us about the real causal forces which create these effects.

It is the study of our own brain actions, our own thoughts, our own mental images and the way in which our consciousness is entwined in these which gives us the clue. Our daily self-examination should help us in disentangling our consciousness from the processes of thought, will and feeling. To learn to perceive implies that the Soul as Perceiver, separating itself from its perceptions, is able to observe the play-*lila*, the illusion-*maya*, of those perceptions. We are responsible for our perceptions as much as a painter or a poet is responsible for his pictures or his poems. Our perceptions affect other people and not only ourselves. "I see it this way," someone says, and often it is not recognized that his way of seeing affects others, or again that his way has been the way of others in the past. For, modes of action are in accordance with the mental-emotional deposits of people, and just as the number of chemical elements is fixed, so also the number of alchemical or psychical elements is definite. However staggeringly vast the number of objects on earth, logically we can perceive that their total represents a definite number. So also with psychological phenomena. Men and women appropriate at any given time a certain number of tangible physical objects for their own use; so also their world of psychic phenomena, *i.e.*, their universe of perceptions, is peopled with a definite number of images resulting from the activity of thought-will-feeling.

The world is a stage, and each one of us plays the dual role of actor and spectator. The play is going on, and with the Soul as spectator we are witnessing the performance of the assemblage of our perceptions. When the student has learnt in some measure to witness calmly the play of his own perceptions, he is ready to enliven the minds of others, whether they be infant unsophisticated minds, or the ghostly minds of persons who have bartered away their psycho-spiritual wealth in the wilderness that they call civilization.

PHYSICS is the study of the structure of consciousness. The stuff of the world is mind stuff.

—SIR ARTHUR EDDINGTON

THE RELIGION OF RESPONSIBILITY

THERE is but One Self. Theoretically the student may sense the truth, but ordinarily he sees the outer veils of matter that obstruct his vision of the One and make of the world but a seeming mass of separated forms. There is but One Life, though there are multitudinous forms; One Will, but multitudinous wills; One Desire, but multitudinous desires; One Man or Humanity, but multitudinous men. The eleventh chapter of the *Gita* explains that all mouths, all arms, all eyes are bound together in Krishna—the One. Yet man fights with man and fails to see in the face of his enemy the reflection of the One Self—that is, of himself!

Theosophy has sometimes been defined as the religion of responsibility. No student can depend on the exertions of others in his behalf; neither can he hope to escape in a miraculous way the results of his actions. More—only by self-induced and self-devised ways and means can he progress. He is told to believe nothing unless it agrees with his reason. This means sincere effort on his part all the time, and only through hard work, practice and discipline can he change his old habit of dependence on things, people, other ideas.

If we look at the results of other-dependence we can see why it has to be discarded. Other-dependence leads to the cessation of thought, which is the soul of action, and so to a negation of spiritual life. Nations today are depending on their leaders, good or bad, and few men are vitally helping their countries by assuming their individual responsibility for its actions. People depend on medicines, vaccines, serums, instead of thinking for themselves; they depend on preparations for war, instead of on that which would make war unnecessary. People are shelving more and more their responsibilities, and a spirit of *laissez faire*, apathy, dependence, is growing rapidly.

This is the manifestation of Other-Dependence.

What is Independence? In *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Mr. Judge says:

Say, Brother Jasper, are you tired? I am. Not tired of fate or of the great "Leaders of the World," but with all these people who gape and gape and are (excuse me) so Americanly "independent," as if men were ever independent of each other.

We forget the real aspect of independence and mostly think of it as the condition of being able to do just as we please—self-will.

We fail to realize that this false independence is caused by that aspect of mind which has become enveloped in the desires of the lower nature. We demand the right to go our own way in terms of what we think we know. Since we are free to choose, we can do so; nothing hinders us. All that happens is that we receive the fruits of our action, "looked for, unlooked for and mixed." Our lack of knowledge makes us rush ahead, self-determined, asserting our freedom of choice. Because physical science has demonstrated certain laws to us, we obey them and use them for our benefit. If we could impress ourselves deeply enough with the truth that every particle of matter is under the operation of the Great Law, and that therefore our actions either go with it or counter to it, we would find life much easier. We learn that a line has length but no breadth; that certain mechanisms produce certain effects; that too strong a current should not be passed through electric wires. We are also taught that hatred ceaseth not by hatred but by love, and we see this demonstrated before our eyes in the antagonism between nations and races. But while we obey the former laws, we refuse to obey the latter. In both cases we are bound by Law, though we are independent as regards whether we obey or disobey. We need to learn that ethical statements are statements of law, that there is no one to punish us if we disobey, and no one to reward us if we obey; we merely get certain effects which are hindrances or helps in progress.

To attain complete independence, irrespective of the Law of Interdependence, is to experience the loneliness of *Avitchi*.

What is Self-dependence? Dependence on the Self means the self-conscious use of natural laws. We surrender our vaunted "independence," which is an illusion, and conform to the Law. This surrender of the personal will to the One Will has been spoken of by all Teachers. Was it not Paul who told us not to "kick against the pricks"? Are we not told, "Give up thy life, if thou wouldst live"? Plotinus said, "Leave nothing of myself in me"; and the *Gita* tells us, "Place, then, thy heart on Me, penetrate Me with thy understanding."

H.P.B. tells us:

It is only when the power of the passions is dead altogether, and when they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will; when not only all the lusts and longings of the flesh are dead, but also the recognition of the personal Self is killed out and the "astral" has been reduced in consequence to a

cipher, that the Union with the "Higher Self" can take place. Then when the "Astral" reflects only the conquered man, the still living but no more the longing, selfish personality, then the brilliant *Augoeides*, the divine SELF, can vibrate in conscious harmony with both the poles of the human Entity—the man of matter purified and the ever pure Spiritual Soul—and stand in the presence of the MASTER SELF, the Christos of the mystic Gnostic, blended, merged into, and one with IT for ever.

Such a change cannot take place without suffering. To die is to give up earth-life; to be born is to give up devachanic life; to live in spirit is to give up the personal life; to become obedient to the One Will means the death of the lower personal will. With our limited vision we think that this surrender means bondage or vegetative existence. We have to learn to understand that such Self-dependence is complete freedom. Our "independence" is shown in that, in spite of all friends and custom, we decide to be dependent on the Self. The impersonality of the Law is our safeguard, and on the moral and spiritual planes there is no more compulsion on us to obey the laws than on the physical plane. If we refuse to learn the laws of electricity ourselves, and refuse to listen to those who have done so, whom can we blame if we kill ourselves? If we refuse to study the moral and spiritual laws, or, after listening to those who have studied them refuse to live in accordance with them, whom shall we blame if we destroy ourselves?

We think of the Mahatmas as Great Beings who have arrived at a far higher stage of evolution than we have. Yet, "one and all of these 'Teachers' are subject to the same inviolable law."

Mr. Judge tells us:

Make up your mind that in some part of your nature somewhere there is that which desires to be of use to the world. . . .

Rely within yourself on your Higher Self always. . . . Persevere, and little by little *new ideals* and thought-forms will drive out of you the old ones. This is the eternal process.

KEEP your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others.

—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

OUR LURES AND OUR PANACEA

THE injunction of the *Gita* that we should perform our own duty is stressed in the other instruction which states that another's duty is full of danger. The primary difficulty which a student experiences in discerning what is action and what inaction—and what action in inaction and inaction in action mean—is raised by this: which are one's own duties that have to be performed and which are the duties of another that have to be eschewed?

The word "duty" is the English rendering of Dharma, a much more comprehensive term which includes not only the doing of deeds but also the expressing of the properties of our own real nature. To do is only one aspect of man's life-process. Just as the physical body is the least important of our constituents, so also are visible deeds—from one point of view—our most ephemeral expressions. Desires, thoughts, words exist at the back of every deed and these are more important. But without a physical body the gathering of experience is not possible and we perceive its importance in the fact that Great Ones incarnate or embody Themselves for the fulfilment of Their mission. Similarly deeds which embody pure desire and noble thoughts should be the avatars of our own Spirit-Being.

