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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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MORAL POWER

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Every pledge or promise unless built upon four pillars—absolute sincerity, unflinching determination, unselfishness of purpose, and *moral power*, which makes the fourth support and equipoises the three other pillars—is an insecure building. The pledges of those who are sure of the strength of the fourth alone are recorded.

IN one of the extracts from Madame Blavatsky's letters which were read at a meeting in New York on the first anniversary of her death, appears the above statement, which demands heart-searching by each aspirant who would serve the Masters and Their Cause.

Those who feel certain of their own complete sincerity, firmly resolved to master the great teachings of Theosophy and to apply and spread them, and are confident that they are moved thereto by no self-interest, doubtless feel themselves confronted by a challenge and may question whether they could possess the other three qualifications at all if they were altogether lacking in moral power.

It does not, however, minimize the importance of the first three qualifications to point out that none of them can securely stand alone. It is for no mere skirmish, no brief campaign, that volunteers are sought for Masters' Cause. Those who would be co-workers of the Masters, "companions" in the world, humbly trying to serve Their purposes for the helping of mankind, may set no term for

their enlistment. It is for life and for lives, for the duration indeed of the great struggle of the forces of Light against the powers of darkness.

Meanwhile the world of real Occultists smiles silently, and goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the *living germs* from the masses of men. *For occultists must be found and fostered and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed* and pretensions go for naught.

Of those sincerely fired by enthusiasm on first meeting with the explanations of the mysteries of life which Theosophy provides, and the ideals which it puts forward, there may be some in whom, as in the Parable of the Sower, the seed falls upon shallow soil and their enthusiasm may spring up quickly because it has no depth of earth. Their zeal enkindled, they may impulsively take upon themselves a commitment which they may, for lack of moral stamina, find themselves unable to fulfil. Such would do well to bear in mind Mr. Judge's message to his correspondent's inquiring friend:

Tell your friend and inquirer this. No one was ever converted to Theosophy. Each one who *really* comes into it does so because it is only "an extension of previous beliefs."

Also, one of the Masters whose message Madame Blavatsky brought to the modern world wrote to Mr. Sinnett early in 1882:

It is a life-long task you have chosen....Knowledge for the mind, like food for the body, is intended to feed and help to growth, but it requires to be well digested and the more thoroughly and slowly the process is carried out the better both for body and mind.

Lest, however, this be taken by the lukewarm as justifying laziness in study and application, as well as in promulgation of the teachings, there was published in *The Path* a reminder of the need to get our mental luggage ready, so that we may be prepared at the first call when we are reborn (an article reprinted in our pages in September 1942). This task calls for augmenting our knowledge

of the modern restatement of the Ancient Wisdom, but also for discarding the useless mental lumber accumulated down the years, whether from upbringing and environment, from sectarian or materialistic education, or from expounders of philosophies that ignore or contradict Theosophy.

One obvious way in which moral power reveals itself is in the steadiness of the indomitable warrior in a fight against great odds for a cause of the righteousness of which he is convinced.

For the strengthening of the aspirant to steadiness there are these verses in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Have patience, Candidate, as one who fears no failure, courts no success. Fix thy Soul's gaze upon the star whose ray thou art, the flaming star that shines within the lightless depths of ever-being, the boundless fields of the Unknown.

Have perseverance as one who doth for evermore endure. Thy shadows live and vanish; that which in thee shall live for ever, that which in thee *knows*, for it is knowledge, is not of fleeting life: it is the man that was, that is, and will be, for whom the hour shall never strike.

And to hearten him who is in the thick of the battle, there are these stirring words:

If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not courage: fight on, and to the charge return again and yet again.

The fearless warrior, his precious life-blood oozing from his wide and gaping wounds, will still attack the foe, drive him from out his stronghold, vanquish him, ere he himself expires. Act then, all ye who fail and suffer, act like him; and from the stronghold of your Soul chase all your foes away—ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire—when even you have failed.

