

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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IMMORTAL ETHICS

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The Ethics of Theosophy are even more necessary to mankind than the scientific aspects of the psychic facts of nature and man.

—H.P.B. (*Five Messages*)

WRITING about the second of the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement, H.P.B. said in *The Theosophical Glossary* that students of Theosophy should prosecute a "serious study of the ancient world-religions for purposes of comparison and the selection therefrom of *universal ethics*" (italics ours). She illustrated the "esoteric bearing of the Karmic Cycle upon Universal Ethics" (*S.D.*, I, 637). The aim and purpose of the Movement she launched was clearly formulated by her on the opening pages of her first book, *Isis Unveiled* (I, xlv) :

...the materialism of To-Day is born of the brutal Yesterday. Unless its growth is arrested, it may become our master. It is the bastard progeny of the French Revolution and its reaction against ages of religious bigotry and repression. To prevent the crushing of these spiritual aspirations, the blighting of these hopes, and the deadening of that intuition which teaches us of a God and a hereafter, we must show our false theologies in their naked deformity, and distinguish between divine religion and human dogmas. Our voice is raised for spiritual freedom, and our plea made for enfranchisement from all tyranny, whether of SCIENCE OR THEOLOGY.

From these and several other comments of H.P.B.'s we have good reason to deduce that the Ethics of the Esoteric Philosophy are as

precise and definite, as constant, consistent and time-honoured, as the body of Knowledge named Theosophy. Mundane morality, like modern knowledge, ever shifts and changes, and each of its branches follows its own pattern.

Ethics and Metaphysics integrate the Esoteric Wisdom. Theosophy has been correctly defined as the mathematics of the Soul, the exact science of the Soul. The Wisdom-Religion is the One Religion "which underlies all the now existing creeds." In each of these many creeds there lie buried nuggets of gold. H.P.B. advocated a "serious study" of ancient creeds with the definite object of codifying the true ideas which comprise Universal Ethics.

In modern civilization,

The wildest dreams of Kew
Are facts in Khatmandu
And sins of Clapham
Chaste in Martaban.

But in the Occult World of Perfected Men, moral principles are precise and go hand in hand with philosophical principles. In the departments of both Ethics and Metaphysics, Theosophy has "no two beliefs or hypotheses on the same subject." There is only one true answer to any problem, to any conundrum.

Robert Crosbie was a great psychologist because he was a great Theosophist. In more than one place he has warned against the foibles and notions of modern Western psychiatrists and psychologists. Where are they going wrong? Just at the place where they disregard the ancient and time-honoured principles of true Psychology. In *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* (pp. 196-7) Mr. Crosbie writes:

The...classification and discussion of the three qualities illustrates the vital difference between the ancient, true psychology of the East, and what is termed as Western psychology. Both abound in classifications; those of the East are much more numerous than those of the West and cover a far wider field; Western psychology in its classifications refers solely to mental states. The psychology of the *Gita* and the ancient sages classifies the *moral* states, treating the mental states as mere effects produced by moral conditions. Herein lies the secret of the hold the *Gita* has had all down the ages, and continues to have increasingly. It lays bare unsuspected bases of error; it discloses the most subtle forms of self-delusion; it marks

out the true course so painstakingly that the dullest mind cannot fail to grasp a clear perception of the path to true knowledge.

The "original" thinking of Freud, Jung, Adler, and one may name others, creates new psychologies. The ancient Psychology which Theosophy supports is not the result of anyone's originality; all its teachings have come to us through the process of transmission. A long line of Sages have reiterated the same moral as well as philosophical principles, not saying "Behold, I know" in a tone of conceit and authority, but repeating "Thus have I heard" in a mellow tone of humility.

Let us see if we can formulate the fundamentals of the ancient science of Ethics. Says Mr. Crosbie : "...the path of true Occultism and that of immorality do not coincide....The Path of Brotherhood and the Path of Occultism are One Path." (*The Friendly Philosopher*, pp. 74-75)

This way of brotherliness is explained and emphasized by W. Q. Judge in a hundred places. The sin of mind, the sin of heart, the sin of hands and body, are all expressions of the sin against Universal Brotherhood, which may well be called the sin against the Holy Ghost.egotism and selfishness are sins against the Divine Ego and the Supreme Self. The sins of speech are many—from exaggerated talk to lies; from fault-finding to malicious defamation; from harsh words to soul abuses; from innuendos to braggadocio.

But Theosophical Morality is not negative; it teaches, not what "thou shalt not," but what "thou shalt." The Divine Virtues are the gauge for the self-examination of our own moral behaviour and ethical principles. Love, harmony, the light of everlasting right, the fitness of the small in the whole—these are the guiding ideas. A very hard and uphill task has to be faced, and innumerable failures overtake the soldier-soul, but "each failure is success"; "the enemies he slew in the last battle will not return to life," provided he continues to fight.

The task of the U.L.T. is to promulgate the Ethics of the Wisdom-religion; to bring men and women to the recognition that true Morality is one and indivisible—always the same. The lost art of Right Living is not to be discovered in modern knowledge. H.P.B. has explained that very fully. Our civilization, she says,

encourages, legally and tacitly, vice under every form, from the sale of whiskey down to forced prostitution and theft brought on by

starvation wages, Shylock-like exactions, rents, and other comforts of our cultured period. Because, finally, this is the age which, although proclaimed as one of physical and moral freedom, is in truth the age of the most ferocious moral and mental slavery, the like of which was never known before. Slavery to State and *men* has disappeared only to make room for slavery to *things* and *Self*, to one's own vices and idiotic social customs and ways. ("The Dual Aspect of Wisdom": *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 32*, p. 2)

It is for the individual to study and ascertain the unchanging, unevolving, ancient principles of behaviour and conduct, and to undertake the right building of character. The aspirant must seek in his own heart the source of evil and expunge it. Also, in that heart he must kindle the Tathagata Light, faithfully, humbly, but confidently, following the Teachings promulgated by the U.L.T.

What the enquirer or the Associate of the U.L.T. does is his concern. The solemn duty of the U.L.T. is to transmit the Message of the Masters, exact and infallible, to all. Newspapers, periodicals and many, many organizations work to spread modern knowledge, but the U.L.T. is the channel for the transmission of the true teachings of Theosophy, both metaphysical and moral. Studying, applying and promulgating these teachings,

LET US PRESS FORWARD.

THE true sublime, by some virtue of its nature, elevates us: uplifted with a sense of proud possession, we are filled with joyful pride, as if we had ourselves produced the very thing we heard....

When men who differ in their habits, their lives, their tastes, their ages, their dates, all agree together in holding one and the same view about the same writings, then the unanimous verdict, as it were, of such discordant judges makes our faith in the admired passage strong and indisputable.

—LONGINUS

GOD: OF RELIGION, OF SCIENCE, OF THEOSOPHY

ORGANIZED religion has one common failing: everywhere and at all times religious followers are credulous and superstitious, and therefore priests have taken full advantage of them. The mentally lazy want to be led; those who will not study, quickly come to believe. Belief and superstition are the hallmarks of every orthodox, dogmatic and sectarian religion. From the most ancient times when true knowledge disappeared from the public world, instead of enquiring, seeking and searching, people accepted the words of the priest and began to believe.

There are generally speaking two steps by which religious followers everywhere descend into the sphere of belief and of corruption. First, the priest inculcates the belief in a personal or anthropomorphic and extra-cosmic god. Secondly, the priest introduces the institution of the intermediary, to gain the favour and mercy of god. In numerous ways this doctrine of the intermediary is made to flourish. Because of these two false teachings, every religion, without exception, has become degraded, and if anyone desires to purify and to elevate his own religion, he will have to attend to these two factors.

The god created by the priest and accepted by ignorant human fancy is personal, anthropomorphic and extra-cosmic. God is conceived as a person, and that is also what is meant by the word "anthropomorphic"—god in the form of man. Just as a person is an entity, distinct from other persons, so people think that god is an entity, distinct and separate from all other entities in the whole of creation. And more, just as a person gets irritated and angry from time to time, so this personal god is pleased at one thing, displeased at another; loving and fatherly at times, angry and wrathful at other times. This personal, anthropomorphic god is said to be beyond the universe—extra-cosmic, outside of the cosmos. How to please this god maintained by human ignorance and superstition is the question for everyone.

