

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (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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### OUR TRIALS AND OUR OPPORTUNITIES

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, February 1956.]

While feeling the service to us of the great ethical ideals which have been formulated by men, I think that the idea of justice intellectually conceived tends to beget a certain hardness of the heart. It is true that men have done wrong—hence their pain: but back of all this there is something infinitely soothing, a light which does not wound, which says no harsh thing, even although the darkest of spirits turns to it in its agony, for the darkest of human spirits has still around him this first glory which shines from a deeper being within, whose history may be told as the legend of the Hero in Man.— AE

The Will is Free;  
Strong is the Soul, and wise, and beautiful;  
The seeds of Godlike powers are in us still;  
Gods are we, bards, saints, heroes,  
if we will!

— MATTHEW ARNOLD

GIVEN below is another of Lessing's fables. (For the first one see THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for December 1987, p. 37.)

When Hercules was admitted into Heaven, he made his bow to Juno before any other deity. All Olympus and Juno were struck with amazement. "What," cried everyone, "do you give precedence to your enemy?" "Yea, even to her," replied Hercules. "It was mainly her precautions which gave me the opportunities of achieving those deeds by which I have rendered Heaven so much service."



Olympus approved of the answer of the new god, and Juno became reconciled to him.

Not to lose ourselves in the complexities of the story of Hercules, it is necessary to start with the myth and mystery surrounding his birth. Hercules was the son of a human mother, Alcmena, daughter of the King of Argos, the father being no less a god than Jupiter, Jove, or Zeus himself. The phenomenon of gods begetting special progeny through human mothers is well known in almost all mythologies. Thus, the mother of the three elder Pandavas was Kunti, but Dharma, Vayu and Indra were the divine fathers, respectively, of Yudhishtira, Bhima and Arjuna. By Pandu's second wife, Madri, the twins Nakula and Sahadeva were born sons of Aswins, the Divine Twins. So the five brothers were not sons of Pandu but of Divine Beings. This is narrated at length in the *Mahabharata*. Implicit in these legends is the teaching that the Great Gods of Olympus or of Meru beget special men or heroes to aid and further the progress of humanity. Such men-gods were models or patterns for mortals to revere and copy.

Now Juno (identified with the Greek Hera) was the consort of Jupiter and the Queen of all the gods—mistress of heaven and earth. But Jupiter remained her lord and master; in spite of her objections, he continued his task of begetting progeny through numerous human mothers. This caused great annoyance to Juno; annoyance grew into anger; anger turned to hate, and she showed herself jealous and inexorable to the highest degree. Virgil had good reason to refer to "haughty Juno's unrelenting hate." She tried to prevent the growth of the child, Hercules, who was destined to be a great Hero—a mortal man ascending to Olympus. A man become god is more than a god, and especially more than a goddess. But the mood of Juno suited Jupiter, for, through her, the human heroes fathered by him met their tests and trials. What Juno did and how Hercules suffered, faced his trials and passed his tests can be read in any good book of mythology.

The Hero became a Mighty One. He was admitted to the Assembly of the Immortals. He surprised the august Fraternity of the Shining Ones by his salutation to Juno before anyone else, as the fable of Lessing chronicles.

What lesson does the fable hold for the student of Theosophy?

The unrelenting and terrifying hatred of Juno is matched against the gracious love of Jupiter. Divine Love and Divine Hate cast their



shadows in this world of shadows. They meet and mingle in man. And so, born of a mortal mother, Hercules has in him the germs of resentment and hate.

Now, hate is as great a power as love. Like love, hate too—peculiar as it may sound—has the capacity to affiance; and therefore Juno's hatred enters the being of Hercules, who, maddened by its maddening force, destroys those nearest to him—murders his own wife, the mother of his children, and the children also. This struggle between love and hate is the great war which takes place between the human and the animal in every man. The one thus tried goes either to Olympus or to Hades.

Having experienced the futility of retaliation and hate, Hercules begins to live the real life of the Hero, and encounters the spirit of Test personified by Eurystheus, under whose influence and direction he performs his celebrated Twelve Labours and comes out triumphant.

What AE's words quoted above bring out is true. Hidden in each one of us is a God, a Hero, a King. But he is surrounded by the demoniac, cowardly and enslaving forces of the beast. Knowledge and suffering compel the coward and the slave to awaken to the existence of the Hero within. This psychological process is depicted in the myth of Hercules.

Next, the fable teaches us an important aspect of the Law of Karma: Though Devotion and Gratitude are stamped in letters of fire as Inherent Ideas in the human consciousness, in this Dark Age these virtues are conspicuous by their absence in the human kingdom. What is worse is that their semblances are mistaken for the genuine Devotion and Gratitude. Face to Face with the Shining Ones, having won his place among Them, Hercules remembers how he came to be the Hero of a hundred exploits. It was Juno's curses which he overcame and her temptations which he faced and conquered.

The ways of Juno are mysterious. The thunderbolt of trials and temptations she hurled at Hercules became charged with benign mercy.

In his hour of achieving numerous mundane triumphs, mortal man forgets his benefactor, overlooks the beneficence of Karma, and thus starts a circle of suffering for himself.

No one can achieve the conquest of mortality and secure the Supreme Wisdom by which he can understand and serve all Nature



without developing the virtue of gratitude to teachers and to teachings at every stage, step by step, as he goes onward through darkness to Light. Ringing are the words of H.P.B. : "He who plays truant in one thing will be faithless in another." To be faithful, devoted and grateful in small things means the steady unfolding of the Great Faith, the Deep Devotion and the Sublime Gratitude which enable an Adept to serve Living Nature and be one with Nature's God.

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## THE CAUSE OF SORROW

THE subject of sorrow is a very intimate one, touching the whole human kingdom. The prince and the pauper, young and old, men and women of all countries, everywhere, experience sorrow—because of want or because of loss; they sorrow for themselves or sorrow with others. And yet, such is the power of *maya*, such is the mighty magic of *Prakriti*, that only a few seek the answer to the question, What is the cause and cure of sorrow? Clever people try to dodge sorrow; patient people are proverbially long-suffering; religious resignation is not altogether confined to the class of saints. Wordsworth in his "Ode to Duty" refers to the common folk who, "without reproach or blot, do thy work, and know it not"; and with equal force we might say to the power or *shakti* of sorrow that "millions do thy bidding and know not why or how."

The scientific mentality is to look upon Nature as red in tooth and claw and to say that there is no rational explanation for human suffering, seeming inequality and injustice. The "struggle for existence and survival of the fittest" are taken to be facts; the saint is weak, the sage deluded; might alone prevails. This explanation of sorrow's giant sway is unsatisfying, not only to the yearning human heart but also to the intelligent, logical mind.

Then we have the so-called religious people who explain sorrow as the divine instrument. God, they say, who knows all, has forged this weapon of sorrow to test the souls of men. Why God has done this cruel thing and how he maintains and sustains it, is not for mortal minds to question. Enough—God did this and it is not for puny man to think himself too wise and make inquiries.

Then there are the moralists whose philosophy looks upon the world as a mighty and well-equipped gymnasium. Just as dumb-bells and other mechanical devices exercise our limbs and muscles and through it make them tough and strong, so also, it is believed, there are innumerable devices of soul-experience and each one of them represents one kind of suffering or sorrow.

All these attempts at explaining the mystery of sorrow do not satisfy the thinking person; they explain *away* the problem, leaving the human mind annoyed, and the human heart empty.

Theosophy says it is a fatal error to remain satisfied with any of



these answers. These theories, which are no explanations, have an intoxicating effect; they numb our consciousness, rob life of its true romance, and stunt our growth. The ancient science of *Brahma-Vidya*, which today we call Theosophy, asserts that every human soul without exception has ready at hand a wonderful opportunity, a short-cut as it were, to Peace and Power, to Light and Life. Men and women of the world do not live in the true sense when they ask not the meaning of their own limitations, the cause of their own weaknesses, the purpose of their own virtues, the inwardness of sorrow and joy. The very first step from the realm of death into that of life is taken when one seeks the meaning of sorrow. Most of us know the story of Prince Siddhartha who became the Buddha. It was sorrow and suffering that opened his eyes, and he left the life of luxury he was born into and went out in search of the meaning of the realities of life. The seed of *Vairagya*, dispassion, was sown in the young Prince when he saw disease, death, decay and sorrow.