Moral power, however, may well also reveal itself in a devoted student of Theosophy in unspectacular ways, as in sticking everlastingly at whatever Theosophical service, however humble and inconspicuous it be, he may have found he can render.

Madame Blavatsky set an inspiring pattern for emulation,

without so labelling it, calling on her followers not to follow her but to follow the path she showed, the Masters who are behind. But who even a little acquainted with her long and willing sacrifice, her patient service of the Cause of Theosophy through good and evil report and despite many difficulties—physical suffering, desertion by professed friends, scorn and ridicule from those who rejected her message—can fail to be inspired to such emulation as individually he or she can achieve?

To one correspondent she wrote:

Come what may, I shall die at my post, Theosophical banner in hand, and while I live I *do* fervently hope that all the splashes of mud thrown at it will reach me personally. At any rate I mean to continue protecting the glorious truth with my old carcass so long as it lasts....

In her article, "The Theosophical Mahatmas," reprinted in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism* from *The Path* for December 1886, she claimed as her only merit her "unswerving devotion" to the Master who, she wrote, had taught her what she knew and made her what she was, and her "belief in the Wisdom, collectively, of that grand, mysterious, yet actual Brotherhood of holy men."

The moral power which she steadfastly exemplified was well described by Mr. Judge in his tribute, "Yours Till Death and After," in *Lucifer* shortly after Madame Blavatsky's passing away:

Amid all the turmoil of her life, above the din produced by those who charged her with deceit and fraud and others who defended, while month after month, and year after year, witnessed men and women entering the Theosophical Movement only to leave it soon with malignant phrases for H.P.B., there stands...devotion absolute to her Master. "It was He," she writes, "who told me to devote myself to this, and I will never disobey and never turn back."

It was a faithful Indian friend, Norendro Nath Sen, Editor of *The Indian Mirror*, Calcutta, who, in his White Lotus Day address in 1905, 14 years after her death, said of her:

It is impossible for me to say how much I owe to the influence

of her sublime life—a life consecrated to the vindication of truth and the spiritual elevation of mankind....

I lived under the same roof with H.P.B. in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, and I had thus ample opportunity of knowing her and her great life-work for humanity. Her whole soul was thrown into the service of mankind, and she worked, as perhaps no one else could work, without giving herself any rest even when physically suffering from acute pain.

The moral power which she displayed was well described by her friend, pupil and biographer, William Kingsland:

The man who dies with his face to the foe, fighting to the last though covered with wounds, is accounted a hero. But in the heat of battle there is oblivion of pain, there is a superhuman strength of madness and frenzy. How much more should she be accounted a hero who could hold on to life, and work as no other woman has worked, through years of physical and mental torture.

How does moral power find expression in her living followers of our own day? For one who seeks to serve by spreading the teachings of Theosophy by the spoken word, the test of moral power comes in the ability of the platform worker of any age or either sex to speak impersonally, without allowing one's own shadow to come between the hearer and the great message one is privileged to share with him and others, or saying to oneself, "Behold, I serve!" or claiming even a moiety of the credit for that which one can at best but faithfully hand on. For, as Mr. Crosbie has truly written:

All that any of us can give is Theosophy. We did not invent it. It was given to us; we stand in line and pass it along, as people used to do at fires in passing the buckets of water. People are grateful to the one who passes the "water of life" along to them, but the "passer" knows where gratitude belongs, and says: "don't thank me; thank Theosophy—as I do. It enables me to help others; it will also enable you."...The fight against the "personal idea" is a long one and a strong one. It has to be guarded against that it does not take to itself what *it* has no

claim to.

The fluent speaker must be on his guard against not only flattery but also honest praise from the unthinking who perhaps are ignorant of the warning in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Shun praise, O Devotee. Praise leads to self-delusion. Thy body is not Self, thy SELF is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not.

Self-gratulation, O Disciple, is like unto a lofty tower, up which a haughty fool has climbed. Thereon he sits in prideful solitude and unperceived by any but himself.