But why have the priests created such an ugly and absurd god? Because of the second factor—the intermediary. People are taught that to gain the mercy and the blessing of god, to avert his wrath and secure pardon for their blunders and sins, they must have some intermediary. According to some Christian and other creeds, an ordained priest, never mind how ignorant or how wicked, possesses

the power to forgive sins and to bestow blessings. Theosophy regards this doctrine as a gross and palpable fraud. But creeds that have given up this absurd doctrine still advocate prayers. All priests, whatever their creed, advocate that people shall offer stereotyped prayers to some outside personal god. The orthodox and bigoted person prays and asks for forgiveness of sins from some god whom he conceives as a person, and thus he distorts the grand and sublime conception of the ever-existing Wisdom and Divine Justice of the One God. The orthodox person does not ask why he made a mistake or committed a sin. If god created him with his human weaknesses and follies, then god is responsible, not he; if god created evil or the devil, then once again god and not man is responsible. Then, how can an ordinary mortal, just because he goes through certain rites and becomes a priest, or because he is born in a certain caste, become pure and holy? Why should such a priest possess the right of performing certain ceremonies? Who among us believes that an ordinary priest who prays for money is holy and learned and worthy of taking us to the realization of god? Priests in all religions exploit the credulous masses. Not only the priests, but even some self-styled spiritual gurus nowadays claim to be intermediaries between man and god.

So the god of religions has fast become grotesque and is being rejected everywhere by all intelligent and thinking people. And the god of science is as fast being accepted. Science has reversed the dictum of orthodox religions. It says that there cannot be anyone or anything *outside* of matter; and therefore within and inside matter the search must be pursued. The matter of science today is very different from the matter science described a few years ago. The invisible, intangible aspect of matter is accepted today. Science has also dethroned lawlessness which the priest introduced. Science says that the universe is governed by law, all its processes are sequential, link after link, and an ordered march of evolution is taking place. Science, real science, is humble, and admits that it has not solved all the mysteries. There is law and order in the universe, but science does not claim that it understands all the laws. Science admits that there are many missing links, but this much it does assert—within matter there is life-energy; the laws of the universe are aspects of the Perpetual Motion which produces all the phenomena, visible and invisible, known or unknown. Science says that there are no miracles, and it is

useless to claim that that which is not understood is the result of miracles. Science accepts one universal substance with its visible and invisible aspects, within which substance the motion of life begets variety, and the many arise out of the One. Matter is living and forms of matter are forms of life. Thus in science Spirit and Matter are two poles of a single substance, connected by Perpetual Motion, so that one Spirit manifests many forms of life. Numberless aspects of that Motion are not known to science, but it hopes to fill up gaps, to find the missing links.

This position of science comes very close to the teachings of Theosophy. What science misses, Theosophy supplies. More, Theosophy corrects the mistakes of religions. Theosophy does not reject religions, but offers correctives and shows that there is but One Religion; it reveals that what is true in any creed is common to all creeds. That which divides one religion from another is false. Theosophy says: Religion is true, religions are false, and it also offers knowledge on the subject of God, Creation, Prayer and so forth. And so let us turn to the God of Theosophy.

If the God of religions is a matter of belief and superstition with its corresponding exploitation, if the God of science is a matter of honest search, what is the God of Theosophy? Theosophy accepts the scientific proposition, adding that God is Spirit-Matter, Motion-Substance, the One Impartite Life-Jiva, Self-Atman. God is omnipresent as Matter, omnipotent as Motion, omniscient as Spirit. Life is Triple—Matter, Motion, Spirit. To help the ordinary human mind to grasp this conception of Deity as Matter, Motion, Spirit—three aspects of Life, Jiva or Atman—Theosophy offers a symbol. Just as in Zoroastrianism Fire is the grand symbol which takes the mind of the contemplator to the Eternal Verities, so in other ancient religions other symbols are used. Theosophy explains all those symbols and it teaches that every concrete symbol is an expression with many meanings of some great abstract truth. Theosophy offers us the primary, grand symbol for Deity—Space. There is space all around us which we see, and there is a beyond invisible to us. So is Deity. In that mighty boundless expanse of space, there are visible forms of life like the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, etc., and there are invisible forms of life with which that whole mighty expanse is filled. Likewise, in a million ways Deity manifests its Glories, its Vibhutis.

Think of space all around; it is said that not an inch, not an *angula* of space is dead or empty; the whole is throbbing with the motion of Life, the whole is ablaze with Light. In thinking of space all around and about, do not overlook that each one of us is a form of life within which is the Light of Deity. People speak of God as omnipresent and then look around and above! Theosophy says—look *within*. The Light of God *within* us enables us to recognize the true nature of that Light throughout Nature. Just as because we have a pair of eyes we are able to see the distant stars, so also because within us is the Light of God we are able to cognize and realize God. By the aid of our own Self, Atman, we are able to know Paramatma, the Supreme Self. So we must learn to look for God within ourselves, in the cave of the Heart. The Buddhists speak of the Saptaparna Cave—that is the human heart. The Jews and others speak of the Sanctum Sanctorum, the Holy of Holies. It is not in the synagogue, which is but a symbol of the real Holy of Holies—the Heart. The Parsi fire-temple also contains the inner chamber where fire is kept perpetually burning. The human heart is that inner chamber and Fire is the Soul on which the sandalwood of good thoughts must be placed so that the Soul ever burns bright.

What is prayer? Who is the priest? Prayer, Theosophy says, must be addressed not to any outside god for forgiveness of sins or for favours, but to the Spirit of God within. Prayer means invoking the power of our own Higher Self, and by that power enlightening our own mind so that we may understand the path of righteousness. The self in man and the Self in the universe are one and the same self. Within man the whole of the universe is reflected. The human mind must endeavour to go within, deep and deeper, and that going within is true prayer. The mind is the priest, the mind is the intermediary, the mind is the link between Spirit and Matter; the mind has the power to move in the direction of Spirit or in the opposite direction of Matter. Who will save us, who can damn us? The mind. Therefore it is the mind that must pray. Mind is called in Hindu philosophy the "internal organ," *Antahkarana*. Mind is the priest who has the power to right the wrong committed by the senses, and we might say that our own intelligent mind has almost the power to forgive sins—first, by right knowledge; secondly, by right resolve; and thirdly, by right practice. It is also the mind that carries the human soul to the One

Impartite Self, Universal and Impersonal, seated in the hearts of all.

To recapitulate: God is like space, omnipresent; therefore God is present in every man, woman and child. That God is called Spirit and Holy Ghost and Christos by the Christians; Atman, the Self, by the Hindus; the Fravarshi in Zoroastrian psychology. That God dwells in the Holy of Holies which is the human heart. The Soul, Manas, *Antahkarana*, is the Intelligence, the self-conscious chooser; and the mind-soul acts as the true priest, purifies the senses and the desires, and goes towards the God in the Heart. One might think that this is a very difficult kind of prayer; it is not. Think of a person who falls in love. The human heart is capable of rising at one bound above differences of race, custom, creed, or even spoken language. Yet human love is but a pale reflection of Divine Love; a man loves only his beloved, but the Divine Lover loves the Universe and all that is in it. Just as the human lover through knowledge and expansion transforms himself into the Divine Lover, so also the human mind transforms itself into the Light of Universal Spirit which is divine.

Where and how shall we begin? Look upon the vast freedom of mind in space, and by a natural connection we shall learn to survey our own life and feelings, our past and our future, dispassionately, as parts of that freedom, universal and vast. Study of the Great Philosophy is the first step. Acquiring knowledge, we shall lose false notions and untrue ideas about God; we shall become truly religious—not sectarians but altruists, philanthropists. Our mind will become our priest and that mind will purify our senses, free us from our weaknesses and sins and take us to the true Temple, the Holy of Holies. Then Atma becomes Mahatma, the Great Soul, and enters into that Kingdom of Wisdom and of Sacrifice, and serves the whole of the race. Such wise Sacrificers are the Custodians of Theosophy who age after age proclaim Their Message. They teach that Man is divine and possesses the power to conquer the entire universe; that Man is the Eternal Pilgrim who, learning in the School of Life, masters all the processes of life, and conquering by knowledge the darkness of ignorance, is able to serve all those who are plunged in that ignorance. Let us learn the first Truth—we are gods; within us is the Light of God, and by the aid of that Light within we can walk the Noble Aryan Path, we can complete our Pilgrimage, and know ourselves as divine.