So Theosophy says that it is a mistake to turn away from a vigorous search of the meaning of sorrow, its cause and its cure. It becomes necessary therefore to answer in brief the so-called explanations offered by materialism, by religiosity, and by moralism. Many have made their souls numb, have curbed their minds and silenced their hearts, by one or other of these explanations, or perhaps have accepted all of them without question. It is of utmost importance that people awaken themselves, pick up the courage to inquire, develop intuition and the humility to understand the answers that they will find ultimately as the search is persisted in.

Is the materialist correct? Is Nature red in tooth and claw? Of course it is not. Its beneficent aspects are numerous, and if we contemplate on the fruitfulness of Mother Earth—of the power of water, of the life-giving property of air, of the mystery of fire that science has not even touched—if we contemplate on the beautiful in Nature, we begin to see that underlying all her struggles, all her storms and earthquakes, tornadoes and typhoons, there is the restorative work, the procreative process continuously going on.

Turn from materialistic disbelievers to religious believers. If God made sorrow and placed suffering in the path of humanity, then God cannot be good or righteous. People say God is love, and has omnipotent power to bless and help and protect, and yet they say that



he created suffering, misery and sorrow. The God of the priests and the temples is a theological nightmare and the earlier we wake up from that nightmare, the better for us, for in proportion as we abandon the false God of theology and bigotry we realize the true concept of Divinity.

Then the gymnasium theory: suffering exists so that using it as a sort of dumb-bell we may strengthen the muscle of the Soul. But men and women do learn also from the pleasurable and joyous events of life. Moreover, suffering and sorrow cannot altogether be life-giving dumb-bells, for quite often sorrow leaves the person weak and broken.

But in all these theories there is a streak of truth. The terror-provoking aspect of Nature has a cause, as has the compassionate aspect. The travails of birth, the pangs of procreation—there Nature acts as the resisting surface to enable the seed to fructify and send up shoots. But it is not an outer power, it is not God who has endowed Nature with cruelty and compassion. If we view God as Law—the Power or Force that is omnipresent and impersonal, that works without fear or favour and that proceeds from within without—we have begun to formulate the true philosophy about suffering and sorrow.

Theosophy teaches that the entire universe is guided by a Power, a *Shakti*, from within without. Our bodies grow from within; our minds evolve from within. Every schoolteacher knows that the mind of the boy or the girl cannot be shaped and fashioned just from without; its real growth is internal. The seed evolves from within itself into a giant tree; the rose-bud opens by the force inherent within it; and so it is everywhere in Nature. What we see in the glory of the dawn, in the magic of sunrise and sunset, in the grandeur of the stars as they come out, is an aspect of Nature's Power or *Shakti*. Ugliness or beauty of the body, radiance of the form or the lack of it, and a million other aspects that are intangible, are all expressions of that Power. Behind what is seen and expressed, behind what is said and heard, behind the blazing sun and the twinkling stars, is the secret Power of *Ishwara*, *Shabda-Brahman*, the Word which wakes universes. So there is Power in Life or Nature, and its process of action is from within without.

Theosophy teaches that this Power acts according to a purpose,



from cause to effect. Therefore God is nought else but Impersonal Law. Power or *Shakti* becomes manifest according to the second aspect of Deity—Law. Nature seems to us cruel or compassionate, beautiful or ugly, because that Power or Force manifests according to Law. In the entire manifested universe, cause and effect are closely linked. Karma is a Law that operates not only in the human kingdom, but everywhere. It works ceaselessly and at every point of space. From within without, effects manifest themselves according to causes. The design in Nature, the innumerable shapes and forms we perceive, are just and legitimate effects of their own causes. Just as the strong physique of the athlete is the result of his own internal vigour, just as the creative output of the painter or the poet is the result of the power to create within him, so it is with all things. The visible effect is directly related to the invisible cause. The Power or *Shakti* of Life moves and circulates with most accurate Justice. Life manifests as Power-*Shakti*, and it does that with infallible Justice-*Dharma*.

Let us now apply that teaching to ourselves, always remembering that Power is inherent in Life, which manifests itself with accuracy, with truth, without fear or favour, because Life is Law. Life-*Jiva* is *Brahman*; Power-Light-Wisdom is *Shakti*; Justice-*Dharma* is the mode which *Brahman* and *Shakti* utilize.

Man is an immortal entity. *Jivatma*, living *Atma* in the human kingdom, manifests Power or *Shakti*, the force or power of innate Wisdom which is Love. *Atma*, the Human Self, shows its power over the whole of Nature, whatever the extent of that power, through *Buddhi*. *Buddhi* is true Wisdom which loves because it understands. Love without understanding is blind love. Ordinary human love is said to be blind, but this is not true of *Buddhi*, the power of *Atma*. Love sees, Love understands; the course of that Divine Love ever runs in uttermost justice, in magnificent rhythm.

Each one of us is *Atman*, the Self, the Immortal Spirit; that is why each is Krishna or Christos. But we have not fully unfolded our Power or *Shakti*, our *Buddhi*. When our *Buddhi*, Wisdom-Love, is fully developed so that we understand all things truly and are therefore able to love the whole universe intelligently, then we become Buddha. Buddha is the one who has perfected himself and who possesses the Light of Wisdom-Love.

By what means, with whose aid, does *Atma-Buddhi*, man's Higher



Self, obtain that Light? To put it another way, by what process does the power or *Shakti* latent in human *Buddhi* become manifest? Each one of us is Divine, inasmuch as each one is *Atman*-Spirit. We therefore possess power in latency; we have to prepare the soil in which the seed of *Buddhi* will grow into the Tree of Life. Our *Buddhi* is like electric power collected in a battery; what use can be made of that battery-power unless we have a bulb connected by wire to that battery? *Manas*, the human soul, the thinker in us, is the vehicle in and through which the power of *Buddhi* manifests.

Let us not run away with the idea that man, even in his higher nature, is perfect and immortal; he is potentially perfect, and has to labour to obtain his own immortality, to make the latent divinity shine forth. Merely saying to oneself, "I am Brahman, and the world is illusion," will not do; the world is *not* illusion till by the power and faculty of the mind, *Manas*, we have dispelled the dark clouds of matter and made manifest the Light of Brahman.

In our higher nature, *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*, we are the universality of *Atma* and the power of *Buddhi*, by the aid of *Manas* which becomes incarnate in our lower nature. As *Manas* understands this great universe, as the soul understands the world of flesh, it shows forth the power of *Buddhi*. Love, Universal Compassion, are the marks of the truly understanding mind, and over such true minds alone suffering and sorrow have no power.

We are not at that stage; our *Manas*, our incarnated thinking soul, has not developed the strength to understand and to love all things. That lack of understanding is the real cause of sorrow. We do not understand what is happening to us when our heart breaks, when our mind is all confused, when jealousy and envy corrode, when pride and conceit puff us up, when selfishness and egotism are to the fore. Man suffers, and often he knows not that he suffers. Many times we do not know that we carry a disease in our body; because actual pain has not been felt we have remained ignorant of the very existence of the disease. So it is with our moral weaknesses and our mental limitations.