Numerous are the objects which lure us from the path of duty; among these are three which are most general—the lure of soul-progress; the lure of helping others; the lure of self-satisfaction, which in reality is self-righteousness. Overcoming these three is of course possible and the force which conquers these lures is the force of Duty.

When a student understands the vast scheme of human progression and perfection and sees the place of the Great Guides of human evolution, his feelings of gratitude and reverence are aroused and he, most naturally, desires to change his life so that he may offer himself to Them in the service of all. Recognizing that soul-progress is essential, he sets about finding ways and means of self-improvement. In doing so, he often overlooks the path of congenital duties. The Westerner, for example, thinks of leaving his duties at home to visit India; the Indian, of leaving his home to mount the Himalayas: both, in themselves, represent a grand objective; they are but symbolic of the journey to the East—that of the human consciousness to the Cave of the Heart. Many a Westerner coming to India has failed to find the Light; many a pious Hindu ascending the Himalayas has returned disappointed. They undertook the pilgrimage on a false perception.

The prior psychological going to the Heart was not undertaken. Similarly, many Theosophical students adopt outer rites and habits of body, like vegetarianism, forgetting H.P.B.'s remark that elephants and cows are that; or sitting for meditation instead of meditating; or doing this or that without inner perception and inner understanding. These latter are not born of head-learning, *i.e.*, through the reading of Theosophical textbooks. They unfold in us when our own congenital duties are performed and not shirked, but performed with a new attitude which Theosophical knowledge begets.

Soul-progress is not made because we possess Theosophical books, but because we use the teachings they contain. Soul-progress is not achieved because we regularly attend our Lodge meetings and classes, but because we re-energize ourselves at each of them so that outside of the Lodge we are able to practise Theosophy. Soul-progress is not attained because we become exponents of Theosophy, but because we have made a serious and a sincere attempt to fit ourselves to help and teach others impersonally. In all these, and in other directions also, it is by the Talisman of Duty that soul-progress takes place. No one ever made real advance on the spiritual path by abandoning congenital duties, or by their half-hearted performance. Rapid strides on the Path of Holiness are made by him who attends to the small plain duties of life with a chastened and tranquil attitude; who does his duty by every duty, but with the conviction and the faith that within dwells the Inner Ruler, the Immortal King.

The second lure is the lure of helping others: this naturally follows the lure of progress. Service being *the* channel named in Theosophy for progress and for drawing Masters' attention, students move here, turn there, forcing themselves to be helpful. Often in attempting to aid others a student interferes in the duties of another. This has a double disadvantage: in trying to force himself to adopt the way of service of another, the student not only mixes himself in the latter's affairs, which are none of his business, but also runs the risk of neglecting his own Dharma. Mr. Judge has said that to seek conditions so that service may be done is not the right way. In another place he writes:

It is not that you must rush madly or boldly out *to do, to do*. Do what you find to do. Desire ardently to do it, and even when you shall not have succeeded in carrying anything out but some small duties, some words of warning, your strong desire will strike like Vulcan upon other hearts in the world, and suddenly you will

find that done which you had longed to be the doer of. Then rejoice that another had been so fortunate as to make such a meritorious Karma. Thus, like the rivers running into the unswelling, passive ocean, will your desires enter into your heart.

Of the three lures, that of self-satisfaction is the most dangerous. Sometimes self-righteousness causes dissatisfaction with oneself; at other times even Theosophical failures do not arouse the student to take himself in hand and discipline himself. "With all that I have faced and gone through, who could have done so well as I have?" The conceit of this position is not perceived. One suffers one's own Karma, and the Theosophical method of right suffering is to use it to arouse us to better and nobler endeavours. Students often say that they have done their best; this is done somewhat automatically in the manner of saying "good morning" or "good evening." He who attempts to do his best is not cast down by failures and hardships, is not dissatisfied with whatever cometh to pass, does not rest on his oars wearing his laurels, but calmly goes on with the duties in hand, hour after hour. Self-righteousness watches the rate of progress and the extent of service rendered and wants to enhance both. Self-satisfaction notices both but desires not to do more. Both attitudes are wrong, for is it not said, "Look not behind or thou art lost"?

The panacea for these three diseases is Duty—that which Karma brings us to do. Theosophy teaches not that we should change our duties, but that we change our method of fulfilling them. In the following words of Mr. Judge the student, whatever his obstacle, will find not only consolation, but also the right Line of Action:

The Past! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as now you exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge."

NEVER to have seen the truth is better than to have seen it and not to have acted upon it.

—ANONYMOUS

ACQUIRED HABITS

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IN attempting to deal with problems which only find their solution worked out to the full on planes and in terms incomprehensible to our ordinary senses, it would seem possible that illustrations drawn from the science of physiology should serve to explain these problems somewhat more fully than those illustrations which are drawn from physical science alone. Physiology is at least the science of life, and though, when pressed, we must admit that we know very little indeed of the main factors which lie behind the phenomena of life; and that, with all the means of research which we possess, we know nothing of even the physical forces *in themselves*, but only study their manifestations and correlations, yet we may, at all events, argue from the little we do know, and attempt to correct our conclusions by comparison with the analogies which we can draw from every science. The principle involved in the "as above, so below," is shown to be true in all departments of science, and has formed a most valuable means of verifying the results obtained by pushing a theory to its legitimate conclusion. Thus by correcting the phenomena of vital force by those of physical, we may arrive at many more or less just conclusions. Therefore, it is probable that by proceeding a step further, and drawing analogies from physiology, we may form an idea of what, for want of a better term, may be called the life of morality, and the forces whereby it is governed. By the term moral, I do not mean to convey any idea of that which underlies what is ordinarily known as morality, but a very much wider idea than that, namely, the force which really lies at the base of and inspires all our *motives* of action. Of course these are indirectly also at the root of our physical and what may be called our animate life, in which we men are in contact with the life of animals; but at present we need not endeavour to make a distinction between man and the animals, which are endowed with the physical and animate life force, but in whom the moral life is entirely latent, save in the case of a very few of the higher species, such as dogs and elephants. Though, even in these cases, it may be argued with good show of reason that this "moral life" of the higher animals is the result of education.

Now in man and animal alike there are great nervous centres which govern the vital phenomena, and hence, as a consequence, the physical phenomena of life. These centres, as they are called,

are formed by collections of nerve cells, which occupy a very fairly defined area. They are found in the brain and the spinal cord for the most part, and to a lesser degree in the great vital organs themselves. Further, there is what is known as the sympathetic system of nerves, with its closely meshed network of nerves and ganglia, which lies outside, but in front of, the vertebral column, the whole length of the body; this system is closely connected in its whole extent with the brain and spinal cord, and the branches therefrom, which are known as the cerebro-spinal system of nerves. Again to some extent the control of the nerves lies with the Will of any man, and the actions which result are termed "voluntary," but a very large majority of the processes and functions of the animal body are what are called "Reflex." These "Reflex" processes for the most part take place thus: An impression is made on what are called the nerves of sensation; these conduct a stimulus to one of the nerve centres above mentioned, and from this centre the stimulus is reflected along a motor nerve, and the action or function ensues. Thus the sensation is "reflected" into motion independently of the consciousness of the individual. Perhaps the best example of a limited reflection is in the case of the eye, when, in response to the stimulus of light, the iris alone, of all the muscles in the body, moves.