OUR UNFINISHED DUTIES

USUALLY, when we awaken again to the realization that a journey toward Self-knowledge is before us, and resolve to take up that struggle, the goal is clear and seems right within our grasp. The Theosophical teachings have given us a new hope and realization that encourages within us an urge to deliver those teachings to others. But later, as we begin on our way in earnest, that goal becomes more obscure, and mighty "monsters" of deception begin to cast their shadows on our pathway. Often we seem to lose sight of that very hope for mankind which we thought even our single effort would bring closer.

Yet, deep inside, we know that hope is never lost if the searcher just continues—no matter how weary he may become. His very effort has permitted Nature to help. Why, do we not think there is a law of Brotherhood, some compassionate force in nature, to give help when it is needed? Do we not have enough faith (call it conviction, if you like) in our highest aims, to know that all nature will co-operate if these aims are truly for the good of all? Nature, too, has a latent desire for divine attainment. It is the responsibility of higher beings to awaken the potential fires of self-consciousness in the lower kingdoms, just as mankind was and is awakened by those above its stage in evolution. We do not need to leave this to speculation, for this is a law easily realizable once we see it as a part of evolution around us.

Further, since law is impersonal, we know that it is only natural for sincere workers to be aided in their struggle. Law shows no favourites, but aids those who co-operate with it, that is, who make themselves "vehicles of the whole humanity." A conviction of this helps us perceive what is meant by "Masters exist as facts in nature," and ever revives in us the Will which makes us rise and struggle anew after each downfall.

The very admission that there *will* be downfalls, is perhaps part of taking on that struggle, for we know that each rise will bring new light for the path around the bend. It is a strong man with pure motive who can face the many confusions that arise—the karma of past responsibilities left uncared for, duties unperformed. How little we realize, until we desire higher ways of living, why, over and over again, Duty is stressed in the teachings! In our enthusiasm for "helping Humanity," we tend to forget that the very performance of

one's own duty is the greatest help we can give, at our present stage. But we soon realize that this duty cannot be escaped. By completing our unfinished duties, we "clean the slate" and prepare ourselves for a greater task. How often we spin rosy dreams about studying for the sake of being "the better able to help and teach others"—only to have our dreams collapse because we have left something undone which, we suddenly recall, must be completed! We seldom realize that even in the task of washing dishes we need not be filled with regrets, for we can still *think*—though we don't often remember this simple fact in our moments of disappointment.

The American schoolmaster, Bronson Alcott, faced this in his Fruitlands experiment. Alcott was swept away by his utopian ideas (great as they were) for a better society, and in his philosophical discussions and speculations he forgot the simple duty of protecting the grain from destruction. His daughter Louisa writes that many tasks were "left undone by the brethren who were so busy discussing and defining great duties that they forgot to perform the small ones." It was not until great grief came to Alcott and his family that he realized his error.

So it is with us all, perhaps, and we wonder *why*; since our motives are right. But even motives must be backed by wisdom: "motive is highly important and must be examined and tested countless times." Wisdom lies in recognizing that our small duties are part of evolution, not to be cast aside as unimportant in our search for truth. It is part of this wisdom to constantly check our motive. The lower man is forever deluding us with selfish motives, trying to turn even our highest aspirations into selfish desire for power and praise—heartless, intellectual pursuits. Yet we remember that with the first step we chose this journey for the good of all. There must be some of that motive left, and if we will only "associate ourselves with the highest in us," as Robert Crosbie suggests, we are sure to hold the "reins of our chariot" firmly. It is this holding firm, with *will*, that keeps us progressing—for the minute we let go we have to start all over again. "There is the finest line between right and wrong."

There are many ways we can remember our duty on this path—ways to prevent us from becoming too dazzled by the sights along the way. One way is to remember that in order to be patient with others it is first necessary to be patient with our own "apparent imperfections,"

as Mr. Crosbie calls them. The faults we see in ourselves should make us more compassionate for our struggling brothers, more understanding and forgiving of their "apparent" mistakes. Likewise, the faults we see in others are only Karmic mirrors of our own faults, set up, as if by some mutual law, for the purpose of our learning together. We do well "to see each friend as teacher," wrote Emily Dickinson.

The *Gita* reminds us that there is no possibility of escaping from the collective Karma of the race. For a Theosophist, above all others, this is certainly true. How else could he help? Each can do his part in turning those evil propensities of the race into good servants to the soul.

It has been said that what is true in a nation or race is true in the family. And it is here that we may begin. "It's a long road, but we have to start somewhere"—if "only" by fulfilling present duties.

THE Esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life. The true philosopher, the student of the Esoteric Wisdom, entirely loses sight of personalities, dogmatic beliefs and special religions. Moreover, Esoteric philosophy reconciles all religions, strips every one of its outward, human garments, and shows the root of each to be identical with that of every other great religion. It proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in nature. It denies Deity no more than it does the sun. Esoteric philosophy has never rejected God in Nature nor Deity as the absolute and abstract *Ens*. It only refuses to accept any of the gods of the so-called monotheistic religions, gods created by man in his own image and likeness, a blasphemous and sorry caricature of the Ever Unknowable.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I, xx

MEDITATION

THE word "meditation is very much in fashion nowadays. The "New Age" movement uses it *ad nauseum*, and there are countless strange ideas current as to the right way to practise it. Every "guru" seems to have his own ideas and some of them are certainly bizarre. We are obliged to adopt the most uncomfortable postures in order to achieve our ends, which are as varied as the methods adopted to reach them. It is a failing of society that it allows itself to be overrun by individuals who are keen to impress their half-digested ideas onto the minds of willing subjects, who have not the time or inclination to think deeply for themselves. We have lost touch with that natural intuition that speaks quietly to us amidst the trials of life, and we do not appreciate the message.

An article, written over a hundred years ago, gives us some priceless glimpses into the nature of true meditation. This paper entitled "The Elixir of Life" appeared in *The Theosophist* and later in *Five Years of Theosophy*, and was reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for July and August 1966. A great many startling facts of occultism are given by the author who signs himself "G.M." The one that most interests us, given the subject-matter of this article, is as follows:

Meditation is the inexpressible yearning of the inner Man to "go out towards the infinite," which in the olden time was the real meaning of adoration, but which has now no synonym in the European languages, because the thing no longer exists in the West, and its name has been vulgarized to the make-believe shams known as prayer, glorification, and repentance.

Earlier, we are informed that "to get rid of the inward desire is the essential thing, and to mimic the real thing without it is barefaced hypocrisy and useless slavery." So it must be as regards meditation. Unless we have this "inexpressible yearning" we may find that we are only playing games that may lead us along a *cul-de-sac*.

There is certainly nothing "weird" about meditation as long as we have a correct understanding as to its purpose. H.P.B. published a short reply to critics of "The Elixir of Life." This also appeared in *The Theosophist* and later in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for September 1966. She poses the question, "Is the desire to 'live' selfish?" In her

reply she defines the method that will lead the aspirant towards *Nirvana* or *Mukti*, when he becomes one with the Divine.

For that purpose, every veil of illusion which creates a sense of personal isolation, a feeling of separateness from THE ALL, must be torn asunder, or, in other words, the aspirant must gradually discard all sense of selfishness with which we are all more or less afflicted.