Understanding born of mind-effort alone removes suffering. Suffering is the cause and sorrow the effect. Misery is felt because of pain. Remove suffering, and sorrow will vanish; remove pain, and misery will evaporate. But suffering and pain—moral, mental,



physical—in their turn are caused by another force—the force of action, past action. A headache is caused by our own past action—wrong food or faulty habits; our present mental confusion is caused by our own past action—neglect of mind-exercises; our present heartbreak is caused by our past action—allowing that heart to run away without proper heart-culture. People use the phrase, "my Kismet, my Karma," but they do not quite understand the real import of what they say. Our present pain and suffering, which make us miserable and sorrowful, are all the result of our own past deeds—our sins of omission or commission. Our ignorance and our knowledge, our saintly or satanic qualities, our health and circumstances—all, all are effects of causes generated by ourselves in the past, often in past lives. Just as in the higher nature the power or *shakti* of *Atma* is *Buddhi* which manifests itself in and through *Manas*, so also in our lower nature the power of the personal man is passion. What *Buddhi* is to *Atma*, that *Kama* is to *Ahankara*, egotism. The power of *Atma* is love and wisdom; the power of *Ahankara* is passion and confusion; and just as the power of *Buddhi* shines in *Manas*, so does the power of *Kama* envelop the body. *Raga-dwesha*, attachment-aversion, like-dislike, is the force by which *Ahankara*, our lower nature, shines forth. Kill that like-dislike and you kill the source, the root, the parent of every suffering, of every pain, of every sorrow, of every misery.

The Buddha taught that the cause of sorrow is *Trishna*; the *Gita* teaches that the root of pain is *Kama*. Desires of the senses, blind loves and blind hates, attachments and aversions, these are our real enemies. It is well for us to see how this force of *raga-dwesha* produces the innumerable forms of suffering and pain, sorrow and misery. There are three kinds of pain, that relating to the body, the mind, the heart. All these classes of pain might be caused either by the dark quality of inertia, *tamoguna*, or by the quality of motion-mobility, *rajoguna*, or by the prevalence in us of the harmony of truth and service, or *sattvaguna*. As in all other matters, so in this, the mighty magic of *Prakriti* assumes three aspects.

The pains of *tamoguna* arise in us as reactions of our own actions which are dark and *tamasic*—deeds causing injury and pain to others. Through greed and selfishness we coarsen and harden our own nature, and this coarsening-hardening process produces pain and suffering; e.g., jealousy in the heart, wounded pride and personal conceit in the



mind, and certain diseases in the body. When we suffer from the reaction of pains inflicted on others, the cause of *our* sorrow is *tamasic* in nature.

Turn next to suffering and sorrow caused by *rajoguna*. When we go our own way and live our own lives, though we may not be avaricious, our condition still is one of self-centredness. As long as we are left alone, we go on living in the prison-house of our own personal beliefs, personal prejudices, personal happiness. A good husband, a good father, displays some unselfishness, some love, and labours hard to protect and to make happy his wife and children. He is living in *rajoguna*; he moves not in gross selfishness, but in refined and tempered conditions of the home, the office, the club. His actions are not disinterested; his motives cannot be selfless. The reactions that his actions bring contain worry and anxiety and fear, with their corresponding physical ailments—fevers, nervous disorders, headaches and so forth. Such pains are rooted in *rajoguna*.

Those in the dark state of *tamas*, through suffering and sorrow come into that of *rajas*, in which one is compelled to care for at least some others. Through the love of our kin, our country, we pass on to the *sattvic* stage. A *sattvic* person is one who lives at peace with himself and with the world, whose central virtue is disinterestedness. The pain that can come to him is of a peculiar kind. As he labours in the service of others, as he works altruistically when those whom he is trying to help frustrate his service, abuse the love and the trust and the knowledge poured out, then wounded *sattva* causes pain. The real Masters, the full-blown Perfected Ones, have transcended even *sattva*.

Most of us are in the *tamoguna* and *rajoguna* states. We must aspire to reach *sattva*.

Each person has a dual task. One is to curb, to control, to kill the pair of *raga-dwesha*, attachment-aversion; this is the way of purification. Second, to unfold, to bring forth, to express the Light of Love which fully understands, and that Light can shine through the lamp of *Manas*; nowhere else can that light be lighted. *Manas*, the mind in us, is the great battlefield of *Dharma*, Duty. There we kill the brood of evil, our Duryodhana; there we find the glory of good, our Krishna. And when the dual task is undertaken, we become in ever-increasing measure the channels for strength and peace and knowledge. First sorrow and misery vanish, even when suffering and pain are



there; then slowly all pain and all suffering depart, leaving us full of peace. The Lords of Peace who have completed their task of evolution are the Perfected Ones; and if we follow Their example we too, by struggles gone through repeated incarnations, reach the glorious heights of Kailasa where the King of Kings, the Healer of Healers, Shiva, and his Shakti, Wisdom and Compassion, ever abide.

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FROM the remotest antiquity *mankind* as a whole *have always been convinced of the existence of a personal spiritual entity within the personal physical man*. This inner entity was more or less divine, according to its proximity to the *crown*—Chrestos. The closer the union, the more serene man's destiny, the less dangerous the external conditions. This belief is neither bigotry nor superstition, only an ever-present, instinctive feeling of the proximity of another spiritual and invisible world, which, though it be subjective to the sense of the outward man, is perfectly objective to the inner ego. Furthermore, they believed that *there are external and internal conditions which affect the determination of our will upon our actions*. They rejected fatalism, for fatalism implies a blind course of some still blinder power. But they believed in *destiny*, which from birth to death every man is weaving thread by thread around himself, as a spider does his cobweb; and this destiny is guided either by that presence termed by some the guardian angel, or our more intimate astral inner man, who is but too often the evil genius of the man of flesh. Both these lead on the outward man, but one of them must prevail; and from the very beginning of the invisible affray the stern and implacable *law of compensation* steps in and takes its course, following faithfully the fluctuations. When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in the network of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of this *self-made* destiny. It then either fixes him like the inert shell against the immovable rock, or like a feather carries him away in a whirlwind raised by his own actions.

—*Isis Unveiled*, II, 593



## THEOSOPHY IN THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE

[Another of Mr. Judge's addresses to the Theosophical Congress held in September 1893 at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago World's Fair, is reprinted here from the Report of Proceedings published by the American Section of the Theosophical Society.]

I HAVE been asked to say a few more words on the subject of Theosophy in the Christian Bible; that is, I have been asked to show what Theosophical doctrines can be found in the Christian books.

One of the Theosophical doctrines is the doctrine of Karma; that is, exact justice ruling in the spiritual as well as in the physical; the exact carrying out of effect from cause in the spiritual nature of man, the moral nature, as well as in the physical world. That is, that every man is ruled in his life, not by a vengeful and partial God, but by justice. This life is just; whether one is miserable or happy, whether he is poor or rich, it is just. Where is this doctrine found in the Christian Bible, this doctrine that as ye have sown so shall ye reap? That is, having lived before in this world you have made causes which bring about today the life you lead now, which have made the characteristics that you have, which made you what you are now, and have plunged you into a living hell or into a happy heaven today. We say this doctrine has not of late been taught in Christianity; but it is in the books of the Christians and it ought to have been taught; it would have been profitable had it been expounded. Now, where can it be found?

Does not Jesus say, among other things, you should not judge others? Why? Because if you do you will be judged yourself. What you mete out to others will be meted out to you. That is, what men do to others will be done to themselves. Where and when is this to be done? When is the measure to be meted out if not in this life or some other? St. Paul says: "Brethren, be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Do not these quotations prove that in St. Paul and in the words of Jesus can be found this doctrine of Karma: that as you sow so shall you reap? That your circumstances now are the result of your own acts? This is the doctrine which is the most prominent in the Theosophical field. I call it Theosophical, not because the members teach it, nor from its presence in our literature, but because it is found in the religion of every nation; that is why it is Theosophical. But you have been taught



that you must be good or you will be punished. In the West you are told you will be rewarded and punished in this life and in the next. But men are not punished in this life. Today thousands of men live lives of luxury, strife, and crime, but they are not punished here, and, according to the teachings of Christianity, they stand a pretty good chance of escaping punishment hereafter if they only believe. We see that many are not rewarded who are good, but are often born into misery.