Now all reflex actions are essentially involuntary, although they in great part admit of being controlled, modified, and prevented by the will. They, most of them, are directed for the preservation of the well-being of the body, and markedly show how the nerve centres combine and arrange in order the action of the muscles, so that they may unite for this common end. Among "Reflex" actions there is a large class called "Secondary," which require for their first performance, and for many subsequent performances, an effort of the will more or less intense, but which, by constant repetition, are habitually and almost mechanically performed, and in many cases almost without the intervention of consciousness and volition: such are reading, writing, and walking. This capacity of the nervous system, which consists in "organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious ones," is that which makes education and training possible. It is by "association" of the reflex actions frequently repeated in a definite order that these actions come to take on a species of "automatism." To such an extent is this carried that we are all familiar with instances of persons, when in the somnambulant condition, writing and playing the piano in a state of complete unconsciousness to physical sur-

roundings.

In fact "automatism" is a very important point in the argument. It is employed by physiologists to indicate the origination in nervous centres of impulses and their conduction from those centres independently of the reception of a stimulus from another part. And in this sense it is not possible in the present state of physiological knowledge to say what actions are "automatic." But the nearest examples are certainly the functions of respiration and the rhythmic action of the heart, which will be considered later on. Suffice it at present that it is a very important point that actions, which are distinctly reflex at the beginning, may be organized into unconscious actions which have a very strong character about them of automatism, and that the two above-mentioned functions are those which are at the foundation of all vital phenomena, and hence, by the passage of time and by education, would necessarily most nearly approach to being automatic.

We may now consider the sympathetic system of nerves. This system of nerves at first sight appears to be anatomically too complex to be understood. In reality, however, it is much more simple in arrangement than the cerebro-spinal, and its complexity is due to the manner in which each part is linked to the neighbouring and distant parts and to the cerebro-spinal system as well. When dissected out it is found that the essential parts of this system consist of a ganglion, or nerve centre, and two nerves—afferent and efferent—leading to this centre, and from it to one of the organs. Thus the sympathetic system is made up of an enormous number of small systems, and the whole are united into the greatest complexity. But there is one essential difference between the two systems. In the case of the cerebro-spinal system, the majority of actions taking place under its guidance are voluntary actions; in the case of the sympathetic system, not only do the majority of actions take place without a voluntary effort, but they are never controlled by the mind save under the strong excitement or depressing influence of some passion; or secondarily, through some "voluntary movement" with which the involuntary region of the body is "associated." But in this latter case the action is really involuntary. Thus, in exceptional instances only does the mind control the action of the sympathetic nerves, and then only under undue excitement or depression; while for the most part the various centres of the sympathetic system, and also of the spinal cord, are reflex centres, which, subject to the "inhibiting action" of the brain, or more highly-organized centre, possess an inde-

pendent action of their own that, aided by custom, habit, and frequency of use, almost amounts to automatism.

In the consideration of automatism we find that there is a nervous region of very great importance situated at the top of the spinal cord and immediately below the brain, and which, roughly speaking, is just within the skull about an inch behind a line drawn horizontally through the lobe of the ear. This region is so important that it has been experimentally found that the entire brain and spinal cord with this sole exception may be removed and still the heart will continue to beat and the animal will go on breathing. But when this region is injured, death ensues at once. Now the most important of the functions of the Medulla Oblongata, as the region in question is called, is that of respiration, and this one function may serve as the type of automatic actions, although there is some dispute about it. Like all the functions which are necessary to life, it is essentially involuntary, but its action is also, to some extent, under the control of the will, for otherwise man would be unable to speak or to sing. It is argued that the act is a reflex one owing to the stimulation of nervous fibres which are distributed to the lungs; on the other hand it is stated that respiration takes place by direct stimulation of the Medulla Oblongata by the increasingly venous condition of the blood. Probably both functions exist, but the nerves leading from the lungs to the "respiratory centre" may be cut or may be paralysed by chloroform, and still the complicated muscular movements which constitute respiration take place in an orderly manner. As said above, respiration can to some extent be controlled by the will, and the breath can be "held" for a varying length of time which increases with practice. But the need of breath eventually overcomes the strongest opposition, and even the most determined attempts to commit suicide in this manner have failed. Still there is no doubt that by practice persons have increased the time during which they can hold their breath, as in certain well-authenticated cases of suspended animation, which have occurred in various parts of the world and especially in India, and thus there is shown to be a power which may be exercised in control of the natural automatism of the body and which, so far as the bodily frame is concerned, is independent of it. Were this not the case the instances of sudden death which occur through shock, and without injury to any part of the body, would be impossible, for there is no reason why the functions of respiration and of the heart should be interfered with, and the body would go on breathing and the heart beating under the stimulus of the Medulla Oblongata.

Thus, then, it is this "organizing conscious actions into more or less unconscious ones," but which may still be under the control of some force that we may call the will, which is of the highest importance to the occultist, as will be seen later on. Speaking in terms of planes, it enables a man to do two or perhaps more things at the same time. Starting an original impulse to walk from point to point, a man may take the necessary steps with no other guidance than the reflected sensations of one step to make another, and during the time occupied his mind may be engaged on matters of a totally different character. But waiving these considerations and the assumption that the brain is physically a registering "organ of mind," it is evident that to a considerable extent the brain has the control of the body.

To those who have studied metaphysics the term "personality" is a very familiar one. In reference to the present subject it would seem to stand to the "higher self" in very much the same relation as the body does to the brain—or rather to the brain only as the organ of mind; that is to say that the personality is, on the moral plane referred to previously, the outer covering, more or less gross, of the real man within—the higher self. This latter is the gradually increasing product of ages and is added to by the "personality" only when it carries out the spiritual aspirations which arise beyond, but which are communicated to the personality by the higher self. Consequently we may compare the actions dictated by the personality to those physical ones which are governed by the lower reflex centres and which have no concern whatsoever with the brain.

And this brings into prominence a curious fact in physiology and pathology, that if either a nerve centre or nerve leading from that centre be stimulated without the impulse passing *to and through* that centre, the actions which result are tumultuous and disordered. This fact has a very important bearing by analogy on those actions which are dictated, reflexly or not, by the "personality" only, for, as regards the higher self or brain, they are found tumultuous and disorderly and are, as a rule, not "directed with a view to the welfare of the organism," and more especially of other organisms. It would be impossible to enter on an elaborate analysis of what the personality really is—and as tedious as if one were in these pages to enter on a detailed description of the minute anatomy of the brain and spinal cord. Man is a compound, in his personality, of "desires, passions, interests, modes of thinking and feeling, opinions, prejudices, judgments of others, likings and dislikings, affections and ambitions, public and private." For

the most part this personality constitutes the horizon of man, and identifies him with this narrowed circle of interests. In other words, he becomes exceedingly "Selfish." Of course the circle is very frequently enlarged, as in the case of family, of a society, of a church, or a state, and other individuals esteem men in proportion as their circle enlarges. Now the enlargement of the circle to and beyond these limits is a process of extreme difficulty, and especially when the circle is enlarged beyond these limits. But there is also another element which has to be eliminated—the thought of Self must not enter into the consideration at all. That is to say, the personality as a source of motive must be entirely eliminated and destroyed; this is the process which occupies ages and is accompanied by such pain and suffering that it can only be faced by the aid of a consciousness of the higher self, and this work is the only work worth doing.

It is not very difficult to understand why this should be so difficult, and why it should take ages to accomplish, for we have to remember that it is the accentuation of personality against personality—the competition to live—which is at the base of all our modern education. In every age the strong man has kept his citadel against all comers until a stronger than he came, and the question is whether he can find a deeper and greater source of strength. To some extent that has been found, for "union is strength"; and the only problem has been amidst the clashing of personalities to make union possible. The parallel in physiology is seen in the difficulty, only obviated by long practice, experienced by divers in holding their breath. Murder will out, respiration will recommence and the educated personality reassert itself, as the body insists upon the breath it is accustomed to have. But again it is possible for man to lay aside the limitations of his personality and merge his living interests with those of the world in which other personalities have an equal right and share. He can force himself to no longer feel separate from them, and to live in companionship with that which in them is beyond their personalities—their individualities, their Higher Selves.