One to whom expression by the written word comes more easily than does expounding from the platform is at an advantage over the speaker in this respect, though he too must be on his guard against self-gratulation. The principle of anonymity of living contributors to Theosophical magazines gives less encouragement to thinking more highly of oneself than one ought to think, but the glow of pleasure which the anonymous writer may experience, when hearing his article impersonally praised, may be a danger signal, not to be ignored in honest self-examination.

All prominent in Theosophical work might find it salutary to remind themselves frequently of the rule (given by Madame Blavatsky in "Practical Occultism," which is included in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*) which warns:

None can feel the difference between himself and his fellow-students, such as "I am the wisest," "I am more holy and pleasing to the teacher, or in my community, than my brother," etc.,—and remain an upasaka. His thoughts must be predominantly fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being. It (the heart) must be full of the feeling of its non-separateness from the rest of beings as from all in Nature; otherwise no success can follow.

It would not seem amiss to equate moral power with the working in whatever measure of "the real and true Will" which Mr. Crosbie equates with the "Spiritual Will, which flies like light and cuts all obstacles like a sharp sword," and which he says proceeds from

"the highest spiritual part of our natures."

As Mr. Judge wrote in "Occult Arts" in *The Path* of January 1894:

The will is one of the forces directly from spirit, and is guided, with ordinary men, by desire; in the Adepts' case the will is guided by Buddhi, Manas, and Atma, including in its operation the force of a pure spiritual desire acting solely under law and duty.

Will not this show itself as moral power?

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IS PSYCHISM DANGEROUS?

I

THEOSOPHY postulates three lines of evolution—physical, intellectual and spiritual (moral)—of which intellectual and spiritual evolution are of great importance as they answer the whole question of “psyhic” and abnormal powers and phenomena on which attention came to be focused increasingly since the middle of the 19th century. Even today we find that periodicals and newspapers carry articles on “psychism” under the headings Psychic Science, Astrology, Hypnotism, Mental Healing, past-life recall, etc. etc. Is it a mere coincidence that more and more people all over the world are taking interest in the “psyhic” and the “occult”? One of the reasons why people turn to psychism could be that they are not able to find solutions to their problems through physical or rational methods. To deal with stress and strain and with various diseases, people increasingly turn to the field of psychism.

In India as in the West, there are “Babas,” “Swamis,” “Gurus” who promise health, happiness and peace through easy and secret methods. More and more people are cashing in on the psycho-religious hunger for miracles, for personal salvation, personal power and aggrandizement. People do whatever they are asked to do, without asking for the basis, the rationale. If they are told that some breathing exercises would bring them knowledge and powers, they would do these exercises, sometimes with disastrous results.

Before *Manas* in man can find full expression, this confusion is bound to be there. This is an age of transition. According to Theosophy, with every Round or evolutionary cycle, one of the principles in man develops. In the Fourth Round the *Kama* or desire principle is dominant, and in the Fifth Round the *Manas* principle will be fully developed. But the beginnings of this development are being seen now.

But as Mind is being evolved more and more as we proceed in our course along the line of race development, there can be

perceived underneath in all countries the beginning of the transition from the animal possessed of the germ of real mind to the man of mind complete. This day is therefore known as the “transition period”...when men’s minds are only preparing for an alteration. Man is not yet fully conscious, and reincarnations are needed to at last complete the incarnation of the whole trinity [the higher spiritual man] in the body. When that has been accomplished, the race will have become as gods.
(*The Ocean of Theosophy*)

H. P. Blavatsky points out that when the Sun enters the sign of Aquarius, psychologists will have some extra work to do, and the psychic idiosyncrasies of humanity will enter on a great change. We experience this today. In fact, she prophesied this state of “psychism” in no uncertain terms in her *Five Messages*:

As the preparation for the new cycle proceeds, as the forerunners of the new sub-race make their appearance on the American continent, the latent psychic and occult powers in man are beginning to germinate and grow....Your position as forerunners...has its own special perils as well as its special advantages. Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the Psychic outruns the Manasic and Spiritual development. Psychic capacities held perfectly under control, checked and directed by the Manasic principle, are valuable aids in development. But these capacities running riot, controlling instead of controlled, using instead of being used, lead the Student into the most dangerous delusions and certainty of moral destruction. Watch therefore carefully this development, inevitable in your race and evolution-period so that it may finally work for good and not for evil; and receive, in advance, the sincere and potent blessings of Those whose good-will will never fail you, if you do not fail yourselves....