The doctrine of reincarnation is taught in the Christian Bible, that is, that you will be born over and over again in this world according to your destiny, to follow the effects of causes you yourself have put in motion in whatever life. Where is that found? In the mouth of Jesus; and certainly if Jesus, the founder of Christianity, has stated this, has any man or any body of men, has any person any right to say that it is not true? I deny their right, and I say that Christianity has been deprived by theologians of a doctrine which Jesus himself declared, when reincarnation is taken away from it. We say that the doctrine is in the Gospels. One day they brought to Jesus a man who was born blind and asked him why was this man born blind; was it for some sin he had committed or those his parents committed? Now, how could a man be born blind for a sin he had himself committed unless he had lived before that time to commit it? This was a doctrine believed in at that day. The Jews believed it and Jesus was a Jew. He did not deny the doctrine on that occasion. He only said, "Not for that reason." If the doctrine were wrong, certainly Jesus, as the Son of God, would not only have denied it, but he would have said, "The doctrine you enunciate is false." He said nothing of the kind. At another time he himself declared the doctrine, and he asked his disciples, "Whom do men think that I am?", meaning and referring to what was believed at that time, that great sages were born over and over again for the enlightenment of mankind. They call them Avatars in the East. They had an idea great sages and prophets would come back. Will you tell me how such men then could be reborn at all unless under natural law and unless such law governs every man? So Jesus, referring to this idea, said to his disciples: "Whom do men think that I am?" And they said: "Some men think that you are Elias, who was for to come." John had been killed just then by the ruler of Judea, and Jesus said to them that Elias had already come back in the person of John and the rulers



had killed him, not knowing he was a reincarnation of Elias. So in one case he did not deny and in the other he explicitly asserted the doctrine. And if we take this view we know what he meant when he said to Nicodemus that a man must be born again. He meant not only the regeneration of the soul, but reborn into the body again; that is, that man is a soul who comes into a house to live life after life, and he must go from house to house until he has learned the whole architecture of human life and is able to build a perfect house. In Revelations, the last word of all the books, we find the great speaker writing that he heard the voice of God saying to him that him who overcometh the flesh and the devil, the world and sin, "I shall make a pillar in the house of my Father and he shall go out no more." Does not that mean he had gone out before? The old Fathers in the early ages of Christianity taught that if we triumphed over the flesh and the devil, the world and sin, God would make each one a pillar in the house of his father and he would not have to go out again. That is the doctrine of reincarnation.

Then if you will look at the history of the Christian Church you find that the doctrine was taught for five hundred years, and not until the Council of Constantinople was it rejected. At that time it was turned out by ignorant monks, and since then it has not been taught by the teachers, but it is in the Christian books, and to these Christian books we appeal. I say these very doctrines are in many other places found there. Another doctrine is that man is not merely a body, but is a composite being of many divisions. St. Paul taught we have a spiritual body as well as material body, that we are a spiritual body and a physical body and spirit. That will bring in every one of the seven principles of the Theosophical category. So we say, all through the Christian books, in the Old Testament and in the New, we may find the great doctrine of Theosophy, by which I mean the great universal ideas of unity, of universal brotherhood, of strict justice and no favouritism, of reincarnation, and of the composite nature of man, which permeate every religion as well as the books of the Christians, both old and new.

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THE end of man is an *action* and not a *thought*, though it were the noblest.

—CARLYLE



## THE "HAVES" AND THE "HAVE-NOTS"

THE problem of the "haves" and the "have-nots" is a perennial and distressing one. It is true that, broadly speaking, the unhappy condition of the poverty-level groups is closely connected with neglect of social responsibility at the other end of the scale, and with the lives of selfish, frivolous luxury led by the "privileged." Such is the interdependence of group Karma.

Nevertheless it is a curious thing that, when one comes to examine individual cases—other people's or one's own—the quality of justice and of inevitability is more evident than was at first suspected. Poverty is obviously not merely a question of inescapable Karma precipitating itself from past lives. The present attitude and actions are important factors.

Possessions, of course, imply more than just one's bank account, investments or income, property, goods and chattels. One is also rich or poor in mental possessions or in knowledge. Lack of breeding, of an educational background, of *savoir-faire*, is also poverty. A man may be poor in creative gifts, lacking in richness of emotion and imagination, or in that charm which draws the wealth of friendship from others. He may also, quite apart from the material security he has, feel himself dispossessed because he is poor in hope and in those spiritual qualities that give stability to life.

Possessions are thus objective or subjective, but the same principles apply to all. They come (or do not come) to us through magnetic attraction and repulsion, activated by thought and feeling. This works in three ways, as well as in combinations of them, represented by the three qualities: *sattva* (harmony), *rajas* (restless activity) and *tamas* (inertia).

In the *sattvic* "have-not" type, there is no attraction for extreme wealth because the person's interests lie elsewhere. Such people are content to be without wealth, just as they are unconcerned about the fields of knowledge, of activity and of feeling outside the sphere in which they are centred and to which they are devoted. Such are the naked ascetic, the unworldly man, the artist, the scholar, or even the humble worker or housewife, happy and content with his or her own small "plot of ground." At times they may "feel the pinch," but there is in them no really strong desire for many possessions. They make



no sacrifices to Plutus, the god of wealth. Their values are not his. How then can he respond?

In the *tamasic* "have-not" type, there is again no point of attraction, not because of contentment, but because of inertia. Such are the people who "cannot be bothered" to look after the possessions they have; who spend in a casual, impulsive fashion, squandering on non-essentials the income that should go towards necessities; who put up with discomfort rather than take the trouble of remedying it; who are not even really "aware" enough to be envious of other people's greater wealth. Apathy creates a vicious circle, and it is obvious that, in such types, there is insufficient attracting force to bring them possessions. Probably a large number of the poor are a combination of the *sattvic* and *tamasic* types—partly contented, partly lazy.

But what of the *rajasic* type of people who are poor, but who apparently ardently desire possessions of all kinds—for *rajas* is inordinate desire? Surely they must set up a strong attraction for wealth. Why do *they* remain poor? A little observation soon shows that *rajasic* people are all the time treating other people's possessions as their own. As long as they do that, how can they attract wealth *really* their own? To take a simple example, the man who is always borrowing his neighbour's tools will have no inducement to buy tools of his own. Even if such a person cannot walk off with other people's property, his very attitude of envy indicates that he considers that what other people have should really be his. The wealthy people, the clever people, the popular people, they have the things *he* ought to have. In some unfair way *he* has been dispossessed of what is really *his*.

From this viewpoint it is a very short step to the almost subconscious encroachment on other people's rights. The girl who borrows a friend's party dress so often that she comes to look upon it as her own, will actually feel aggrieved when the real owner needs it on the very day when she wants it. At first, when borrowing, there may be sops thrown to the conscience: "But he (or she) likes lending it!" "He won't miss it!" "He doesn't even know he has got it!" Until finally we come to all those soothing little euphemisms for "stealing" which are in vogue particularly among public bodies or large firms and organizations: scrounging, lifting, wangling, pinching, fiddling, winning, getting it over the wall, and many others. They all indicate



that the appropriator considers he has the right to use, if he can, what belongs to someone else. This is shown by the hurt way in which he responds to any suggestion that he is stealing—"It's not the same thing at all!"

The same attitude of treating the very surroundings as a background for oneself is seen in those people who chatter loudly in the street and bang car doors in the quiet hours of the night; or those who scatter litter in the parks, public vehicles and elsewhere. Here the element of *tamas* also enters, but the element of *rajas* is seen in the aggressive comment: "There are men paid to pick it up, aren't there?" A characteristic of these *rajasic* persons is that, no matter what they have, they will go on complaining and making comparisons and considering themselves to be poor. They are always more aware of what they have not than of what they have. Yet it must be obvious that, while they use everything they can as theirs, they are making no definite focal point of attraction for possessions legitimately their own.

On the plane of feeling also this type exercises the same possessiveness. Yet the very attempt to possess the affection of others ends by repelling them, and the importunate one finds himself bereft of friends and poor indeed. In the same way, on the mental plane, there are those who, lacking education and a good natural understanding, try to appropriate knowledge and learning at second-hand, as it were, without growing into it naturally. They show off bits and pieces of information, parade their pseudo-culture, forgetting that "the style is the man himself" and that they cannot "take over" another's language and assimilated knowledge by the simple desire for it.