Meditation leads us to this end. Merely to repeat, parrot fashion, certain mantras, or to sit for an hour or two in some yogic posture, means absolutely nothing in the end. Damodar K. Mavalankar also commented on "The Elixir of Life." His article, "Contemplation" (reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*), warns the student to avoid the dangerous Hatha-Yoga practices enjoined by some "gurus" and suggests that the path outlined in "The Elixir of Life" be followed. We must be constantly vigilant and our everyday life should become a meditation on the highest. We should certainly not set our occult practices aside from our diurnal duties, but learn how to live always "in the light." Meditation is surely a way of life and should teach us how to live among our fellow human beings with a deeper understanding of our oneness with the source. We should be trying to become more human and less animalistic. True meditation is a way to free ourselves from the conditioning of modern society, which has based itself on the mistaken notions of scientists and dogmatic religionists, and to see things as they really are. In other words, meditation is a return to clear vision. It is unfortunate that many individuals have shown it in a bad light because of their own personal brain-mind notions. Those who are addicted to eccentric actions are the ones who are most likely to push themselves forward and have us believe that they hold the keys to the "kingdom of heaven"!

The truth is that we are all born equal in that respect. Perchance some of us are more entangled in the web of material images than others, but time and effort can put this right. This is the purpose of meditation. It is like a blind man gradually recovering his vision. Slowly but surely the light filters through and a whole new range of experiences is introduced into his life. Too much too soon would be confusing and harmful, so the process has to be measured. Of course we must be aware that we live in a topsy-turvy world and so people in general regard normality as insanity and *vice versa*. We go about our daily activities unaware of the Spiritual aspect of life. Therefore

we glorify trivialities and denigrate the essential. Without some kind of meditation, there is little chance that we will be able to see things in their true light. The time may be fast approaching when practitioners of genuine meditation will cease to hide their light under a bushel and will easily overthrow the pretensions and delusions of the worldly-wise. In the *Diamond Sutra*, a major Buddhist scripture, one of Gautama Buddha's disciples, Subhuti, makes the comment that "It is the Absolute which exalts the Holy Ones." Meditation on the highest that one is able to imagine is an effective way of reaching spiritual understanding. Of course we should have an intellectual grasp of the mechanics of Theosophy in order to have a basis for our contemplation. Lack of this elementary knowledge is the stumbling-block of most self-styled gurus and practitioners of meditation.

Robert Bowen, a pupil of H.P.B.'s, made notes of teachings given to him and others ("Madame Blavatsky on How to Study Theosophy": THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, August 1961). H.P.B. states in these notes that *Jnana Yoga*, the yoga of knowledge, is the best way for the Western student, and she gives an excellent synopsis of the methods and results of meditation. An extract from these notes follows:

As one progresses in *Jnana Yoga*, one finds conceptions arising which, though one is conscious of them, one cannot express nor yet formulate into any sort of mental picture. As time goes on these conceptions will form into mental pictures. This is a time to be on guard and refuse to be deluded with the idea that the new-found and wonderful picture must represent reality. It does not. As one works on, one finds the once admired picture growing dull and unsatisfying and finally fading out or being thrown away. This is another danger point, because for the moment one is left in a void without any conception to support one, and one may be tempted to revive the cast-off picture for want of a better to cling to. The true student will, however, work on unconcerned, and presently further formless gleams come, which again in time give rise to a larger and more beautiful picture than the last. But the learner will now know that no picture will ever represent the TRUTH. This last splendid picture will grow dull and fade like the others. And so the process goes on, until at last the mind and its pictures are transcended and the learner enters and dwells in the world of NO FORM, but of which all forms are narrowed reflections.

SOME IDEAS OF W. Q. JUDGE

LETTER II of the Second Book of W. Q. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me*, addressed to the London Theosophists living together in a co-operative household, may be said to epitomize the discipline expected of students of Theosophy and aspirants to the Higher Life. Mr. Judge, with his characteristic knack of expressing profound truths in simple-sounding words, is not only giving practical guidance in the living of the life to a group of students of a century ago, but is, as it were, addressing himself to each of us today who believes that Theosophy must be made practical.

It would be difficult to pick out any statement in the letter as embodying seed ideas, for almost every sentence is pregnant with meaning. In general, it could be said that Mr. Judge deals with two important aspects of our work—our work in the world, and our work in and on ourselves, each one—and the two are supplementary and complementary. We gain in knowledge and power as we work for others, and what is thus gained is not for our selfish use but to fit ourselves to be the better able to help and teach others.

At the outset, Mr. Judge speaks of co-operative households and how close intimacy is apt to lead to personal frictions—a common human failing from which present-day students are not exempt. The formation of a nucleus of unity and brotherhood is the most important object of our work, but one has to beware of the strong force that revolves around a united centre, ready to dissipate it. As an individual has his sphere of influence, so has a group, and to keep it in good magnetism unity is the first requisite. The personal element that is to the fore in most of us creates barriers between us and prevents us from doing the good that we could do as a truly united body. Fault-finding and condemnation of others harden our own nature and, failing to see the beauty of others, we weaken our soul-perception. All this is in direct violation of our discipline as students of Theosophy.

The principle that should guide us when friction of personalities arises is succinctly expressed by Mr. Judge in these words: "Essentials are the only things on which true occultism and Theosophy require an agreement." This should serve as a constant reminder to those of us who are apt to judge others by our own particular "crank." Masters do not select disciples because of their similarity of temperament, but to give to each the opportunity for self-discipline and self-development

through mutual give-and-take. Though all students of Theosophy subscribe to the same aim, purpose and teaching, techniques of doing things differ from person to person, and acceptance of this fact alone can do away with fault-finding and create a firm basis for union.

What Mr. Judge says regarding mental grooves—filling up the old ones and making our mind run in the natural grooves of another mind—has especial relevance when we perceive that "thus in one life even we might have the benefit of many, for the lives of other men are lived beside us unnoticed and unused because we are too broad and flanged in wheel, or too narrow and flanged also." This not only helps us in our individual lives, but also makes our service more effective. Each has to make of himself "a centre from which, in our measure, may flow out the potentialities for good that from the adept come in large and affluent streams." Those of us who expect quick results, and are apt to be disheartened when they are not forthcoming, need to remind ourselves that we work in the present, for the future, so that men and women of generations to come may profit by the work we do now.

Being of the race, it is but natural that the general race tendencies bind us down. But, instead of groaning over it, we, in our inner nature, can force our way out by fighting the great fight and accumulating all that we can of merit. In this transition age, we stand at the midway point from where the ways go up or down. It is in our hands to seize the opportunity and rise above the condition of the whole—or keep marking time. For aspirants to the Higher Life, especially, there is a quickening process which should be taken advantage of to be free from the material basis of our nature that is binding down the race as a whole.

Referring to the broader scope of our work, Mr. Judge makes the all-important point that it embraces the race, the whole mass of units. "We are not working for some definite organization of the new years to come," he says, "but for a change in the Manas and Buddhi of the Race." The leaven of Theosophy has been working through the years, transforming the world of thought, though much still remains to be accomplished. Students of Theosophy who talk of the Three Objects of the Theosophical Movement but fail to keep abreast of what has already been achieved along the lines of these Objects in the world at large, are behind the times and can hardly hope to make an effective

contribution in the present and future work of the Movement. The widespread influence of Theosophical ideas, however labelled, is reflected in the stupendous change in human thought during the past hundred years. Not only are the Occult doctrines gaining greater intellectual acceptance, but their *living power* has transformed countless lives and given them an upward impulse. At this juncture, in this last decade of the 20th century, it is of paramount importance to know the trend of the race-mind, for the whole purpose of the Movement in its broader aspect has been and will continue to be the elevation of the Manas and Buddhi of the race. With this end in view, we must continue the great task of injecting into the thought of the day the ideas, the doctrines, the nomenclature of the Wisdom-Religion, pure and undefiled.

The object of our general work, Mr. Judge goes on to say, "is to start up a new force, a new current in the world, whereby great and long-gone Gnanis, or wise ones, will be attracted back to incarnate among men here and there, and thus bring back the true life and the true practices." At present, the darkness of Kali Yuga prevails and prevents the Masters from doing the good they would do. Yet we have to aim high and help in the building up of a new order of things for the benefit of the whole. How can this be done? Mr. Judge provides the answer: "We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and good from other spheres from beyond the earth."