There is nothing “evil” or “wicked” in the psychic nature itself. The evil results from lack of control. In fact, the more the powers of the mind are developed, the greater is the responsibility of man, as the selfish use of these powers is more dangerous than misuse

of physical powers.

The Third Object of the Theosophical Movement is: "The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man." Mr. Judge points out that there are two kinds of investigations possible: (1) actual physical and experimental investigation and (2) investigation of the philosophical basis and the laws underlying the phenomena. Actual and experimental investigation has always been discouraged by Theosophy. H. P. Blavatsky performed various phenomena, but for two reasons: (1) In her time, especially, science did not admit the existence of a super-material realm governed by laws. Religion agrees that there is a super-sensuous realm, but does not admit that there can be laws governing this realm. So we find that any abnormal occurrence or exhibition of unusual powers is explained by religion to be the work of god or devil. Science classes the whole thing as deception or fraud. H.P.B. wanted to show that every human being has the germ of psychic and spiritual powers latent in him, which is brought to fructification in Mahatmas through long training and experience. These powers are natural but not common, just as great musical ability is natural but not common. She also wanted to show that there are occult laws behind these phenomena. (2) Moreover, she wanted to leave behind a record of a different sort. In her time, only false concepts of Spiritualism and Mediumship were prevalent.

There were numerous mediums in the early 19th century. Unfortunately, people felt that these mediums could bring them in contact with the "Spirit" of their dear departed ones. But Theosophy teaches that what one comes across is only the *kama-rupic* shell of the dead. It is the psychic corpse of the deceased person, which gives off impressions like a gramophone record. This activity is dangerous to both sitters and mediums of the séance room. A medium makes connection with the *kama-rupic* shell with the aid of his nervous fluid and also the elementals. There is, besides, the presence of "elementaries" or depraved souls at almost all séances. (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 161)

What is a medium? In her article "Are Chelas Mediums?" (U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 13), H.P.B. writes that a "medium" is a person who allows other people to influence him to such an abnormal extent that he loses his self-control and does not have any power or will to regulate his own actions. This giving up of control could be active or passive—it could be conscious or unconscious. A person can submit his will to "another being" and become his slave. Or it could be an idea like love, hate, jealousy or some other passion which takes such a hold of his heart and mind that we say he is obsessed with the idea. The "other being" could be an elemental or elementary. Also, it could be one's own higher principle. The medium will then be a great musician, an artist, a writer, poet, etc. The "other being" could be a Mahatma; the "medium" then is a Chela. Sometimes a person is not aware of the source of his influence. He may write a great scientific treatise, a great poem or story, under the influence of an adept, and go on thinking that it was the personal spirit of Faraday, or Newton or Shakespeare that was writing through him.

What is dangerous is mediumship in which there is passive submission to an abnormal extent to outside influences. The influence can be from other people, from literature, from television advertisements and so on. We submit our minds to these influences. If we look at a particular advertisement for, say, a shampoo several times, then we feel compelled to go and buy that shampoo. We are passively accepting the views of others in newspaper features and editorials. We do not take pains to reason things out. Even in small things like joining an art class, let us not go and join a particular class just because everyone says so. We must collect information about different classes and then analyze and make up our mind. A person is on his way to becoming a medium if he takes undue interest in ghosts, séances, etc. Then there is the influence from the astral light, which acts as a hypnotizing agent, where the lower thoughts of people are impressed. It is under the influence of these pictures in the astral that people sometimes commit crimes and do things almost against their will. In our unguarded moments these influences enter us.