Dogmatism, too, is a form of false possession. Highfalutin speech, officiousness, malapropisms, insincerity in speech—all these proclaim the poverty of those who try to assume an intellectual garb not truly theirs. Such people can never possess an educated mind. The snob who assumes a position not his or hers by nature has less breeding than the simple but honest person; the former puts barriers in his own way.

To acquire possessions, then, there must be a focal point of attraction. What makes this point? What is the lesson to be learned from possessions? This will indicate to us what the nature of the



necessary attraction is. The lesson to be learned is that of give-and-take, of the balance between the value of the goods and the money paid, between service rendered and payment received, between responsibility for the possessions and their acquirement, between abilities and the time and effort given for their cultivation; and so on through every aspect of life.

Here again we can trace three types of those who "have." To the *sattvic* type belongs the *good* businessman as distinct from the *sharp* businessman. He is concerned with maintaining the balance between what he gives and what he gets, making a fair deal for both parties, and he gives full attention to it. The possessions come at the level on which the attention is fixed.

In the same way, mental, emotional and moral possessions come to the one who pays for them. The callow aspirant to fame daydreams vaguely of rising to the eminence of this or that world-known character, appropriating in fancy the great one's reputation, without seeing that the owner has given the right price for its possession, in effort, in thought, in will and in sacrifice. Ambition may have tainted the reward, but the price has been paid. Or, if the reputation is only a false glamour, the debt of disillusionment will hang heavily over the future—the price will at last have to be paid.

What, then, about the *rajasic* people, the greedy getters of wealth? Despite the feeling of revulsion they often evoke, they have learnt one aspect of the universal lesson of balance. For, with them the constant questions are: "What do I get for what I give?" "Is it the best value?" Time spent in learning that brings no corresponding increase in earning power is considered by them as wasted. They think there is no value in it. On the subjective planes also the same attitude is found in the person who offers for sale his mental abilities, his personal charm and other possessions, but demands the best possible return. He attracts the objects of his desire to his focus.

Finally there are the *tamasic* people who seem to accumulate wealth and possessions in spite of themselves, the passive favourites of fortune. This is because of causes from past lives that have attuned their constitution to the gnomes, the elementals of wealth. In the lives of such people we find inexplicable runs of good luck or bad luck, but it is "easy come and easy go." A typical example is that of a woman who ran through one fortune left to her, made and lost another on the



stock exchange, and finally made (and also lost) a third in gold mining. Her "luck" at one time was phenomenal. Every wild-cat scheme she took up "turned to gold," quite against reason and common sense. Yet there was no fixed focus, and when the elemental tide turned, she became as unlucky as she was hitherto lucky, and died completely dependent on others.

In the same way there are those endowed with psychological "wealth," who are merely the passive agents for capacities, with no control and no power to prevent their departure. Calculating prodigies, for example, are often retarded in other directions and may lose their powers before they come to adulthood. No one need feel envious of such unstable possessions.

All these types are to be found among students of Theosophy also, since they too are but human. But the perfected individual, the Theosophical ideal, belongs to none of these categories, for he blends the opposites and brings right action and renunciation of action into one single process.

He has the disinterestedness of the saint and the ascetic, not because he is concentrated only on things other than material ones, but because he sees Life as a whole, the interdependence of Spirit-Matter. He sees the reality of Spirit, but is not abstracted from the things of this world. He has an innate and developed sense of justice, order and balance in all the details of mundane life. He renders justly to Caesar what is Caesar's, and in all his relationships, financial, social, political, family and so on, he keeps the balance of give-and-take with an alertness as keen as that of the good businessman, and an eye to right value as sharp as that of the *rajasic* person. His psychological possessions of head and heart are balanced and integrated, yet his self-interest is not involved in the commerce of any relationships. He reverses the attitude of the *rajasic* "have-not" type, so that in place of treating other people's property as his own he views what is "his own" as in reality belonging to the whole world and only held by him in trust. Even his body is borrowed from nature, his family is a loan, his powers are drawn from a common source and he pays fairly for their use. In him the carelessness of *tamas* is replaced by freedom from the worry that possessions too often bring. For he does not worry whether he has, at any given time, this or that possessions, inner or outer. His affinity with nature is not that of a



passive recipient. He finds a use for what comes to him and lets it go willingly when he must. He knows how and when to save, how and when to spend, whether of time, money or energy.

The goal of the Theosophist is not "poverty," not a retreat from the business of the world into the haven of undifferentiated bliss, letting everything else slip, any more than it is an absorption in one's possessions that makes the whole life worthless when they go. The Theosophist needs all the possessions of which he can make himself master, possessions of knowledge, of love and of power, in order to be the better able to help and teach; just as the Theosophical Movement must draw to itself material funds, when and as needed, to carry on its work in the world.

The unworldly person seeks to know only one thing, God, and follows the path of liberation. But the Theosophist, in addition to attaining that one single, simple, absolute Truth, must also possess the understanding of the *relative* value of everything in manifestation. For without this universal knowledge, so vast and all-embracing, with its infinitude of details against the background of the One Life, how can we help to turn the great cosmic wheel of Life as do the Masters? The possession of love and devotion opens the gate of opportunity for understanding, while power is needed to carry its possessor on to achievement. The Theosophist must not be "poor," if he is to be of use. But his possessions must be like the craftsman's tools, only means to an end; and for Theosophists that end is Service.

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The choice is always ours. Then, let me choose  
The longest art, the hard Promethean way  
Cherishingly to tend and feed and fan  
That inward fire, whose small precarious flame,  
Kindled or quenched, creates  
The noble or the ignoble men we are,  
The worlds we live in and the very fates,  
Our bright or muddy star.

—ALDOUS HUXLEY



## THE DIVINE DIALOGUE

THE Indian traditional teaching which spans both the spiritual and material regions has remained preserved for us in the simple yet profound discourses of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In studying that text, due importance has to be given to the fact that each of its eighteen chapters carries at its end the assertion that it records the dialogue between Sri Krishna, the Guru, and Arjuna, his disciple. This fact that the great Instruction is given in the form of an audible dialogue is often passed over as of little consequence. Yet, as we persevere in trying to reach to the "Secret Wisdom," we come to realize that the medium of the spoken word was not chosen as a mere literary form. It is there because it conforms to and is the pattern of an inner and more profound reality. There *is* an Inner Voice which speaks where there is none to speak. That Voice, which is the Voice of Krishna (call Him by whatever name you will), speaks to the inner ear of each Arjuna (the name Arjuna becoming the generic term for any disciple who owes allegiance to the Highest). For each such disciple, the Inner Guru is always vocal, and for the devoted He is near at hand, ready to answer.

Although Sri Krishna resides in the heart of every creature, He retains in most of us His aspect of a Spectator who remains unconcerned and unaffected by the actions of the mortal forms he inhabits. The ordinary average person knows Him not. His other aspects of Admonisher, Sustainer and Enjoyer become manifest in the disciple only when he moves deliberately along the difficult path of progressive spiritual awakenings. The first step towards spirituality is reached only when the individual begins to recognize the presence within himself and then in others of one or more of these transcendental aspects of the indwelling Divinity. Very early in his journey to the Occult, the disciple learns that the Inner Voice of the great Admonisher cannot be heard except by him who is strong enough to conquer the vices of his personal human nature, and that the Voice becomes mute when devotion flags and attention wavers. That this must always be so is evident, for it would be an act of disservice to the man of vice if he is burdened with a knowledge that he can never appreciate but always defile. It is a truism that pure water poured into a muddy well can only stir up the mud that has settled at the bottom.