Our immediate task is to press forward with new energy in the work, with faith and confidence born of the conviction that a united centre of earnest student-aspirants can make a substantial contribution in changing the thought-atmosphere of a world that is in need of it. With W.Q.J.—not the dead, but the living W.Q.J.—to help and guide us, we cannot but succeed.

A character is a completely fashioned will.

—NOVALIS

CYCLES AND HUMAN LIFE

THE fact that we make use of things and of events does not mean that we understand and know about them. All of us switch on electric lights; how few of us understand generating and transmission systems! Fewer still understand what the real nature of electricity is. Similarly with cycles; every second we act, feel, think in terms of cycles, and great Nature around us revolves under cyclic Law, affecting the minute and the stupendous in its ramifications and infinitude.

Superficial analysis reveals the human being to be enmeshed in cycles throughout his life. There is the nine-month period of prenatal life. With birth commences the cycle of lung-breathing. The habits of the family, community and nation into which he has been born create their periodical effects. The period when it is light, becomes in time the period for feeding. Darkness means sleep, for which a different type of clothing is sometimes put on. These repetitions produce cycles, and babies, although different in temperament, can be made to adhere to good habits. Babies can also quickly learn, however, to take advantage of their parents' weakness. And there seems to be a world-wide fear that grandparents may "spoil" otherwise carefully nurtured and trained offspring. Good habits in such cases are replaced by bad.

Gradually the cycles of morning, noon and evening become more fully established in the child's consciousness. The milkman and the newspaper-man come. Father leaves in the morning and returns in the evening. Then follow school days, recreation, study, sleep. Finally examinations loom, with vacation periods thereafter. And in India there are the great religious festivals, including the several different new years of the differing sects.

On the farm, the seasons of ploughing, rains and harvesting become clear-cut. In the city, the periodical wage payment may bring with it sweets or even a cinema, but also, alas, the appearance of the collecting money-lender.

The child reaches the age of seven and a change in consciousness occurs. There may, in some countries, be a thread ceremony. Inwardly, the pricks of conscience begin to be felt. Previously the parents' word was law; now the child debates right and wrong within himself and sometimes argues the *why* of things with parents and teachers.

Towards 12 or 14, certain psychological and physiological changes begin to assert themselves; a vague idealism makes its appearance; an

individual here or there becomes the ideal for the moment. Life is growing more complex. The school examinations seem to come sooner; the vacations for most seem shorter, though to some who have the will to be up and doing, they seem to drag. Emotionally, we become easily upset; we jiggle and giggle; we are moody; a sudden mild fever seems to us to presage some terrible crippling disease. The knowledge of sex and its allure begins to impinge and we are shy or bold, modest or ribald according to our temperament. The adult world says that we are in our teens.

But at the age of 18 to 21, a certain stability or basic stamina is usually developed. Early marriage is probable in Eastern countries and thereby a whole new conglomeration of interrelating cyclic habits, forces and responsibilities come into motion. The problems of death and ill-health more and more engage our attention. Our parents are definitely older, less active, one perhaps is already dead. As they had been responsible for a family's well-being, so we are now. We have become more or less conscious of being like the central pivot of a clock. Around us seem to move countless hidden wheels. Sometimes they interact smoothly, sometimes they grind and break, sometimes a hidden alarm suddenly goes off. If we forget to wind ourselves up regularly, to keep well cleaned and oiled, we run down and stop.

If we become intellectually acute, we see that communities and men go through their cyclic ups and downs too. The sun seems to move rhythmically from East to West each day, but we reason that this appearance is due to the earth itself turning. Intuitionally, we may even sense the spiritual interrelationship between central suns and their attendant and dependent planets, all responsive to the great cyclic, cosmic law, which affects all beings in nature. Do cycles rule us, or can we rule them?

WILL-POWER goes far when well applied by those "*who know how and when.*"

—H. P. B.

THINGS COMMON TO CHRISTIANITY AND THEOSOPHY

[The following address was delivered by William Q. Judge before the Aryan T.S., New York, on January 9, 1894, and issued as a pamphlet the same year.]

THAT the Theosophical Society is not opposed to Christianity in either its dogmatic or pure form is easily demonstrated. Our constitution forbids it and the second object of the Society does also. The laws of our body say that there shall be no crusade against any religion, tacitly excepting, of course, the few degraded and bestial religions now in the world; the second object provides for a full and free study of all religions without bias and without hatred or sectarianism. And our history also, offering to view branch societies all over the world composed of Christians, refutes the charge that the Society as such is opposed to Christianity. One instance is enough, that of the well-known Scottish Lodge, which states in its printed Transactions No. IX, "Theosophists who are Christians (and such are the majority of the Scottish Lodge)...Therefore Christians who are sincere and who know what Theosophy means must be Theosophists..." If members of the Society have said to the contrary, it has been from ignorance and a careless thinking, for on the same ground we should also be opposed to all other religions which have any forms, and both Brahmanism and Buddhism have as much of formalism as has Christianity. Generally speaking, then, the Society is not and cannot be opposed to Christianity, while it may lead to a denial of some of the men-made theories of that Church.

But that is no more than branches of Christianity have always been doing, nor is it as much a danger to formal Christianity as the new standards of criticism which have crept into the Church.

Nor can it be either that Theosophy as a whole is opposed to Christianity, inasmuch as Theosophy is and must be the one truth underlying all religions that have ever been among men. A calm and sincere examination of all the world's religions reveals the fact that in respect to ethics, in respect to laws, in respect to precepts or example or effect on daily life, or even in respect to cosmogony and cosmology, the other religious books of the world are the same in most respects as those of the Christians, and that the distinguishing difference

between the latter's religion and the others is that it asserts an exclusiveness for itself and a species of doctrinal intolerance not found in the rest.

If we take the words and the example of Jesus as the founder of Christianity, it is at once seen that there is no opposition at all between that form of religion and Theosophy. Indeed, there is the completest agreement. New ethics are not brought forward by Theosophy, nor can they be, as ethics of the right sort must always be the same. In his sermons and sayings are to be found the ethics given out by Buddha and by all other great teachers of all time. These cannot be altered, even though they hold up to weak mortals an ideal that is very difficult to live up to and sometimes impossible to realize in daily life. That these rules of conduct laid down by Jesus are admittedly hard to follow is shown in the behaviour of Christian states toward each other and in the declarations of their high prelates that the religion of Jesus cannot be the basis for diplomatic relations nor for the state government. Hence we find that the refuge from all this adopted by the theologian is in the statement that, although other and older religions had moral truth and similar ethics to those of Jesus, the Christian religion is the only one wherein the founder asserted that he was not merely a teacher from God, but was also at the same time God himself; that is, that prior to Jesus a great deal of good was taught, but God did not see fit until the time of Jesus to come down among men into incarnation. Necessarily such a declaration would seem to have the effect of breeding intolerance from the high and exclusive nature of the claim made. But an examination of Brahmanism shows that Rama was also God incarnate among men, though there the doctrine did not arouse the same sum of intolerance among its believers. So it must be true that it is not always a necessary consequence of such a belief that aggressive and exclusive intolerance will grow up.

The beliefs and teachings of Christianity are not all supportable by the words of Jesus, but his doctrines are at all times in accord with Theosophy. There is certainly a wide difference between the command of Jesus to be poor and to have neither staff nor money and the fact of the possession by the Church of vast sums of money and immense masses of property, and with the drawing of high salaries by prelates, and with the sitting of prelates among the rulers of the earth upon

thrones, and in the going to war and the levying of taxes by the Pope and by other religious heads. The gathering of tithes and enforcement of them by law and by imprisonment at the instance of the Protestant clergy are not at all consistent with the words of Jesus. But all of the foregoing inconsistent matters are a part of present Christianity, and if in those respects a difference from or opposition to them should seem to arise from Theosophical teachings we must admit it, but cannot be blamed. If we go back to the times of the early Christians and compare that Christianity with the present form, we see that opposition by Theosophy could hardly be charged, but that the real opposition then would be between that early form of the religion and its present complexion. It has been altered so much that the two are scarcely recognizable as the same. This is so much so that there exists a Christian sect today called "Early Christian."