But this is a process which needs an enormous strength of will and an application to which most men are unequal. The ordinary senses have to be stilled and quieted before—if one may misapply a term—the sense of the higher self comes into play, and the divine companionship of the higher self is felt and realized. Thus then the analogy of physiology is maintained: the bodily functions are reflexly fulfilled, and by long education, in some cases, automatically, but are subject, in proportion as another education has

trained the mind and will, to the brain. Equally so on the moral plane, the desires and tendencies of the personality act more or less reflexly and automatically without other control. But in proportion as the limitations of Self have been transcended, so also is the extent of the power increased which controls the personality. The brain in one case, the higher self in the other, being trained and educated to send down impulses sufficient to control the physiological needs of the animal mechanism, or the desires of the personality.

But a further and yet more interesting problem now presents itself for discussion. We have seen that it is rational to conclude that conscious acts are by education organized into unconscious, and that the two functions most important to the physiological health of the body, *viz.*, respiration and the action of the heart, have been rendered automatic and independent almost of any voluntary conscious effort, although this control may be, in some instances, recovered. Consequently, by analogy, the control on the moral plane may be vested in the higher self as against the personality, by an effort to unite the consciousness with that higher self. That is, the higher self, or brain, will be able to control the physiological personality, or a higher centre dominate a lower. But a still further point would seem to consist in this. Why should it not be possible to make of the higher self a reflex centre, and finally an automatic one, which shall control the personality absolutely? On the physiological analogy it would certainly seem reasonable that this should be so. Let the personality send up a suggestion for action to the reflex centre, which may be in or below the level of the higher self, as is the case in the relative positions of the cerebral hemispheres and the Medulla Oblongata. Supposing that the motor point be in the higher self, it would only seem natural that the corresponding motion excited by the suggestion of the personality will either be in accord with the higher self, and be accomplished, or will be nullified. If, however, the motor point be below the higher self, then the communication must be handed on in order that the higher self shall have the control, and the personality not allowed to exercise sway.

Finally, however, the real importance of the argument does not rest with the higher self, but with the spiritual life beyond; or, as *Light on the Path* states it, "the life beyond individuality."

Let us grant for the moment that it is possible for the consciousness to be identified with the higher self, and that the personality militating against that better part of man, and consequently interfering with "the life beyond individuality," is entirely subjected

and controlled by a centre of force, certainly reflex, and, if possible, automatic, which is vested in the higher self. What, then, is the consequence? The personality as a source of separateness is done away with, and only used as an instrument in the same way that the physical body uses a finger. The real life is centred in the higher self, which maintains an automatic action over the personality, and prevents it from becoming a source of mischief. The force which is vested in the higher self or individuality is derived from that united Spirit of Life which is beyond individuality, and the man is left free to concentrate his attention and aspirations on that Spirit of Life, and draw more and more of its influence through his higher self into the world around him. Just as the physiological needs of the body are controlled by an unconscious, involuntary mechanism, so the personality becomes a conquered instrument, used for ends greater than it knows of. Man, as man, is no longer swayed by his changing and temporary desires, and has reached the happy "Waters of Oblivion."

—A.I.R.

IT is not physical Science that we can ever ask to read man for us, as the riddle of the Past, or that of the Future; since no philosopher is able to tell us even what man is, as he is known both to physiology and psychology. In doubt whether man was "a god or beast," he is now connected with the latter and derived from an animal. No doubt that the care of analyzing and classifying the human being as a *terrestrial animal* may be left to Science, which occultists—of all men—regard with veneration and respect. They recognize its ground and the wonderful work done by it, the progress achieved in physiology, and even—to a degree in biology. But man's *inner*, spiritual, psychic, or even moral, nature cannot be left to the tender mercies of an ingrained materialism; for not even the higher psychological philosophy of the West is able, in its present incompleteness and tendency towards a decided agnosticism, to do justice to the inner; especially to his higher capacities and perceptions, and those states of consciousness, across the road to which such authorities as Mill draw a strong line, saying "So far, and no farther, shalt thou go."

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 636

SPANNING THE GULF

THE world of reality interpenetrates the world of illusion in which we live, touches it as every point; but for the average person appearances almost completely veil the real and true. Still, most men and women catch now and then a glimpse, however fleeting and intangible, of the reality behind phenomena, the symmetry and order beneath the outward confusion. Each would hold these glimpses as background for a nobler life, but all too soon they are overlaid with the crowding impressions of sense, of desire and of concrete thought. The power to see clearly is not within the deliberate control of the undeveloped man. The thick clouds of matter may part for a second now and then to reveal the radiance they hide, but only progress in the spiritual life can make them grow steadily translucent and transparent to the eye of Soul.

Although it interpenetrates the world of sense, the world of real existence is for most people most of the time removed from the phenomenal as by a wide and fathomless abyss. There are two groups whose labours serve to narrow that gulf between reality and illusion. The artist is one of these builders of a bridge. He seeks to fix in permanence his flash of beauty which is truth. His experience is not unique, otherwise none could recognize his expression of it. He is the voice of the inarticulate. He works deliberately to span the gulf, to bring the truth of the real world within our ken. He sets in place the far end of the bridge. The modern scientist may not suspect that back of all appearances exists the real, but, none the less, by ascertaining the laws of the phenomenal he approaches their source in the noumenal world. He builds his bridge-end from the world of sense.

The scientist and artist work on opposite sides of the abyss. Each builds at his own bridge-end and strengthens it, and neither grasps that his work is useless unless the two ends meet. Only divine philosophy can span the truths established in the laboratory with those intuited by human hearts. That central span is ready for the bridge—fashioned long ages since by the Sages, kept by the Custodians of changeless Truth. Setting that span in place will make the bridge complete, will make it possible for all to find their way, unhampered, to the heart of Truth. All who study the philosophy of the ancient Wisdom-Religion, and try to apply its tenets in their lives, are contributing their mite to the swinging into place of that great central span which alone can complete the bridge over which men may pass to Truth and Light.

THE RHYTHM OF LIFE

PATANJALI says that concentration is "the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle." Modifications are changes—changes of direction, of colour, of sound, etc.—and that which is modified is the thinking principle, ourselves as we know ourselves, Manas, the thinker in the body.

Just as these modifications, changes of consciousness, are caused by sense impressions or desires, when not produced by higher thoughts and feelings, so in the total field of life there are modifications that are the great currents of Karmic happenings.

The basis of Karma is Harmony. All evolution is a struggle for harmony, for the perfect working of the parts in themselves and in conjunction with other parts. It is our unnecessary modifications of this harmony that produce discord.

Yet, life is a song. And it is true that we must learn that we are a "part of the harmony" of the song. We are not in reality a part of the disharmony, for disharmony must finally become harmony, and we—the real "we"—have little to do with the temporary.

Every song has its tempo, its rhythm; so every life has its tempo, its rhythm. As a singer is carried along by the rhythm of the song, so we must learn to be carried along by the rhythm of life. Our life, from birth to death, is governed by our past deeds and present opportunities; or, to continue the analogy of the song, the notes and rhythm are in terms of our past, and our capacity to sing is also limited by our past to some extent. But, as "exertion is greater than destiny," we can exert ourselves to learn how to sing our own particular song. We must go *with* the rhythm of the song of our *own* life, sing it as it is written, and penetrate the mind of the composer.

There are no discords in the song of our life. It is when we do not see the relationship of the apparent discords to the whole song that we think of life as a cry of anguish. To let our life unfold and to use what comes is the secret of harmony in living, of joy in the doing of actions, of vitality in thought and of calm tranquillity in emotions. All these are based on fearlessness, on trust and on faith, and these qualities come to birth through knowledge, for they are knowledge in operation.

The theoretical knowledge of Karma worked out in practice will show us that Karma is the law of Harmony.

The dauntless Shelley wrote:

Yet, human Spirit, bravely hold thy course,
Let virtue teach thee firmly to pursue
The gradual paths of an aspiring change:
For birth, and life, and death, and that strange state
Before the naked soul has found its home,
All tend to perfect happiness, and urge
The restless wheels of being on their way . . .