The Voice of Krishna—the Divine Voice—can be heard by him alone who in his new-found status of an awakening Arjuna addresses to his indwelling God these memorable words:

I am thy disciple; wherefore instruct in my duty me who am under thy tuition; for my understanding is confounded by the dictates of my duty, and I see nothing that may assuage the grief which drieth up my faculties, although I were to obtain a kingdom without a rival upon earth, or dominion over the hosts of heaven.  
(II, 7–8)

Until the individual realizes the futility of using his intellectual reasoning to understand the dictates of Spirit, and until he abjures for ever his thirst for power and dominions, he can have no existence for Him who is the Teacher of disciples. So long as lust, anger and greed have the power to enter his soul and make it blind and deaf to the presence and guidance of the Spirit, he renders himself incapable of pledging a total abandonment of himself to the behests of his Inner God.

There are other texts which, though not as old as the Mahabharatan period, still give invaluable advice about the nature and function of the Inner Voice. To guide the soldier who is about to enter upon his Mahabharata War, the Inner God repeats the same advice today as has been and will be given to each aspirant to Divine Wisdom. The rendition of that advice into human language may vary from one era to another, but the Instruction remains changeless and in unbroken continuity with the utterances of all the pasts. One text, *Light on the Path*, made available to present-day students gives this advice:

1. Stand aside in the coming battle, and though thou fightest be not thou the warrior.
2. Look for the warrior and let him fight in thee.
3. Take his orders for battle and obey them.
4. Obey him not as though he were a general but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires; for he is thyself, yet infinitely wiser and stronger than thyself....When once he has entered thee and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee, and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee.

Yet another text, *The Voice of the Silence*, speaks of this same



## Inner Voice:

There is but one road to the Path; at its very end alone the "Voice of the Silence" can be heard. The ladder by which the candidate ascends is formed of rungs of suffering and pain; these can be silenced only by the voice of virtue. Woe, then, to thee, Disciple, if there is one single vice thou hast not left behind. For then the ladder will give way and overthrow thee.

Lastly, even though the night be long and despondency stares the aspirant in the face, the Inner Voice as relayed to us by the great Vyasa gives these words of encouragement and promise:

There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—*Ishwara*—who by his magic power causeth all things and creatures to revolve mounted upon the universal wheel of time. Take sanctuary with him alone, O son of Bharata, with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place.

This is the Abode of the Eternal Peace. Let us yearn to hear that Voice which speaks within our ear and learn from the *Gita* the initial lesson that the Silence has a Voice and that it converses freely with the devoted disciple.

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WE have tried the ways of ambition, of self-aggrandizement, of aggressive opportunism, and we have seen the kind of flimsy success to which they lead, we have tasted the bitter poisons they generate, we have known the conflict, the disgust, the inner division, the outer isolation that follow in their wake. We have also tried in some small measure the other way, and known that every man and woman must have love; that there is no life or peace without love; only strife, waste, madness, destruction, death. There is that in life which makes it necessary that men should find the way of truth, of understanding, of justice, or else destroy themselves and each other. You have not seen it? You cannot move a step but you stumble into it; it is in the structure of your world; you cannot live a day or an hour without saying either ye, or no to it, without finding life through it or death without it.

—GREGORY VLASTOS



## THE ARDENT SEEKERS

What the broom is to the house, self-searching is to the heart.  
Sweep well your hearts.

Make no demands upon the world which you make not upon yourselves. Nor make demands on any man which you allow him not to make on you.

All things must have a centre from which to radiate and round which to revolve.

—*The Book of Mirdad*

THEOSOPHY has been characterized as the most serious movement of the age. Most students, despite the repetition of this tenet—a warning for personality, individuality and race—take it as only a vague generalization. Are we serious? Do we know what is the *soul* that is energizing the words and mental images that we evolve and use? We are apt to get a spasmodic feeling of seriousness when crises arise, *e.g.*, a sudden illness, a rumour of retrenchment in our office, a cyclonic storm, the outbreak of an epidemic, diminishing bank balances and rising living costs. These and countless other apparently unrelated factors induce seriousness. But, once the crisis has passed, we sigh with relief and, unless we are by nature unusually introspective and reflective, very little shall we have learned therefrom.

Are we in earnest? Are we serious? A little thought on these questions will indicate that to be earnest and serious means having developed to some extent a sense of responsibility. We may be in earnest or serious about our passing or our children's passing the examinations, or about our making good at sports or in business, political or social activities. We may feel that we shall achieve something by a certain course of diet or of mental hygiene. All these moods and attitudes are indicative of something to be attained, whether it be health, wealth or happiness.

Few, however, among the earnest and serious as above described, aim at goals that have permanent values. Once our objective is attained, new allurements in other fields of activity attract us. We do not stop to question, in the rush *to do*, what is permanently valuable and what is only the bewitchment of a transitory phase. Our ideation, whether we possess bodies of Eastern or Western heritage, is limited to the achievements and periphery of a single lifetime. How often do we hear it said, "He died in harness," as if that meant something



important! Yet, how soon is the person so spoken of forgotten and his achievement lost!

Contact with Theosophy, for short or longer periods, opens up the great vistas of the beginningless past and the endless future that flash upon the student's consciousness. The experience closes the door for ever on his former unthinking irresponsibility. It makes him feel a responsible being. The Vision Splendid has reanimated to a greater or lesser extent his storehouse of inherent Ideas because he is potentially a MAN, a Thinker. The fructification of a tiny acorn in due course produces a mighty oak. At the same time it is true that, through lack of foresight, we do not always envisage the effects of the seeds we sow, and this is never more evident than in a Theosophical awakening.

Our earnestness and sincerity take on a new colouring. We realize that there is a Goal to be achieved and that life has a Purpose. We see the magnificence of this Goal and this Purpose and they absorb us to such an extent that our friends and acquaintances see or sense the change that is taking place within our consciousness. Some are attracted and ask questions, while others are repelled and resentful. Thus the first test arises from those who surround us and our enthusiasm and earnestness and sincerity become tempered in the fire of criticism, unjust and just. This allows us to evaluate and to keep our balance. If sufficiently strong, the student brushes off diverting tactics and pushes on.

For whom is the Goal sought? This is one of the next points that should engage our attention. Are we trying to further our individual progress, or are we at work for the elevation of the family, the community or the human race? Reflection on our progress tends to deepen our earnestness. We may have planted the great weed of selfishness, or we may have cast all considerations of personal achievement into the fire of endeavour to alleviate the world's suffering, having recognized that we are an integral part of the Whole. We begin to see that our achievements, great as they may seem to us, are not the result of our own unaided efforts. We sense and come to know that we have had assistance, that others must have stood where we now stand. They must have faced the same sort of problems, had to answer the same inner questions, brave the same enemies of doubt and temptation. Progress, then, for whom? Wealth for whom? And happiness for whom?



There are those who, seeking ardently the goal of personal attainment, push on, the emphasis in their endeavours being on their little ego. Others see that to achieve anything of worth they must tread the Path of Altruism, the ancient Path trodden by all who are truly in earnest, truly serious.

Then comes gratitude for the labours of those who have preceded us and who have erected signposts that man may advance in the right direction—gratitude to Those who have reached the journey's end and yet, forgoing rest, have had the heart compassion to extend helping hands and proffer advice to their toiling brothers on the ancient Path. Therefore there are gradations of gratitude and these, plus reverence when it arises, aid and sustain the pilgrims bogged in dark valleys or walking on treacherous cliffs.

True earnestness requires a Goal of permanent value—not one to be reached only by ourselves, but a Goal the reaching of which will involve the successful progress of the whole of humanity, which we shall come to regard as our family. We shall sense and come to realize the Presence and Prescience of those Elder Brothers who have not forgotten us, although a major portion of humanity nowadays seems to have forgotten Their very existence, though organized religions take the name of one or another of Them in vain.

This is the task of the earnest Theosophical student. The fact that he is in earnest does not mean that he will not fall and often fail to live up to his highest possibilities. But just as a child can learn to walk only by falling and picking himself up, so can we. And is not the Goal—emancipation of the Race from the entanglements of the round of births and deaths, and the restoring of the Law of Order in act, speech and thought—worth every effort?

So think as if your every thought were to be etched in fire upon the sky for all and everything to see. For so, in truth, it is.

So speak as if the world entire were but a single ear intent on hearing what you say. And so, in truth, it is.