Everyone has at all times a right to object to theological interpretations if they are wrong, or if they distort the original teaching or introduce new notions. In this respect there is a criticism by Theosophy and by Theosophists. But thinkers in the world not members of this Society and not leaning to Theosophy do the same thing. Huxley and Tyndall and Darwin and hosts of others took ground that by mere force of truth and fact went against theological views. Galileo also, seeing that the earth was round and moved, said so, but the theologian, thinking that such belief tended to destroy the power of the church and to upset biblical theories, made him recant at the risk of his liberty and life. If the old views of theology were still in force with the state behind them, the triumphs of science would have been few and we might still be imagining the earth to be flat and square and the sun revolving about it.

Theosophical investigation discloses to the student's view the fact that in all ages have appeared great teachers of religion and that they all had two methods of instruction. One, or that for the masses of people, was plain and easy to understand; it was of ethics, of this life and of the next, of immortality and love; it always gave out the Golden Rule. Such a teacher was Buddha, and there can be no controversy on the fact that he died centuries before the birth of Jesus. He declared his religion to be that of love. Others did the same. Jesus came and taught ethics and love, with the prominent exception of his prophecy that he came to bring a sword and division as recorded in

the Gospels. There is also an incident which accents a great difference between him and Buddha; it is the feast where he drank wine and also made some for others to drink. In regard to this matter, Buddha always taught that all intoxicating liquors were to be rigidly abstained from. The second method was the secret or Esoteric one, and that Jesus also used. We find disciples asking him why he always used easy parables with the people, and he replied that to the disciples he taught the mysteries, or the more recondite matters of religion. This is the same as prevailed with the older saints. Buddha also had his private teachings to certain disciples. He even made a distinction among his personal followers, making classes in their ranks, to one of which he gave the simple rules, to the other the complex and difficult. So he must have pursued the ancient practice of having two sets of teachings, and this must have been a consequence of his education.

At twelve years of age he came to the temple and disputed with the learned rabbis on matters of the law. Thus he must have known the law; and what that law was and is it is necessary to ask. It was the law of Moses, full of the most technical and abstruse things, and not all to be found in the simple words of the books. The Hebrew books are a vast mine of cypher designedly so constructed, and that should be borne in mind by all students. It ought to be known to Christians, but is not, as they prefer not to go into the mysteries of the Jews. But Jesus knew it. His remark that "not one jot or tittle of the law would pass" shows this. Most people read this simply as rhetoric, but it is not so. The jots and tittles are a part of the books and go to make up the cypher of the Cabala or the hidden meaning of the law. This is a vast system of itself, and was not invented after the time of Jesus. Each letter is also a number, and thus every word can be and is, according to a well-known rule, turned into some other word or into a number. Thus one name will be a part of a supposed historical story, but when read by the cypher it becomes a number of some cycle or event or a sign of the Zodiac or something else quite different from the mere letters. Thus the name of Adam is composed of three consonants, A, D, and M. These mean by the system of the cypher respectively "Adam, David, and Messiah." The Jews also held that Adam for his first sin would have to and did incarnate as David and would later come as Messiah. Turning to *Revelation* we find traces of the same system in the remarks about the numbers of the beast and

the man. The Cabala or hidden law is of the highest importance, and as the Christian religion is a Hebraic one it cannot be properly studied or understood without the aid given by the secret teaching. And the Cabala is not dead or unknown, but has many treatises written on it in different languages. By using it, we will find in the Old Testament and in the records of Jesus a complete and singular agreement with Theosophy.

Examine, for instance, the Theosophical teachings that there is a secret or esoteric doctrine, and the doctrine of inability of man to comprehend God. This is the Brahmanical doctrine of the unapproachableness of Parabrahm. In *Exodus* there is a story which to the profane is absurd, of God telling Moses that he could not see him. It is in *Exodus* xxxiii, 20, where God says Moses could see him from behind only. Treat this by the rule of the Cabala and it is plain, but read it on the surface and you have nonsense. In *Exodus* iii, 14, God says that his name is "I am that I am." This is AHYH ASHR AHYH, which has to be turned into its numerical value, as each letter is also a number. Thus A is 1, H is 5, Y is 10, H is 5. There being two words the same, they add up 42. The second word is A, 1; SH, 300; R, 200; making 501, which added to 42 gives 543 as the number of "I am that I am." Now Moses by the same system makes 345 or the reverse of the other, by which the Cabala shows God meant Moses to know God by his reverse or Moses himself. To some this may appear fanciful, but as it is the method on which these old books are constructed it must be known in order to understand what is not clear and to remove from the Christian books the well-sustained charge of absurdity and sometimes injustice and cruelty shown on their face. So instead of God's being made ridiculous by attributing to him such a remark as that Moses could only "see his hinder parts," we perceive that under the words is a deep philosophical tenet corresponding to those of Theosophy, that Parabrahm is not to be known and that Man is a small copy of God through which in some sense or in the reverse we may see God.

For the purpose of this discussion along the line of comparison we will have to place Christianity on one side and put on the other as representing the whole body of Theosophy, so far as revealed, the other various religions of the world, and see what, if anything, is common between them. First we see that Christianity, being the

younger, has borrowed its doctrines from other religions. It is now too enlightened an age to say, as the Church did when Abbé Huc brought back his account of Buddhism from Tibet, that either the devil or wicked men invented the old religions so as to confuse and confute the Christian. Evidently, no matter how done, the system of the Christian is mixed Aryan and Jewish. This could not be otherwise, since Jesus was a Jew, and his best disciples and the others who came after like Paul were of the same race and faith. The early Fathers also, living as they did in Eastern lands, got their ideas from what they found about them.

Next, a very slight examination will disclose the fact that the ritual of the Christian Church is also borrowed. Taken from all nations and religions, not one part of it is either of this age or of the Western Hemisphere. The Brahmans have an extensive and elaborate ritual, and so have the Buddhists. The rosary, long supposed by Catholics to be a thing of their own, has existed in Japan for uncounted years, and much before the West had any civilization the Brahman had his form of rosary. The Roman Catholic Christian sees the priest ring the bell at a certain part of the Mass, and the old Brahman knows that when he is praying to God he must also ring a bell to be found in every house as well as in the temple. This is very like what Jesus commanded. He said that prayer must be in secret, that is, where no one can hear; the Brahman rings the small bell so that even if ears be near they shall not hear any words but only the sound of the bell. The Christian has images of virgin and child; the same thing is to be found in Egyptian papyri and in carved statues in India made before the Christian came into existence. Indeed, all the ritual and observance of the Christian churches may be found in the mass of other religions with which for the moment we are making a rough comparison.

Turning now to doctrine, we find again complete agreement with the dogmatic part of Christianity in these older religions. Salvation by faith is taught by some priests. That is an old Brahmanical theory, but with the difference that the Brahman one calls for faith in God as the means, the end, and the object of faith. The Christian adds faith in the son of God. A form of Japanese Buddhism said to be due to Amitabha says that one may be saved by complete faith in Amita Buddha, and that even if one prays but three times to Amita he will be saved in accordance with a vow made by that teacher. Immortality of soul has

ever been taught by the Brahmans. Their whole system of religion and cosmogony is founded on the idea of soul and of the spiritual nature of the universe. Jesus and St. Paul taught the unity of spiritual beings—or men—when they said that heaven and the spirit of God were in us, and the doctrine of Unity is one of the oldest and most important of the Brahmanical scheme. The possibility of arriving at perfection by means of religion and science combine so that a man becomes godlike—or the doctrine of Adepts and Mahatmas as found in Theosophy—is common to Buddhism and Brahmanism, and is not contrary to the teachings of Jesus. He said to his disciples that they could if they would do even greater works—or "miracles"—than he did. To do these works one has to have great knowledge and power. The doctrine assumes the perfectibility of humanity and destroys the theory of original sin; but far from being out of concordance with the religion of Jesus, it is in perfect accord. He directed his followers to be perfect even as the Father in heaven is. They could not come up to that command by any possibility unless man has the power to reach to that high state. The command is the same as is found in the ancient Aryan system. Hence, then, whether we look broadly over the field at mere ritual dogma or at ethics, we find the most complete accord between Theosophy and true Christianity.