To be one with Nature's Laws and to let them work through us, to take the tide at its full and resist not, is to become one with Life—it is to dwell in the Silence in the midst of the storms, using the knowledge that comes to us through the "Voice which speaks where there is none to speak."

Happy is the man who has reached this state!

Till then, let us "welcome each rebuff" that takes us out of our soporific calm, for only so can we reach the all-powerful calm that can withstand the total force of Nature and control it, pouring out its life-giving Bliss upon all creatures.

"THE men where you live," said the little prince, "raise five thousand roses in the same garden—and they do not find in it what they are looking for."

"They do not find it," I replied.

"And yet what they are looking for could be found in a single rose, or in a little water."

"Yes, that is true," I said.

And the little prince added:

"But the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart."

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

THE SOURCE OF ENERGY

MASTER Krishna instructs his pupil in the art of doing great things, many things, and of yet preserving mental and bodily health. It is a general complaint that human bodies get tired out and human minds fatigued after a few hours of work every day and that people get old before their time. Nervous disorders caused by overwork have greatly increased and one of the reasons for the present moral laxity is said to be overwork from which men and women have to find an escape. Moral laxity an escape! Physiologically as well as psychologically this is putting the cart before the horse. Nervous disintegration follows the "escapes"; mental fatigue tires the nervous system; the body reacts much more to our mental attitudes than the mind to the state of bodily health. No one need deny that physiological and pathological disturbances affect the psychic nature, but a vast number of nervous ailments spring from mental confusions and moods. Bodily fatigue results and under Nature's laws cannot be avoided; but Nature has her own remedy to compensate for that bodily fatigue in sleep. Similarly the body must die, but it need not die prematurely and violently, as it so often does as a result of those very "escapes" mentioned above and because of various habits we acquire in this civilization. Most people live like superstitious barbarians—overeating, drinking, drugging, running about achieving next to nothing, wearing themselves out by a round of "busy-ness." All this the student of Theosophy tries to avoid, but in his own enthusiasm to serve his fellow-men, to make soul-progress, to gain merit—albeit all unconsciously to himself—he makes the same mistake on a higher spiral, and has to pay the price for that error.

In the *Gita* the disciple is taught to act with calmness and detachment. It is said:

The devotee who knows the divine truth thinketh "I am doing nothing" in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing; even when speaking, letting go or taking, opening or closing his eyes, he sayeth, "the senses and organs move by natural impulse to their appropriate objects."

Bodily fatigue traced so often to overwork is really caused by the mental attitude we have towards our work. It is not work that kills, but our mental picture of that work. Our psychic moods fatigue and kill us, not the actual labour with senses and

organs and brains.

Further on we are told in the *Gita*:

Whoever in acting dedicates his actions to the Supreme Spirit and puts aside all selfish interest in their result is untouched by sin, even as the leaf of the lotus is unaffected by the waters.

When work is exercise, there is fatigue; when it is worship, it energizes the organs which it calls into play. Even in performing Theosophical work we should avoid being carried away by the excitement of effort; we should learn to work without strain. To do this we should learn to take the attitude "I am doing nothing." It lessens the strain which tires us out.

W. Q. Judge wrote to a student:

One could be confined to a prison and yet be a worker for the cause. So I pray you to remove from your mind any distaste for present circumstances.

Life being probationary, all of us are prisoners—each in his own personality. It is no use trying forcefully to break the prison walls; Mr. Judge does not say, "Remove yourself from the prison house." No, he asks us to remove from our own mind the attitude of distaste for present circumstances.

It is said that a very busy man finds time to do many things; and yet more things. Two factors are involved in doing many things: one is method, but the other, without which even method will not be successful, is the mental attitude. When a man says, "I am doing nothing," he not only weakens the bonds of attachment but also discovers the source of energy which prevents illegitimate fatigue.

IF thou hadst known how to suffer, thou wouldst have been able not to suffer. Learn thou to suffer, and thou shalt be able not to suffer.

—*The Acts of St. John*

LEAN BACK ON THE SELF

OUT of the mire of terrestrial actions the lotus of celestial beauty can never grow. But let the magic seed fall in waters, however murky; because of its potency the lotus of beauty does arise. If the Soul in man is activated, however evil the past Karma surrounding it, the potency of that soul will sprout, and leaving behind the murky past, shoot upwards towards the sun, the giver of life physical and the symbol of Atman, life spiritual.

Many are the men and women whose awakening to spiritual truth is frightening to them, aware as they are of the mass of errors and sins which they have committed in the past. Self-purification and self-discipline seem very hard, and repeated failures discourage them and damp their ardour. Control of the senses looks very difficult; control of the mind, impossible. Engaging themselves in the task of handling the lower, with their good impulses they hope to curb and kill the evil in themselves. This is a wrong method and must prove futile.

The neophyte has to learn that unless he seeks the soul, not the part of it that is directly enmeshed in the senses and the brain, but that Soul which overbroods the personality—unless he seeks it, there is no hope of success for him. Not by continuous endeavour to kill the devil, but by removing himself from evil company and remaining, at least for a while, in that of the Spirit, will success come. We have to overpower the evil, but we give it exercise and therefore strength by paying attention to its existence; to forget it is to starve it and that is best done—in fact cannot be done in any other way than—by taking refuge in the Over-Soul, the triple Monad. A *daily* retreat to the Ashrama of the Monad is essential. The way thereto lies through the brain which, quitting the senses, becomes quiet so that the Monadic light may get an opportunity to focus itself on its spiritual organs. Mr. Judge advises “leaning back on the great ocean of the Self which is never moved.” “Lean back and look on at the ebb and flow of life that washes to your feet and away again many things that are not easy to lose or pleasant to welcome. Yet they all belong to Life, to the Self. The wise man has no personal possessions.”

People often think of personal possessions as objects—properties, stocks and shares, cash balance at the bank. These are but shadows, weak and distorted shadows of personal possessions. Possessions of the personal self are qualities which enmesh the Soul—the contacts with the objects born of those qualities. Comparatively it is easy to part with outer possessions—but to sepa-

rate ourselves from the qualities through which attachments take place, to gaze upon them, not to be worried by them nor to be anxious about them, is most difficult—but not really difficult if we acquire the art of retreating to the Ashrama of the Monad. Our study is a great aid, but in reality it is only in our meditation that we can lean back on the Self.

As we lean back we see two worlds quivering before the Soul's vision—the world of things and the world of images. The former falls away more easily and we see it as ephemeral; but the world of images does not fall away so quickly. To extricate ourselves from that world we need soul-strength and not only mind-strength. The world of objects falls away from the personality in three-score years and ten, but the world of images entwines the man for a millennium and a half. Between objective earth-life and Devachan this time difference exists, and it is caused by the power of attachment which creates the images, and the power of cohesion which sustains them.

The world of objects loses its hold on us when we perform our duties without any concern in the ensuing results, and instead of running away from it, adapt ourselves to it from the Soul's point of view. Buddhi-yoga of the *Gita's* second chapter is the prescription.

The inner world of images exerts a far more powerful influence because it affects more the mind than the senses, and a proper practice of Dhyana-yoga of the sixth *Gita* is the remedy against its snares. Extricating ourselves from our self-made images, we have to withdraw, and joining the Inner Ruler, sit in his company and perceive the play, the *Lila*, of the universe. Sinking our chain of thought in the pure waters of the Supreme Spirit, we have to come across the Lotus of our Higher Self which grows there, and rest therein. As we bathe in the beauty and the purity which surrounds us, we perceive from a distance that the two lower worlds of objects and images are created and preserved by us, that it is we who have spread them abroad, and that by using our third power of destruction-regeneration, we can shape the destiny of the universe, fashioning it after a more spiritual pattern.

How distant such an experience seems to the struggling neophyte! Yet, it comes to each in the process of endeavour. Learn to retreat to the Ashrama of the Monad every day and see the small events of hourly life joined to the big events of incarnated existence; thus the glorious experience will come when ripeness of discrimination is attained.