So do as if your every deed were to recoil upon your heads. And so, in truth, it does.

So wish as if you were the wish. And so, in truth, you are.

So live as if your God Himself had need of you His life to live. And so, in truth, He does.

*(The Book of Mirdad)*

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## VAIRAGYA—TRUE DISPASSION

TO achieve true patience, to make our words and actions just and loving, we know that we need *Vairagya*, dispassion. We know that we must learn to give up possessions—those treasures on earth to which we cling even though we know that moth and rust will destroy them in time. We know, too, that we must try to gain spiritual possessions which never die. We are asked to be charitable towards the one who robs us. We are also told that we must never take anything unless it is voluntarily given to us. We must learn to give up *tanha*, thirst for life, and meet death willingly.

But is this true dispassion? Do we not need to go deeper and lose all *idea* of possessions, all idea of *our* life, *our* thoughts, *our* virtues, *our* vices?

Patanjali asks us to concentrate the mind upon the true nature of soul as distinct from all else. Only when this is done can we become truly dispassionate. Only by dwelling upon the idea of soul (or the higher mind), the permanent, the glorious, can we put changing things in their proper place in life and value them at their true worth. By seeking the soul in all, the light within the darkest moments, we shall be able to distinguish the real from the false, the ever-fleeting from the ever-lasting.

To reach this condition, we must realize that our lower personal self is not the knower or the perceiver. It is not even the real experiencer, though it seems so to us. We must strive to convince ourselves that it is the soul that is the real experiencer, the knower.

True dispassion, says Patanjali, carried to the utmost, is indifference to all else but soul. What a long way we have to go!

All the virtues we think we possess, like *Dana*, *Shila* and *Kshanti*, belong not to the personal self but to the soul, the real individuality. If we think that the personal self is the performer of actions, it means that *Vairagya* is not sufficiently unfolded in us. We must develop an attitude of detachment and think of the soul as the actor.

Dispassion, therefore, implies dissociating ourselves from all objects and subjects. Recognition of them for what they are is necessary, and so is interest in them, in so far as they are means towards perfect harmony; but the sense of possession must be given up. When we are free from *our* ideas, we can embody patience; when we do not speak



or act, we become the Word made flesh. It is strange that stripping ourselves of virtues as of vices brings integrity, wholeness, stability and freedom. Once we see that the soul is quite different from the surface appearance of things, that it alone is the real, we can apply this knowledge and give a new turn to our life. To do this is a hard task, and without *Virya*, dauntless energy, we needs must fail.

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TO SAY that the reviling of a righteous man will condemn one to a life of a beggar in the next existence is definite enough in statement, but it is put forward without a reason, and unless we accept these teachings blindly we cannot believe such consequences would follow. To appeal to our minds, there should be a reason given, which shall be at once plain and reasonable. There must be some law for this particular case; otherwise the statement cannot be true. There must occur, from the force of the revilement, the infraction of some natural regulation, the production of some discord in the spiritual world which has for a consequence the punishment by beggary in the succedent existence of the reviler....As this world is a world produced by law, moved by law, and governed by the natural operation of laws which need no one to operate them, but which invariably and unerringly operate themselves, it must follow that any punishment suffered in this way is not suffered through any order, but is suffered because the natural law operates itself. And further, we are compelled to accept this view, because to believe that it was *ordered*, would infer the existence of some particular person, mind, will or intelligence to *order* it, which for one instant no one will believe, who knows that this world was produced, and is governed, by the operation of number, weight and measure, with harmony over and above all.

So then we should know in what manner the law operates, which condemns the reviler of a righteous man to beggary in his next existence. That knowledge once gained, we may be able to find for ourselves the manner and power of placating as it were this terrible monster of compensation by performing some particular acts which shall in some way be a restoration of the harmony which we have broken, if perchance we have unconsciously or inadvertently committed the sin.

—W. Q. JUDGE



## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Issue No. 167 (Vol. 42, 1992) of *Impact of Science on Society* is devoted to the question of the exchange of scientific knowledge between various parts of the world. The expeditions of Columbus and other "voyages of discovery" towards the end of the 15th and early 16th centuries were an important turning point in history and the start of numerous exchanges and meetings of peoples having different forms of thinking, culture and social organization. In spite of this, writes Dr. Susantha Goonatilake in his contribution to *Impact*, the development of modern science has been largely within the European tradition, and its spread as the only legitimate science across the globe has resulted in the curtailment and "loss" of traditional knowledge systems in other parts of the world. Yet these other civilizations, such as those of Asia, possess stores of knowledge which could prove invaluable even today, as they have done in the past, in the development of scientific concepts and thought.

Dr. Goonatilake, who received his training in Sri Lanka, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom as an engineer and a sociologist, has been a visiting Fellow/Professor at Universities in the U.K., Norway, Sweden, Philippines, and Columbia University (New York). He is currently a consultant to UNDP on science and technology and a visiting scholar at the New School for Social Research, New York. His article in *Impact* centres on past cross-flows of concepts and knowledge between the Western tradition and that of South Asia in particular; how scientific knowledge grows by importing metaphors and conceptual elements from outside the discipline and the possible uses to modern science of South Asian concepts.

Interchange of ideas and culture between Greece and the Indian sub-continent, says Dr. Goonatilake, was opened up in ancient times, and some of the ideas from the period 700 B.C. to 500 B.C. which are found in the later Vedic hymns, the Upanishads, and in the philosophies of the Buddhists and the Jains, appear in later Greek thought. The idea of the one reality, for instance, is echoed by Xenophanes, Parmenides and Zeno, the founders of Greek mathematics. Pythagoras, who had travelled widely, believed in the soul's prior lives. Almost all the theories, religious, philosophical and mathematical, taught by the Pythagoreans were known in India in the sixth century B.C. and, like



many Indians, they refrained from destroying life and eating meat. The concept of Karma and the "cycle of necessity" was likewise central to the philosophy of Plato. Scholars who have made detailed studies of the parallels between the thought of Plato and Indian philosophy have found many common features in the two traditions.

Other parallels are indicated by Xenophanes's teaching that God is the eternal unity. Empedocles's theory that matter consisted of the elements of earth, water, air and fire has parallels in the earlier *punchabhuta* concept of *prithvi*, *ap*, *tejas*, *vayu* and *akasa*. The atomic theory was taught in India as far back as the sixth century B.C. and was therefore earlier than the time of Democritus. Heraclitus's concept of everything in a state of flux is preceded in a more sophisticated form by the discussions of the Buddhists. Nor was Aristotle's doctrine of the mean anything new; similar doctrines had been taught by the Buddhists and others several centuries earlier. In the realm of medical knowledge, too, Greece was influenced by India. While there was transmission of ideas from the East to the West in these early times, there is also evidence of transmission of Greek ideas to South Asia.

During the Roman Empire, contacts with South Asia continued and ambassadors were sent from the latter to Rome. There are records also of Indian philosophers going to the West. On the other hand, Apollonius of Tyana travelled to India. Some South Asians settled at Alexandria and elsewhere, and there was heavy trade as also the spread of Indian philosophy, including Buddhism, from the East to other lands. A strong similarity exists also between Neoplatonism and Vedanta and Yoga systems on the one hand and Buddhism on the other.

In the Middle Ages, contacts between Europe and South Asia continued mainly through Arab intermediaries. The major Arabic transmission was in mathematics—the Indian method of arithmetical notation and enumeration, the concept of zero, the decimal system, algebra and trigonometry. At the beginning of the Renaissance, the new knowledge included significant borrowings from the East, especially in mathematics and techniques for the newly important arts of navigation, astronomy and warfare. After the voyages of discovery, new ideas and products were introduced to Europe. The new knowledge opened up fresh vistas in botany, geography, languages and social



customs. There is considerable evidence that, even after the Renaissance, in important areas such as chemistry, theories of motion and philosophy, antecedents from the East helped the new scientific revolution significantly.