But now taking up some important doctrines put forward by members of the Theosophical Society under their right of free investigation and free speech, what do we discover? Novelty, it is true, to the mind of the Western man half-taught about his own religion, but nothing that is uncommon to Christianity. Those doctrines may be, for the present, such as Reincarnation or rebirth over and over again for the purpose of discipline and gain, for reward, for punishment, and for enlargement of character; next Karma, or exact justice or compensation for all thoughts and acts. These two are a part of Christianity, and may be found in the Bible.

Reincarnation has been regarded by some Christian ministers as essential to the Christian religion. Dr. Edward Beecher said he saw its necessity, and the Rev. Wm. Alger has recorded his view to the same effect. If a Christian insists upon belief in Jesus, who came only eighteen centuries ago after millenniums had passed and men had died out of the faith by millions, it will be unjust for them to be condemned for failure to believe a doctrine they never heard of; hence

the Christian may well say that under the law of reincarnation, which was upheld by Jesus, all those who never heard of Jesus will be reborn after his coming in A.D. 1, so as to accept the plan of salvation.

In the Gospels we find Jesus referring to this doctrine as if a well established one. When it was broached by the disciples as the possible reason for the punishment by blindness from birth of a man of the time, Jesus did not controvert the doctrine, as he would have done did he see in his wisdom as Son of God that it was pernicious. But at another time he asserted that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias the ancient prophet. This cannot be wiped out of the books, and is a doctrine as firmly fixed in Christianity, though just now out of favour, as is any other. The paper by Prof. Landsberg shows you what Origen, one of the greatest of the Christian Fathers, taught on pre-existence of souls. This theory naturally suggests reincarnation on this earth, for it is more natural to suppose the soul's wanderings to be here until all that life can give has been gained, rather than that the soul should wander among other planets or simply fall to this abruptly, to be as suddenly raised up to heaven or thrown down to hell.

The next great doctrine is Karma. This is the religion of salvation by works as opposed to faith devoid of works. It is one of the prime doctrines of Jesus. By "by their works ye shall know them," he must have meant that faith without works is dead. The meaning of *Karma* literally is "works," and the Hindus apply it not only to the operations of nature and of the great laws of nature in connection with man's reward and punishment, but also to all the different works that man can perform. St. James insists on the religion of works. He says that true religion is to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. St. Matthew says we shall be judged for every act, word, and thought. This alone is possible under the doctrine of Karma. The command of Jesus to refrain from judgment or we should ourselves be judged is a plain statement of Karma, as is, too, the rest of the verse saying that what we mete out shall be given back to us. St. Paul, following this, distinctly states the doctrine thus: "Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap." The word "whatsoever" includes every act and thought, and permits no escape

from the consequences of any act. A clearer statement of the law of Karma as applied to daily life could hardly be made. Again, going to *Revelation*, the last words in the Christian book, we read all through it that the last judgment proceeds on the works—in other words, on the Karma—of men. It distinctly asserts that in the vision, as well as in the messages to the Churches, judgment passes for works.

We therefore must conclude that the religion of Jesus is in complete accord with the chief doctrines of Theosophy; it is fair to assume that even the most recondite of theosophical theories would not have been opposed by him. Our discussion must have led us to the conclusion that the religion of Karma, the practice of good works, is that in which the religion of Jesus agrees with Theosophy, and that alone thereby will arrive the longed-for day when the great ideal of Universal Brotherhood will be realized, and will furnish the common ground on which all faiths may stand and from which every nation may work for the good and the perfection of the human family.

IF you find friction between yourself and another or others, never stop to think where they are wrong. Everybody is always wrong somewhere: and, apart from that, it would be easy enough to find their errors in your own imagination. Their errors, real or imaginary, are no concern of yours, are not your duty, and need not and should not be considered by you. For you to do so would be to make an occult "break." What concerns you and what is your duty is to discover wherein you have been at fault. If, on finding friction of any sort, you will look back over your past thoughts and words and deeds, you will surely find you have erred, either directly or indirectly, by leaving something undone or unsaid. By living that way you will learn a good deal about yourself, while by looking for and noting the possible faults of others—no matter how greatly they have sinned, in your opinion—you will learn nothing and will merely prove yourself an ass.

—W. Q. JUDGE

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Professor Bryan Wilson of Oxford University, an authority on the sociology of religion, spoke on "The Changing Functions of Religion: Toleration and Cohesion in the Secularized Society," on March 23, at the Institute of Oriental Philosophy's European Centre at Taplow Court in the suburbs of London. Excerpts from the lecture are published in *Soka Gakkai News* for April 1991.

In recent decades, religion has come to be regarded, at least in Western countries, as essentially a personal concern. The idea that religion has functions for the wider society has lost currency. But in past history, as Dr. Wilson stated in his lecture, orthodox religions, of any variety, dominated all departments of social life. Religion dictated society's economic rhythms and made rules for commerce. It sought to control human conflicts and laid down a criminal code. It was intimately involved in politics and leading statesmen were often religious leaders. It claimed a monopoly over education and even early science was controlled by the Church. Religion has traditionally been associated with therapy, and hospitals were run by nursing orders. The Church also provided approved recreation, in spectacle and pageants, and suppressed various unapproved forms of entertainment from play-acting to secular expression in art. Finally, religious bodies regulated family life by prescribing sexual norms, rules of cohabitation, etc.

Today, however, religion has been relegated to a subsidiary role. In Dr. Wilson's words:

What has occurred, at varying pace, has been that religion has lost the presidency it once exercised in public affairs. In all areas it has declined in influence as a public force within the social system. The functions that it once exercised for the state have been appropriated by other agencies. Thus, political authority no longer requires supernatural legitimization: the voice of the people has replaced the voice of God. Governments claim legitimacy in advanced countries by reference to the electorate and not because they claim to be divinely appointed and anointed. Social control no longer depends on threats and promises of after-life punishments and rewards in some transmundane sphere. We have in place much more elaborate systems of regulation: criminal codes, policing services, a sophisticated and complex structure of legal arrangements.

We have technical devices, ranging from credit ratings to traffic lights which regulate and co-ordinate our affairs and our movements. We depend hardly at all, except in the realm of personal morality (and decreasingly even there) on religious prescriptions and proscriptions....

Since its former functions of sustaining social cohesion and the legitimacy of the state are no longer relevant to modern society, religion is now liberated from its old commitments. It becomes, in the first instance, a much more private phenomenon. Religion has lost its overt public presence: it is no longer identified with societal concerns. Old institutions do not immediately disappear, of course, but their purposes tend to become increasingly hollow. They command less support, but above all they wield less influence. The privatization of religion is a phenomenon which sociologists have noted, and it conforms to the idea of a free choice in a wide spectrum of ways of seeking and understanding what is meant by salvation and the means by which it might be attained.

Tolerance is now widespread in spite of the world being a scene of highly variegated religious diversity. Ecumenists of a universal persuasion believe that the current situation of tolerance is evidence that, at bottom, all religions are the same.

However laudable the freeing of society from the tyranny of orthodox religions, the idea of one true Religion which one can believe with one's whole heart has still to gain ground. Not the religion of the priests, but the true Religion as taught by the sages and seers of yore and synthesized in modern times by H. P. Blavatsky, is what the modern world is sorely in need of. An unbiased study of these immemorial teachings should convince anybody that they satisfy in an eminent degree the spiritual needs of our age and present a philosophy of the origin and goal of life and of the universe which is soul-satisfying.

The concept of a Hindu community did not exist in earlier times; it is a fabrication of the scheming politician, far removed from traditional India, says Richard Gombrich, Boden professor of Sanskrit, Oxford University. In that scheme of things, according to him, religion was not only radically different, but simply irrelevant. In an

interview with him published in the *Sunday Review* supplement of *The Times of India* for June 9, L. K. Sharma draws out the eminent scholar on the evolution of the war cry of *Hindutva*.