This tendency towards mediumship is carried over from one life to the other. So there are some races of people in whom mediumship is natural and predominant, while in others seership. So also there is a difference in the powers exhibited—e.g., clairvoyance. There is ordinary clairvoyance and there is spiritual clairvoyance. This is looking into the astral light and predicting events, past, present and future. Mr. Judge points out that those who have the clairvoyant faculty from birth are generally physically diseased and nervously deranged. It is very rarely that a healthy and well-balanced person displays clairvoyance. In the article "Shall We Teach Clairvoyance?" Mr. Judge points out that even if it is learnt, it should be under a competent guide. (Judge Series Pamphlet No. 13, p. 20)

There are numerous difficulties and dangers. There are several layers of astral light and only a true clairvoyant can look into all the layers. There are delusions. An untrained clairvoyant is deluded, as he is not able to differentiate between the picture he sees of an idea or thought in a person's mind, and the picture of an actual event. For example, a mother who is anxious about her child may merely imagine that child meeting with an accident and thus form a picture. An untrained person will see this picture (which is solely due to emotion and imagination on the part of the mother) and predict an accident. Then again there is reversion of images. The figure 6 would be seen as 9, and 9 as 6, etc. Sometimes a picture could be coloured by one's own emotions and thoughts. Most of these are psychic visions. Mr. Judge describes even the visions of Swedenborg as psychic perception, as he claimed to have seen inhabitants of Mercury, but he described them as wearing the clothes which people in Europe were wearing at that time.

When a student starts upon the path and begins to see spots of light flash out now and then, or balls of golden fire roll past him, it does not mean that he is beginning to see the real Self—pure spirit. A moment of deepest peace or wonderful revealings given to the student, is *not* the awful moment when one is about to see his spiritual guide, much less his own soul. Nor are

psychical splashes of blue flame, nor visions of things that afterwards come to pass, nor sights of small sections of the astral light with its wonderful photographs of past or future, nor the sudden ringing of distant fairy-like bells, any proof that you are cultivating spirituality. These things, and still more curious things, will occur when you have passed a little distance on the way, but they are only the mere outposts of a new land which is itself wholly material, and only one remove from the plane of gross physical consciousness. (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 77-78)

The physical body is built on the astral body which is enmeshed in the physical like the fibres of a mango in the mango pulp. In a trained seer, the astral body is so coherent that he can project the astral out of the physical at a distance. This is how Buddha and Apollonius of Tayana were seen at two places at the same time. The real centres for hearing, seeing, smelling are in the astral body. These are used for astral perceptions. In clairvoyance, the image first falls on the astral eye and is then transmitted to the astral brain, then to the physical brain, and then the physical eye.

(To be concluded)

You can be subject to no greater or lesser rule than that which you impose upon yourself.

Gain that during your youth which can compensate you for loss of youth in old age. And if you are of the opinion that wisdom is the food of old age, then see to it in your youth that you will not lack such a diet.

Only they are poor who have too many wishes.

—LEONARDO DA VINCI

THE NEED FOR TRUE IDEALS

Be hopeful then, not despairing. With *each* morning's awakening try to live through the day in harmony with the Higher Self. "Try" is the battle-cry taught by the teacher to each pupil. Naught else is *expected* of you. *One who does his best does all that can be asked.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

ONE of the urgent needs today, to lessen the confusion and turmoil of our world, is to restore to man faith in the possibility of his own redemption. Face to face with the selfishness evidenced almost everywhere, confronted by the evils of corruption, deceit, and injustice, there is a growing sense of discouragement which threatens to become despair. This paralyses effort. Nothing seems worth while any more, not even trying to improve one's own character.