THE FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

THE teachings of Theosophy illuminate the fact that *Three* has always been a mystic sacred number in religion and philosophy. When a student begins to penetrate into some of the deep meanings of the Three Foundational Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* with the truths they embody, he is struck by the progressiveness, the inherent and triplicate lawful order of unfoldment, evident in them, and also evident even in the mere phrasing of them.

Proposition One proclaims a Principle which is a platform, a foundation for everything. That foundation is the Uncreate, the Unmanifest, the Unreachable. Not to be grasped by the human mind, this mind finds the best shadowings forth of It in a series of negatives. Yet It is also the Grand Positive. And as if to counteract a possible agnostic effect of such a set of negatives, the teachings do not merely state this Principle as chief; they likewise record in hint and symbol the nature and operation of that Principle. Through such elucidating record the Ancient Doctrine becomes first of all capable of emphatically declaring that the Doctrine itself "establishes" the Principle. And truly the teachings in and of themselves do give evidence of that First Principle as self-revealing and self-proving.

To this immovable abstract established Principle-One the Ancient Doctrine "affirms" (literally *makes fast*) Principle-Two; thus producing an "assertion," a *binding* or *joining* which constitutes and "is the absolute universality" of Two. Hence, Two is no less certain than One. Nor does One need the support of Two. Rather, the assertion or binding shows the strength of Two as included and identical with the abstract strength of One. Yet Two expands One, begins to apply it in the direction of concreteness and manifestation; therefore toward the human level.

On and with these both is Principle-Three, expanding further their applicability and concreteness. By Three is displayed the actual fusion of the human and all lower ranges of manifestation with the compound One-and-Two. The extension and proof afforded by Three is accomplished because Three "teaches" what the Soul in each human and other manifest being is, and what the Soul needs to know and do. "Establishes"—"affirms and asserts"—"teaches"—a passing from That which is not reached by Thought, to what is Thought and Thinker, on to what is affected by Thought, and is the product and interaction of Thoughts—this is the evolutionary procedure; and thus the entire Threefold

philosophic Basis is completed. Within it are contained, in graded usefulness to us, all explanation, all guidance. The Three Statements together, and of course even more the spiritual facts worded by them, are indeed Hypostases. They share an identical nature; yet, following their self-contained law, they unfold and extend the meaning and applicability of themselves, the Foundational Three. Each rests on the others, each corroborates the others, and all are synthesized in the One as Source.

THERE is a common thread that links the spectacle of life in all its varied manifestations as it has appeared, evolved, and sometimes died out. Underlying the beauty of the spectacle there is meaning and significance. It is the elusiveness of that meaning that haunts us, that sends us again and again into the natural world where the key to the riddle is hidden. It sends us back to the edge of the sea, where the drama of life played its first scene on earth and perhaps even its prelude; where the forces of evolution are at work today, as they have been since the appearance of what we know as life; and where the spectacle of living creatures faced by the cosmic realities of their world is crystal clear. . . .

Contemplating the teeming life of the shore, we have an uneasy sense of the communication of some universal truth that lies just beyond our grasp. What is the message signaled by the hordes of diatoms, flashing their microscopic lights in the night sea? What truth is expressed by the legions of the barnacles, whitening the rocks with their habitations, each small creature within finding the necessities of its existence in the sweep of the surf? And what is the meaning of so tiny a being as the transparent wisp of protoplasm that is a sea lace, existing for some reason inscrutable to us—a reason that demands its presence by the trillion amid the rocks and weeds of the shore? The meaning haunts and ever eludes us, and in its very pursuit we approach the ultimate mystery of Life itself.

—RACHEL CARSON

THE SERVANTS OF HUMANITY

THE theme of the Servants of Humanity is a sacred one and only the heart's eye can perceive and the heart's ear hear the truth about that theme. The Great Ones serve the human Soul, and it is the human Soul alone who can contact Them, learn from Them, grow like unto Them. Each of us is a human Soul, but that Soul is for most people saturated with desires and ambitions, enveloped by wishes and feelings, surrounded by worldly thoughts of passion and of self. It is only by throwing off those desires and longings, by casting away the envelope of personality, by thinking of ourselves as Bright Souls, as Divinities, that we can go to the heart, and see and hear the Reality. "Thou art That, O Shvetaketu," said the teacher to the inquirer in the Mysteries, according to the Upanishads. "Thou art That—the Supreme Light, surrounded by the smoke of sense-passions and love-longings; by the steady breeze of thy own all-powerful Will drive away that smoke; by the steadfast attention of thy Thoughts chase away that darkness, and to thee also will come the Truth as it came to others. Shvetaketu—Thou art That."

In this human body of bones and blood and flesh, three cities exist—the city of desires or Kama, the city of Manas or the mind, and the city of Buddhi or the heart. The human Soul living in Buddhi-puram, the Heart-City, is ready to tread that Narrow Path, that Noble Way, which takes it to the Great Lodge, the Great School called Maha-Shala in the Upanishads. Those who live in feelings and strive only to fulfil their desires and to satisfy their ambitions cannot and will not find the Way. Those too will not succeed who seek and obtain knowledge, or head-learning; not by the way of scholarship are the Gurus to be found. Only those who have purified their feelings and subdued their minds, and who use these two as weapons and instruments of the Soul in the Heart, are fit and ready to walk the Way, to tread the Path. Free yourselves from desires and ambitions, which means, free yourselves from pride and prejudices which narrow and limit the movement of the Soul—pride of race and caste and community and family; prejudices engendered by religion and nationalism and class-consciousness. Rise above these and learn to view yourselves as human Souls, and garbed in that pure garb, you will succeed if you seek. Do not speak, do not feel, do not think before you consult your heart—that is what living in the heart means. It does not mean you will make no mistakes, but that you are on your guard having recognized the source of all errors and sins,

and you will gradually learn to avoid blunders and mistakes.

First, then, unless we come to dwell in our own heart we cannot make a start. Just as, if we want to go to a distant country, we will have to go to the airport to catch the plane, or to the harbour to take the boat, or to a station to board the train, so also here: the human heart is like the airport or the railway station or the harbour—the starting point. But though we may go to the proper boarding place, what good will it be to us without a ticket! The ticket that we require on this heart journey is Service of Humanity. The title which the Mahatmas take for themselves is “Servants of Humanity.” We are bound for the Country of Service and our ticket must bear the name of that country. Eager and earnest Souls often fail, though they come to the heart. There are many who seek liberation, Mukti, and they are men and women of pure heart, but they do not find the Great Gurus, whoever else they may find, because they have not made up their minds to go to the Land of Service. Our Masters, the Gurus to whom H. P. Blavatsky showed us the way, are engaged in the eternal service of the race. So, having come to the heart, let us intelligently develop within ourselves the Vow of Service—service of *all* human Souls, not only service of minds and bodies. It does not mean that we shall not feed the hungry body, or nurse the sick mind, but that we recognize that unless the Soul is served the agonies of body and mind will continue. Therefore Theosophy gives preference to the feeding of the Soul, over even feeding of the mind; also therefore Theosophy attempts to cure the disease of the Soul rather than the disease of the mind. This Path of Soul-Service is very definite—both in its programme and in its policy. The service of human Souls is a science and an art—the most difficult of sciences and arts. Our Masters, who are Servants of Humanity, serve the race by a definite programme and a definite policy. We too must develop in our heart the resolve to serve human Souls according to the programme and the policy outlined in ancient Brahma-Vidya, or Theosophy. To succeed, let us meditate upon these words which form what is known as the Pledge of Kwan-Yin:

Never will I seek nor receive private, individual salvation; never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever, and everywhere, will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world.