Professor Gombrich, who is also associated with the Oriental Institute, questions the use of the word "fundamentalism" to describe what is happening to Hinduism today. The term "resurgence" is also out of place because there never was a surge earlier. Today, we are in fact witnessing, he says, a Hindu nationalist movement—the "hijacking" of Hinduism for political purposes.

Hinduism has no central church, no dogmas, and is amorphous in character. Traditionally, Hinduism was a "system of practice, mostly hereditary, in which beliefs were secondary and sometimes even irrelevant....You are born what you are. Broadly, no one can be converted."

In traditional India [Professor Gombrich says] it is irrelevant what you are, whether you are a Hindu or a Christian or a Muslim or a Jain....Fanatical aggression towards non-believers [as in Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran] has revived the Hindus' folk memories of the Muslim conquerors, which is totally irrelevant, though, to what the Muslims of India are today, or have been for a long time....

The traditional kind of tolerance that prevailed in rural India was about letting people get on with their own thing. They were used to it....But when people leave their villages, there is a complete loss of traditional norms and ties. They are in search of a new identity.

It is the sense of "imagined community" that brings in irrationality. People get ready to kill and be killed. They become insensitive to human suffering. It may give temporary glory to one or two leaders, but it is not in the interests of the community. But in such a state, they are not following rational self-interest....

If you have a Hindu identity, then you demand that it should be the national identity. That is the game that is going on these days. Then you say we have a Hindu national identity. Let us make that the Indian identity. And you claim that you are only trying to restore what was lost—which itself is nonsense, a fabrication of history.

According to Professor Gombrich, the prognosis is rather gloomy. Scheming politicians can create symbols of difference and hostility,

but once such trends start, it is difficult to reverse the process and regain the lost innocence of the past.

It might be added that in all the controversy that surrounds the involvement of politicians in the proposed building of a temple at Ayodhya, the true function of temples in ancient India seems to have been forgotten by Hindu zealots. They were then more than places of worship. In fact, there is no reference in the Vedas to worship in the temples. They were originally centres of spiritual force, founded to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions and soul ideas. They were halls of learning and served as centres of cultural and educational activities. Those were the days when there were "Temple-Initiates," who provided systematic training to pupils in sacred lore and were "ready always to give some meed of spiritual insight and assistance to those of pure heart who may go there." Discourses and discussions on religious and sacred themes were part of the facilities provided by temples. With the decline of true religion and the rise of the priestly class, the real purpose behind the establishment of temples came to be forgotten. One could say that in proportion as the power of the priest increased, that of true religion declined. What is happening in India today is a travesty of true religion.

In lifting many taboos, *Glasnost* in the USSR has also opened the floodgates of belief in the paranormal. The first national convention of experts in this field, held in the Moscow House of Culture, was a resounding success, according to a report in *Science in the USSR*, March-April 1991. Although there was much pseudoscientific rhetoric at the convention, "there were clearly some problems deserving serious consideration," says the report, which gives some inkling of the research being conducted in the USSR in the realm of the paranormal:

Living cells generate electromagnetic pulses. Experts at the Gorky Research Institute of Radio-Physics developed highly sensitive instruments which register these emissions. Researchers of the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy in Moscow have been studying the magnetic field of the human brain and enthusiasts from the Institute of Radio Engineering and Electronics of the USSR Academy of Sciences have been doing some really interesting

work on very high frequency (VHF) radiation from living organisms. Physicists are focusing on the study of electric and magnetic fields carrying meaningful information about the condition and functioning of body organs. Others are studying the infrared radiation of the human body and its potential for diagnosis of various ailments. Signals transmitted by the brain, liver and heart contain valuable data about them which are hard to obtain by other means.

Much interest was also generated by a report by V. Kaznachejev, a member of the USSR Medical Academy. He showed slides demonstrating the development of human cells placed into two glass vessels separated by a common wall. The cells in one of these were infected with a virus and perished. And although the cells in the adjoining vessel were quite healthy, they perished too after spending four hours next to the diseased cells. Scientists have been investigating this phenomenon for the past 30 years, but the problem remains unresolved.

Attending a meeting of scientists, one naturally expects to hear some unorthodox views and ideas....Some speakers seriously claimed the existence of life in all forms of matter....

Theories supporting the claims [of psychic healers] are elaborated by researchers from the Institute of Geochemistry of Rare Metals. They speak of particles, called leptons, which are much smaller than atomic nuclei and can freely pass through living and inanimate objects. Another speaker at the conference, B. Isakov, D.Sc. (Economics), head of the chair of statistics at the Moscow Institute of Economic Management, claims that such microparticles are, in fact, the carriers of thoughts and feelings, of information about the past and the future of the universe. He explains the phenomena of clairvoyance and telepathy by interaction of lepton gas with material objects and human brain. What is more, the human body is but a "visible core" of man. Spreading far around it are two concentric lepton shells. When two persons approach one another, these shells come into contact, or intersect, offering a channel for the transmission of information. In some cases, like that of a mother and child, or two lovers, these shells are common, which accounts for their "togetherness."...

The convention posed more questions than it answered. But if publicity fosters research, it did abundantly serve its purpose.

Play has an important role in the lives of human beings. They are

one of the few species that carries its youthful capacity for play into adult life. Although the modes of play have changed dramatically in the past centuries, the *need* for play has remained constant. *Unesco Courier* for May 1991 reminds us that, in the games of children and the pastimes of adults, the capacity for play, for following one's fancy with no thought of immediate gain, is central to the human experience. Biologists and ethologists have demonstrated that play, which is closely bound up with the urge to explore and to satisfy one's curiosity, is a springboard for learning and discovery among human beings and all the higher animals.

This issue of *Unesco Courier* examines simulation games as aids for decision-makers, modern sports at the mercy of the profit motive, and quotes many philosophers who contend that, if we want to go back to a freer, more worthwhile form of existence, we must rediscover the instinct for play. "Like a game, society has rules. The game may, however, become complicated if the players cheat."

Play has been connected with human or cultural evolution. It contributes value to human life. But play can also be dangerous and cruel. And in the modern competitive sports so much importance is placed on winning that it is producing adverse psychological and emotional consequences. Indeed, some psychologists are of the view that the tremendous upheavals and violence in society could be the result of the breakdown of the code of sportsmanship.

Unfortunately, peace has received far less attention than war. The word peace itself has not been acceptably defined, nor has there been agreement on how to achieve peace. To have peace in the outer world there has to be peace in the inner world of man is a thought seldom considered. Dr. Amulya Mohapatra's reflections on "The Philosophy of Peace" (*Bhavan's Journal*, April 30) are worthy of reflection:

The term peace is very wide and comprehensive. Thus peace includes freedom, happiness, joy, perfection, bliss and beatitude. When the mind is quiet and stilled, there arises the peace, happiness and tranquillity which lies within....

Peace is within us, in the Atman, which is Sat-Chit-Ananda. This is what is meant by happiness from within. The mind derives

real peace not from the world of objects but from the pure Atman which is all perfection, all peace and eternal....

The quest for truth is also the quest for perfection and peace. The key to the Upanishadic quest for perfection is the concept of the Brahman, which is equated with the Atman....

The teaching of the Upanishads on the nature of man and his destiny culminates in such startling statements as: "This self is Brahman"; "I am Brahman"; "Thou art That." All these Upanishadic statements point out that all living creatures are Brahman. If we can have such a feeling, then there would be no hate, enmity, war among mankind. And ultimately in the world there would be a sense of brotherhood and fellow-feeling, considering that the world itself is our family: *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*.

While travelling East to West, a person gets up too early and becomes tired in the middle of the day. Going in the opposite direction, it is more difficult for him to fall asleep at night. Still, many people maintain that it is more pleasant to travel from East to West than *vice versa*. This is because in the first instance the 24-hour rhythm seems to become longer, as it were, and in the latter, shorter, which is harder for the organism to adjust to.

Scientists believe that this specific feature of our organism could be used in treating some diseases that are caused by violations of man's internal biorhythms. (*Sputnik*, March 1991)

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

By H. P. Blavatsky:

ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.
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THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY
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TEXTS FOR THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"
IN MEMORY OF HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, BY SOME OF HER PUPILS
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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 ideal 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 of 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.