It is at such periods of stress, when darkness envelops the world, that a reaffirmation of man's potential divinity becomes most necessary. No matter how low humanity may have sunk through abject egotism and ugly sin, we should never despair; for in each one there is a spark of divinity and that can be reawakened, however completely dormant it may be today. Let each begin in himself, with himself. Let him look within and endeavour to rediscover his own true Self. "Awake, arise, seek the Great Ones, and learn."

The first lesson the Great Ones teach is that it *is* possible to redeem ourselves. They speak to us, not as we are now, weak, foolish, ignorant, and even wicked, but as we can become. And that Image of the New Man they place before us, they also show us how to attain.

In this process of self-redemption, of renewal and regeneration, true ideals are essential. The highest and noblest ideals have been reiterated by all great Teachers down the ages. We can use these ideals to elevate our consciousness, to cleanse our minds and to purify our hearts, thus activating our latent divinity.

But what is an ideal? According to the definition found in the dictionary, an ideal is that which is in accordance with one's most

exalted imagination or conception. It is that which embodies one's highest standard of excellence. In philosophy, idealism is the theory which affirms that mind, or the spiritual and ideal, is of central importance in reality. To the idealist, reality is essentially spiritual because it embodies mind and reason. An idealist formulates ideals and lives under their influence. He deliberately exposes his mind to their current, exactly as a person who feels cold exposes himself to the rays of the sun, or one in a dark room lights a lamp. The idealist makes his mind receptive to the influence of his Higher Self and thus draws to himself its light and its radiance.

An idealist, in the philosophical sense, is thus a truly practical person. On the other hand, one who rejects ideals on the plea that he wants to be independent, or because he is not able to live up to them, is being very impractical and suffering from conceit, or from fear, or from both.

History and experience bear witness to the guiding part ideals play in the progress of humanity. An ideal that finds a responsive echo in our own heart can revolutionize our life and transform our nature. Let us set up a high ideal and make it our own by endeavouring to live up to it, to translate it into daily practice. Nor need we be deterred by awe at the sublimity of such an ideal. The very fact that we are able to respond means that we have in us the capacity ultimately to attain it. To adopt a noble ideal is the first step, and the longest journey must begin with that first step. The goal may loom far, far away, but a beginning has been made and to keep on striving is in itself an achievement.

The power of true Ideals is a triple one. There is first the power inherent in the Ideal itself. A true Ideal is an actual fact, a living archetype that radiates its own magnetic quality and sheds its beneficent influence upon humanity.

In the second place, such an Ideal, through this radiation, draws out from within everyone who accepts it and reflects upon it that which is consubstantial with its own quality. As the light and the warmth of the sun draw out the potency hidden in the seed, gradually enabling the plant to grow, bear flowers and fruits, and to produce seeds for future plants, so the magic power inherent in

a high Ideal draws forth the dormant powers in a person's inner consciousness and gradually enables him to transcend his personal self and to show forth his inherent divinity.

But there is also the third aspect of an Ideal's power: the power generated by the effort of the individual to come nearer to his Ideal. This is a significant factor in the spiritual life and when correctly understood indicates the need to strive incessantly; for it is the striving that counts the most. Gandhiji says:

The goal ever recedes from us. The greater the progress, the greater the recognition of our unworthiness. Satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory.

Let us then choose the highest ideal we are able to conceive and to appreciate. Our hidden aspiration will exert its influence. Only a part of our ideal is made manifest. The rest remains unseen and yet it too has its own power. Albert Schweitzer, discussing what he designates as mankind's will towards the ideal, affirms his conviction that this will is greater than we can see and that the unseen part produces effects that exceed in value the effects of the visible action. He concludes: "Judging by what I have learnt of men and women, I am convinced that there is far more in them the idealist will-power than ever comes to the surface of the world."

The major part, locked in their hearts, has yet to be released.

May we then, sustained by our faith in humanity, of which we are a part, keep on in our efforts undismayed by aught! "Have patience, Candidate, as one who fears no failure, courts no success," enjoins *The Voice of the Silence*, and this is possible if we keep our gaze upon the Ideal we have accepted.