That at once gives us the distinction between Muktas and Ma-

hatmas. Mukti—liberation *per se*, is not the Path of Theosophy or Brahma-Vidya; Great Souls, Mahatmas, are Those who renounce the Freedom of Mukti, the Bliss of Nirvana, the Joy of Salvation; They serve suffering humanity by keeping company of men struck by agony and disease; therefore They are our Elder Brothers. One more thought in reference to this Ideal of Service. Theosophical discipline and training require that we live in and with the world, though we are not of the world. The Mahatmas live in the world though They are not known by the world. They appear as nothing particular in the eyes of men when mortals see Them; and They require Their chelas and disciples also to appear as nothing strange or particular in the eyes of the public. Therefore Theosophy says, if you aspire to walk the Noble Way remain in the world, doing your duty by every duty, fulfilling your dharma and your karma.

But even that is not sufficient: there are many good and pure men and women in the world who live the life of duty, charity and service. Now begins the positive training and discipline. The Soul accustomed to consult his own heart, bent upon the service of all human Souls, must acquire the knowledge of how to tread the Path that leads to the Great Ones. And the very first aphorism, after his great Resolve, which he must learn is this—"all life is probationary." It means that every event of life should educate the Soul. In the lives of ordinary men and women of virtue and charity, every event is *not* educative. Strange as it may sound, men and women of virtue do not learn through the experiences which are the routine of life. Even the same experience repeated does not bring them wisdom. Only extraordinary experiences of suffering awaken the Soul, for in suffering people seek the Soul. Therefore the mere resolve for service will not do; add to the ideal of service the ideal of learning from life, and say with understanding—all life is probationary. Get into the habit of watchfulness, seeking the meaning of life, the purpose of existence. When by the power of the Heart we watch the process of life, we begin to raise questions for which neither science, nor philosophy, nor religion, has answers. There are theories of science, there are speculations of philosophy, there are beliefs of religion—but where is there convincing truth about the Soul, its origin, its evolution, its goal? Facts of science deal with the body, and the Soul's very existence is uncertain. Facts of philosophy deal with space and time and causation, but lack of co-ordination prevails. Facts of religion, alas, divide man from man. If we honestly seek by the way of the heart, rising above feeling, we find that neither science,

nor philosophy, nor religion, serves our purpose. People come to Theosophy for different purposes, and sooner or later many get disappointed, because they want to gain and benefit from Theosophy in their own way. But as a science, a philosophy and an art of life, Theosophy has to be obtained by a definite way, and that way is the way of application—real Abhyasa.

Therefore, unless a man says, “all life is probationary,” and proceeds honestly to seek the light to walk the Way of probation, he does not make real progress; he advances, he moves, but he will find that it is not the real progress. Application of what is in books such as the *Gita*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Key to Theosophy* and *Letters That Have Helped Me* will change his very nature. The grooves of our brain, our cerebrum and cerebellum, undergo a change when we are awake and watchful to every event of life, when we curb every evil thought, when we kill every evil feeling, when we use intelligence in every act of service, as we meet with our trials and tests of probation. The phrase “all life is probationary” signifies that life is full of trials, that in every event, small or great, we are tested. Trials and tests do not come from outside; they emerge from our own karma, from *within* ourselves. People get confused at many events of life and sit down resigned—karma! kismet! That is a wrong attitude. Seek the meaning and overcome weaknesses within and obstacles outside. For this of course we need knowledge, such as Theosophy gives us.

Because of the resolve of service, because of the attempt to meet the tests and trials of life as probation, because of the sincere aspiration to learn from the recorded Message, our attention most naturally begins to flow towards Those who have overcome the tests and are full of Wisdom and of Light. It is *after* we have done all this that a real longing to feel the Master’s Touch arises in us. These first preliminary steps must be taken—service of others and self-learning are like our two feet and between them is the step of progress which brings the student nearer to the Invisible Guru. When that step is taken, the Guru lights in our heart what is called the Tathagata Light. The Soul in the Heart, who has been attempting to serve and to learn, is like a small light, and as the Guru pours the magic oil on the light, that Soul in the Heart shines with the Tathagata Light. Tathagata is the title of the Great Buddha, one who follows in the footsteps of his Predecessors. All Buddhas, all Mahatmas, follow but One Path, One Way, One single File—no variableness, no change, not even a shadow of turning. All the Masters follow in the footsteps of Their Illustrious Predecessors. They neither learn, nor do They teach, different

things at different times. They point to a single Path, They impart an indivisible philosophy.

This lighting of the Tathagata Light in the heart of the aspirant by the Master is a kind of minor initiation. It is a blessing which comes as a response from the Invisible Guru who ever says: "As you want to serve humanity and enlighten the Souls of men, by self-purification and self-knowledge, and as you aspire to learn the right method, here is what I give thee." Students who undergo this experience do not know it, for a very simple reason: just as a babe does not know what a mighty change has taken place on its leaving its mother's womb and being born in the world, so also in this case. The young aspirant in whose heart the Master lights the Tathagata Light knows nothing about it. And it is good that he does not know, for soon would he get proud and talk about it, and thus meet with abject failure and the waste of a whole incarnation.

The Givers of the Tathagata Light, the Great Gurus, are Lords of Light. They are self-luminous, Embodiments of Glory. They are clothed in the Garb of Light, the Robe of Light. Having freed Themselves by self-effort and self-discipline, They have absorbed and assimilated the Ageless Wisdom, and with that Light of Wisdom They serve the Human Race. It is impossible to describe Their Nature, Their Powers and Their Glory; and were it possible, it would be unwise to go into details. The Ideal of the Gurus and Mahatmas has become so degraded that even to speak about Them becomes a dangerous proposition—for people ridicule and laugh at high and holy things, and abuse of sacred names and holy subjects is the greatest of sins and dire in its results.

But we might say this: The Path to the Gurus of Light is obscured by false teachers, by false knowledge, by false aspiration. Often these teachers, knowledge and aspiration have some good in them, but never overlook the fact that blind believers make priests; hasty aspirants make false occultists; unintelligent chelas make false gurus. Let us go into our own heart, for there and there alone is the real Guru to be found. If anyone claims to be a guru himself—know him to be false. The Real Ones awaken the Soul by the gift of the Tathagata Light and show the Path which starting from the heart of man ends at the heart of the universe. Real Gurus are *Aja*, unborn, and *Achyuta*, Those who never fall. The Real Guru is Parentless, *Anupadaka*, and His Vesture or *Kaya* is of Light—*Hiranmaya*. And because He works from within the heart, uniting Himself with the chela, in the Hall of Wisdom or *Buddhi*, He transforms the very consciousness of the chela and

enables the latter to exclaim: "My Lord is the Lord of the Universe, my Guru is the Guru of all, because my Atma is revealed by Him to be the Atma of all; to such a Guru salutations!" We have to learn to perceive the entire Universe as One Indivisible Whole because of the Wisdom imparted to the Soul in the Heart by the Guru. When we begin to lead the Life, and to teach, it is that Light and that Wisdom of the Guru which streams forth from our heart. It is because of the Light the Guru has lighted in the heart that we say: All, all are myself. Such a gift comes from the Real Ones, the True Gurus. How degraded the Ideal has become! Let us restore it for the sake of the whole human race; for with the restoration of the Ideal of the True Guru there will be peace on earth, prosperity of the Soul.

ALL human beings go through a previous life in the sphere of Instinct, where they are brought to see the worthlessness of earthly treasures, to amass which they gave themselves such untold pains! Who can tell how many times the human being lives in the sphere of Instinct before he is prepared to enter the sphere of Abstraction, where thought expends itself on erring science, where mind wearies at last of human language? For, when Matter is exhausted, Spirit enters. Who knows how many fleshly forms the heir of heaven occupies before he can be brought to understand the value of that silence and solitude whose starry plains are but the vestibule of Spiritual Worlds? He feels his way amid the void, makes trial of nothingness, and then at last his eyes revert upon the Path. Then follow other existences—all to be lived to reach the place where Light effulgent shines. Death is the post-house of the journey. A lifetime may be needed merely to gain the virtues which annul the errors of man's preceding life. . . .