In the 17th and subsequent centuries, transfer of technology from South Asia continued, as in the textile industry, the iron and steel industry, linguistics, plastic surgery, etc. There are also significant Eastern traces in the ideas that influenced the thought of the major scientists and philosophers of the 17th and later centuries, directly or indirectly, among them Newton, David Hume, Descartes, Schopenhauer, Kant and Hegel.

Dr. Goonatilake's article supplements very interestingly all that H.P.B. has written about the scientific achievements of antiquity, prominently those of India. The science of Asia is sadly underestimated today, yet without the Asian contributions, both the Greek and the modern scientific developments would have been weakened and delayed. Of those contributions little is known yet. The progress of research into the earlier science of Asia is inevitably a slow accumulation of scattered data, some archacological and some from manuscripts in many languages. Yet the unique achievements of India, not only in the realm of philosophy, but also in the arts and the sciences, are borne out by many writers.

We affirm that, if Egypt furnished Greece with her civilization, and the latter bequeathed hers to Rome, Egypt herself had, in those unknown ages when Menes reigned, received her laws, her social institutions, her arts and her sciences, from pre-Vedic India; and that therefore, it is in that old initiatrix of the priests—adepts of all the other countries—we must seek for the key to the great mysteries of humanity....In those ancient times countries which are now known to us by other names were all called India. There was an Upper, a Lower, and a Western India, the latter of which is now Persia-Iran. The countries now named Thibet, Mongolia, and Great Tartary were also considered by the ancient writers as India. (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 589)

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The rest of Dr. Goonatilake's article is devoted to demonstrating how scientific knowledge is an unfolding process which is nourished



by metaphors and knowledge elements from outside—from other disciplines and even from other cultures. For instance, there are scientists who have been guided in their discoveries by mystical values. There are many instances of how a given science is nourished by "extrascientific" elements, such as the social ideas of the day.

Dr. Goonatilake goes on to consider how some South Asian concepts can be used with advantage today. Ancient Indian discussions on fundamental issues have many parallels with modern science and present a range of possible uses. The seven key items that have been identified are:

- (1) the enormous age of the universe (found in Buddhism and the Puranas), (2) the infinite number of worlds apart from our own (in Buddhist Puranas), (3) worlds even in an atom (in Yoga Vasistha), (4) infinitely small living beings like bacteria (in Jainism), (5) the importance of the subconscious in psychology (in Yoga), (6) doctrines of matter in Samkhya and Buddhism similar to modern systems, and (7) the world that appears to the senses is not the most real.

In many spheres of scientific search today, Eastern concepts would provide an important input. Dr. Goonatilake gives as an instance the concept of Karma. Karma is more than a cycle of retribution according to one's actions. As a philosophical concept, Karma is "the path of action that maintains the universe...the universal law of the world, the particular causal structure of the universe. It symbolizes the relative, the changing and the temporal. It relativizes time and makes time the very expression of the law of Karma." Problems related to those evoked in philosophical discussions about Karma, the author submits, occur in physics after the collapse of the tightly deterministic world of Newton and Laplace and its replacement by a world governed by quantum physics, entropic phenomena and the chaos theory. These Karma discussions also have direct relevance for contemporary debates in biology.

The various explorations of the nature of time in the South Asian tradition are worth looking into by those researching this field today. Likewise South Asian explorations of the nature of the mind "have given a wide variety of constructs that rival in their richness the systems that came into being in the West in the 19th and the 20th centuries and associated with such writers as William James, Freud,



Jung, etc." There is no unanimity of these Western approaches to the mind, and different South Asian models—such as those provided by Vedanta philosophy, the Yoga system of Patanjali, the Buddhist schools, etc.—could provide useful insights to Western investigators.

Dr. Goonatilake concludes by saying:

...regional civilizations possess stores of elaborate knowledge on a wide variety of topics. These stores, the results of millennia of human inquiry, were lost from view, because of the consequences of the European "discovery." But now it appears they will be increasingly opened up, foraged for valid uses, and what is worthwhile opportunistically used. The operative word should be "opportunistically," to guard against a mere romantic and reactionary return to assumed past golden ages of these civilizations.

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The International Labour Organization (ILO) has come out with a top-ten list of stressful professions. Miners head the list, followed by police and prison officers, construction workers, pilots, journalists, advertising executives, dentists, actors and doctors. *Preventing Stress at Work*, published this May, is the result of a two-year study which will ultimately lead to ILO guidelines. It is based on several case studies of stress prevention programmes conducted in establishments across nine countries, including one on miners working for Western Coalfields in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. (*The Times of India*, June 26)

The study finds that stress at work has assumed pathological proportions. Increased job pressure, job insecurity and feelings of powerlessness at work affect workers in all professions worldwide. "Stress results when workers are constrained from responding on the basis of their own psychological and physiological response pattern, because of external factors over which they have no control," concludes Prof. Robert Karasek, who analysed the case studies for the ILO publication.

Prof. Karasek suggests that the responsibility for reducing negative stress devolves on both employees and management: workers should improve coping abilities and managers should eliminate unnecessary



stressors from the working environment. Stress can lead to absenteeism caused by poor health or by psychological problems, or the worker may be on the job yet mentally absent.

The ILO study lists several factors that make some jobs more stressful than others. Fear of physical injury and difficult working conditions reportedly cause high stress in miners, firefighters and police officers. High job demands combined with comparatively little decision-making power often lead to feelings of being trapped and impotent. Temporary employees are affected by a high degree of job insecurity. Women employees are prone to higher levels of stress than their male counterparts because they are often paid less than men and also have a second job of looking after the home and children.

Stress has been defined as "an individual's perception and assessment of the environment," and "environment" does not mean just external conditions, whether at the workplace, in the home, or elsewhere in the world around us. We each inhabit a distinct and personal environment created by the way we think and feel and by our outlook on our circumstances. It may be said that there are as many worlds as there are "I's" to see them. Negative stress responses are the root cause of many an ill that confronts us today. We must learn to eliminate them through our own efforts and our positive responses.

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An experiment in prison reform being tried out in Bangalore Central Jail is creating new feeling among the prison inmates. The single-time offenders among the over 1000 inmates were encouraged by prison officials to take up any of the three-year degree courses offered by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). Some among the 32 inmates who came forward to do the course were serving life sentences. Only 25 qualified after an entrance examination and all of them opted for a degree in the social sciences. They were in the 25-40 age group and none of them had completed their school education. The project is sponsored by the State Government, though the initial encouragement came from the jail authorities. (*Indian Express Sunday Magazine*, May 16)

Requiring no attendance at classes, the courses offered by the open



university provide exhaustive preparatory notes and a package of audio-visual aids, and allow for continuing education. The prison library provides additional study material. Those who have completed the course are allowed to appear for the examinations from centres of their choice. Enthused by the experiment in Bangalore, the IGNOU is planning to offer a course on food and nutrition to women prisoners.

According to S. Venkatesh, a lecturer in political science in IGNOU and liaison officer of the course, the signs are good. The attitude of the prisoners is different from that of outside candidates, he says. "Through my interaction with the candidates in the prison I found that they were eager to make full use of the lost time in their lives." Those prison inmates who did not opt for the course are now regretting their decision. There is a change in the attitude of the inmates in general.

This experiment has added a new page to the reformation theory of convicts. Additional Director General of Police (Prisons) T. Srinivasalu believes it will be a lesson to other prison administrations in the country. It has certainly provided an impetus to them. Even though some of the prisoners are undergoing life imprisonment, it helps them to get through the remainder of their lives in a much more productive manner.

This new wave in prison management should be welcomed by society which for long has condemned the sinner, not the sin. It is gratifying to note that education and reformation as ideals have replaced senseless barbarity, for only in proportion as imprisonment aids the convict is the prison's existence justified.

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# THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

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THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.  
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THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY  
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE  
THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY  
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FIVE MESSAGES TO THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS  
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LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME  
THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
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VERNAL BLOOMS  
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IN MEMORY OF HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, BY SOME OF HER PUPILS  
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# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

**T**HE 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."*

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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.