THERE may also be another sort of wealth than mere gold, another sort of power than position in politics or society. The powerful, wide, all-embracing, rapidly-acting brain stored with knowledge is a vast possession which one man may enjoy. He can use it properly or improperly.

—W. Q. JUDGE

KARMA—THE LAW OF ETHICAL CAUSATION

WHEN Madame Blavatsky launched the present Theosophical Movement in the last quarter of the last century, the term Karma was hardly known in the West, though belief in the operation of the just and merciful Law of Retribution, spoken of by Jesus and by those before and after him, had always existed. In the East, and especially in India, though the doctrine was known, it was very much misunderstood and misrepresented. Many of the misconceptions have, however, been removed by the teachings of Theosophy. Many modern writers in the West are now freely using the terms "Karma" and "Reincarnation" in their writings, and the dictionaries have also included them—all of which goes to prove the impact of the present Theosophical Movement on the minds of the people.

What is Karma? It was a question that Arjuna put to Krishna in the beginning of the Eighth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*; and Krishna answers that "Karma is the emanation which causes the existence and reproduction of creatures." A footnote explains: "Karma here is, so to say, the action of the Supreme which is seen in manifestation throughout the evolution of the objective worlds." This concept is closely related to the fact of Universal Unity and Causation. It is the operation of the Law which, in obedience to the Ideation of the Universal Mind, brings into existence all the various states of being in this phenomenal world. It is this Law which causes the Day and Night of Brahma, each lasting a thousand revolutions of the *Yugas*, creating periods of activity and rest for all beings, worlds and systems of worlds.

Theosophy teaches that God and Law are not separate but that the latter is the eternal action or motion of God or the One Life. This motion proceeds, not in a straight line, but in a spiral, so that each revolution of the wheel of the Law brings all evolving beings, not to the same spot, but to a higher level, thus making possible the progressive march of evolution through cyclic repetitions. The common phenomena of day and night, the ebb and flow of the tide, the phases of the moon, etc., can be observed by all. Theosophy

goes one step further and points out how the Law equally operates in the inner realm of man and of nature, resulting in the cycles of health and disease, moods of elation and depression, the rise and fall of civilizations, periods of mental and moral light and darkness, in terms of man's own behaviour. And this aspect of the Law of Karma would enable an individual to overcome his past wrong tendencies and strengthen his capacities and virtues so as to steer the course of his life wisely, avoiding many a pitfall on the way. This is how Karma becomes the doctrine of responsibility.

It is necessary, therefore, to recognize that Karma is not only action and reaction, cause and effect, that effect becoming a cause again; but in the human kingdom it is precisely the Law of Responsibility, and therefore the Law of Ethical Causation and Moral Retribution. It is this aspect of the Law which, if used in a practical manner, can make for the social amelioration of mankind, bringing peace and happiness to all.

How can it be done? Man has to assume the firm position that: (1) He is a soul, a ray of Life and Light Divine, and that therefore he has to think and act and live in co-operation with the Divine Law, not hindering but helping its course. (2) He is a miniature copy of the whole universe and therefore has within him all the powers and forces and energies that exist anywhere in nature. He is an heir to the forces above him and akin to those below him. In terms of the law of consubstantiality he can become a focal point, a magnet, and attract to himself the forces of Light or of darkness. (3) The responsibility of man lies in the choices he makes every moment and the will he uses to realize and fulfil what he wants.

The majority of individuals live as irresponsible beings because they drift with the current and are not vigilant and deliberate in their behaviour. Bound down by a hundred cords of desire they dissipate their energies in a hundred directions, work against the Law, go astray, and thus meet with sorrow, suffering and frustration. The Law being just and merciful does not reward or punish, but only restores harmony and equilibrium when these are broken through man's folly. In the process of restoration, lasting for a long or short period, one passes through pain and difficulty. Herein

lies man's responsibility. If he learns his lesson of pain with a correct philosophical attitude, if he *wills* to abstain from his past mistakes, the pain will be a stepping-stone to further progress and inner unfoldment. But if he grumbles and murmurs, blames others for his misfortune, and continues to indulge in his wrong actions, then he has not learnt the lesson, and further sorrow and misery will be his lot. Therefore, as responsible human beings it is necessary to act deliberately from within on the basis of spiritual principles instead of ever following impulses from without. Every thought, word and act in our daily life should be deliberate so as not to cause a disturbance in the harmonious movement of the Law.