The virtues we acquire, which develop slowly within us, are the invisible links which bind each one of our existences to the others—existences which the spirit alone remembers, for Matter has no memory for spiritual things. Thought alone holds the tradition of the bygone life. The endless legacy of the past to the present is the secret source of human genius.

—HONORE DE BALZAC

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The modern fetish for collecting more and more information is creating an overinformed yet woefully unenlightened society, argues Henryk Skolimowski in his lecture in the series "Educating the Information Society," sponsored by Eastern Michigan University (*The Ecologist*, Vol. 14, No. 5/6). In this computer age of ours there is a lot of loose talk about the information revolution. But this does not make a new society. The Information Society (epitomized in the computer) deals only with quantity; it does not know the meaning of quality, Professor Skolimowski maintains. It deprives us of responsibility and dwarfs our status as human beings.

In my opinion what is involved and what is required is judgement, wisdom, enlightenment. You do not make your judgement sharper, more mature and wiser by acquiring more bits of information. You make your judgement wiser by becoming a wiser person. You do not acquire more enlightenment by acquiring more computer programmes. You acquire enlightenment by becoming an enlightened person—not a reservoir of information (for encyclopaedias serve this purpose) but a source of light. In all the three instances, of judgement, of wisdom, of enlightenment, we deal with new qualities. . . .

Technological change has produced undesirable social mutants: the atomized family and the isolated individual who is in touch with the world by touching buttons but cannot be touched by his neighbours or be in touch with himself. . . . *I want a society that engages me with life, not eliminates me from it.*

The columnist Sydney I. Harris put it so well when he said: "The real danger is not that computers will begin to think like men, but that men will begin to think like computers." . . .

The essence of human exchange is the capacity to empathize with the innermost states of other human beings as well as an exchange of emotions, visions, things that make us uniquely human; the kind of things that cannot be easily, if at all, translated into objective bits of information. . . .

Let us look at the concept of responsibility in the context of the Information Society, and see whether the Information Society is likely to enhance our responsibility, or on the contrary, stifle it. . . . Responsibility seen in the larger cosmic plan is a late acquisition of evolution. It comes about as consciousness becomes self-consciousness, and furthermore, as self-consciousness (in

attempting to refine itself) takes upon itself the moral cause: the burden of responsibility for the rest. Responsibility so conceived is a form of altruism. The tendency to escape from responsibility is a purely biological impulse, a self-serving gesture, a form of egoism. Therefore, those two tendencies, the altruistic (accepting the responsibility for all), and egoistic (escaping from it into the shell of our own ego), are continually fighting each other within us. And each of us knows the agony of this fight.

When we observe the lives of great men and women, the lives that are outstanding and fulfilled, we cannot help noticing that they were invariably inspired by a great sense of responsibility. Those who sacrificed themselves in the name of this responsibility did not have the sense of a wasted life.

To be human is to live in the state of responsibility. However, through the systematic separation of human beings from the cycles of nature, as well as through the process of delegating important decisions to experts, contemporary technology has been systematically disengaging us from life. Our lives have been made increasingly disconnected, atomized and trivialized. This particular aspect of present technology makes it more detrimental to the future of the human race than any particular technological disaster.

It is a pity, and indeed a blindness of our times, that the proponents of the computerized age never address themselves to this problem of our status and responsibility as human beings. T. S. Eliot aptly summarized our dilemma some 50 years ago: "Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?"

At a symposium on healthy living and the mind-body relationship, held in Bombay on July 21, speaker after speaker pointed out that several stress-related ailments could be relieved if the mind was kept free from "cravings and aversions" and negative emotions such as anger, resentment, jealousy, discontentment, etc. The function was inaugurated by Mr. K. Prabhakar Rao, Governor of Maharashtra.

Eminent medical practitioners gave their views on how various diseases of the chest, heart, abdomen, nervous system, etc., were associated with the mind. Dr. B. K. Goyal, cardiologist, said that mental stress creates spastic angina which causes heart attacks,

without there being any disease in the heart. Thus our heart has to bear the brunt of our mind and emotions. According to him, unhappy, ambitious persons are more prone to heart problems than stable, contented people. Subscribing to this view, Dr. B. S. Singal, neurophysician, said that not only does the mind produce diseases such as hypertension and migraine, but a patient's recovery after an illness depends considerably on the state of his mind. Those with a cheerful disposition recover faster. Dr. F. P. Antia, gastroenterologist, stressed the effect of the mind on the digestive functions. Emotions like anger and resentment produce changes in the stomach, causing indigestion, ulcers and inflammation. According to Dr. J. C. Kothari, chest diseases—asthma, for instance—have been helped by relaxation; the latter also helps to heighten the “immune mechanism” in a person. Psychiatrist V. N. Bagadia spoke of the need for a change in a person's philosophy and way of life.

In a keytone address at a meeting of the Society for Behavioural Medicine in New Orleans, Professor David McClelland of Harvard University in Boston, Massachusetts, stated that some people go around in a constant state of emotional arousal. It is now a matter of common knowledge that chronic arousal is injurious to one's health, but while the last decade of research has concentrated on stress and heart disease, this year's conference was devoted to psychoimmunology—the effect of emotions on the immune system. (*New Scientist*, July 4)

In one experiment on a group of dental students, it was found that the level of an antibody thought to protect against respiratory infection fell in periods of high stress, such as examination times, but more than that, the fall was most significant at times that the students themselves perceived as being the most stressful. There was even a suggestion that the greatest falls occurred among those students who had the fewest friends. Another study involving a group of medical students showed that periodic relaxation sessions improved the function of lymphocytes and white blood cells that destroy invading organisms.

The basic belief of psychoimmunologists is that disturbances in a person's life can reduce his immune function which, in turn, can increase his susceptibility to infectious disease, and perhaps even to cancer. Further studies are in progress.

Zarathushtra, the prophet of old Iran, is revered by some hundred thousand Parsis, one of the smallest religious communities on the face of the globe. According to Esoteric Philosophy, there were more teachers than one of that name, the name being adopted, as the title Shankaracharya is even today adopted, by a long line of religious teachers. This is very probably the reason why so many different eras and dates are assigned to Zarathushtra—from the 6,000 B.C., of Pliny the Elder down to the 600 B.C. of some present-day authorities on Iranian Culture. Zoroastrianism is not strictly monotheistic in the sense that an extracosmic, anthropomorphic Being created the universe and looks after its running. Ahura Mazda signifies ever-existing Wisdom. It is the omnipresent, impartite One Life-Power manifesting itself through the duality of Spirit and Matter, Spenta- and Angra-Mainyu, out of which emanate numberless Powers. Hence, there are hymns to these Powers symbolized by the Sun and by the Moon, by Fire and by Water. Of course there is the tendency to anthropomorphize these Forces of Nature and call them Gods and Goddesses, but in the *Gathas* their impersonal nature is to the fore.

Of these Manifested Powers, Fire is the chief object of veneration and, nowadays, of worship. It is called the Son of Ahura Mazda and in reality stands for the Human Soul, the Spark of Deity in the heart of every man.

During this month of August, on the 25th, the Parsis generally will celebrate their New Year; and on the 30th, the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet. We take this opportunity to offer a passage from the Hymn to Fire which is used every day by the devout visitor to his fire-temple:

Thou art worthy of Sacrifice and invocation; mayest thou receive these in the houses of men!

Mayest thou blaze for the protection of this house!

O Fire! Son of Ahura Mazda, Thou Great Purifier!

Mayest thou burn in this house! Mayest thou ever burn in this house! Mayest thou blaze in this house! Even for a long time, till the powerful restoration of the world!

Give me fullness of welfare, fullness of maintenance, fullness of life. Give me knowledge, sagacity, eloquence of tongue, holiness of mind, good memory and the understanding which goes on growing and which is not acquired through mere learning.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished 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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