We have all lived in the past and have accumulated a huge store of Karma, good, bad and indifferent; and so difficulties and troubles may crop up any time when suitable environment is provided for the reaping of any effect. Then the responsibility lies in preserving the right attitude and setting into motion such forces as will mitigate the effects to a certain extent at least. Each individual draws to himself Karma in terms of his moral stamina; therefore everyone is able to cope with whatever comes to him.

Mr. Judge, in his very practical article "Advantages and Disadvantages in Life," gives an excellent definition of good Karma which should be always remembered and practised: "Good Karma is that which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires."

If every individual were to live up to this instruction, and before engaging in any particular action were to ask himself if it was *desired* and *required* by the *Ego*, all the troubles and problems of life would vanish. Action here means not only deeds on the objective plane but also thoughts, because Karma starts on the plane of mind. It is the mind which encourages the desires one way or the other; hence the necessity to generate thoughts which are consubstantial with the desires and requirements of the Ego, and speech and action will follow naturally. At present, it is generally the sense-inclinations that arouse the desires and lead the mind towards the material pole. It is necessary, therefore, to train and control the

mind as desired and required by the Ego so that it becomes a valuable instrument through which the Ego can accomplish its work. *The Voice of the Silence* teaches us to blend the mind and soul. A controlled mind will be able to subdue the desires, and the whole personality will become a proper channel for the reflection of the Divine Light. That is what is desired and required by the Ego. Unity and harmony, love and sympathy and kindness, truth and devotion and nobility and all higher aspirations are desired and required by the Ego. The Ego needs nourishment to unfold and expand in serving his fellow beings. The highest aspect of the Law of Karma is the Law of Love eternal.

Karma is often taken to mean fate, preordained by "God," against which nothing can be done. Thus, the responsibility of man is absolutely lost sight of, and no effort is put forth in the right direction. This leads to passive submission, not active energization. Theosophy teaches that fate or destiny is self-created, the result of past choices and actions, the sins of omission and commission, and therefore man himself is the maker of his destiny. With that past destiny anyone can re-create himself because there is free will in him. The Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that there are no privileges or special gifts in man save those he wins for himself through his own self-energization. Did not Bhishma state: "Exertion is greater than destiny"? Exertion is necessary to overcome one's destiny, but exertion only on the basis of the Eternal Verities. The Wise and Regenerated Ones, the true Embodiments of the Law, have always taught mankind how to become free from the bondage of birth and death. It is only when one has cleared the storehouse of personal Karma that he can be a free being, no longer bound down to earthly existence. This can be accomplished by following the advice given in *Light on the Path*:

Desire to sow no seed for your own harvesting; desire only to sow that seed the fruit of which shall feed the world.

THE POWER OF THE SPOKEN WORD

Let us use with care those *living* messengers called words.

—W. Q. JUDGE

CARELESS, loose and inordinate speech is a characteristic of our extrovert and restless civilization. We do not understand the value of deliberate and careful speech because we are ignorant of the source of this precious faculty and totally unaware of the power of the spoken word. Our speech is too often impulsive and hence thoughtless and meaningless.

Much of the confusion and turmoil of our world today is reflected in our irresponsible use of speech. But the reverse is equally true: our foolish and wrong use of words adds to the prevailing confusion and is a major factor in creating tensions and bringing about misunderstandings. We are often divided today through words. If we could purify and control our speech we would tone up our moral fibre, improve our character, and thus become better able to seek for the solutions of the numerous problems we are facing.

All who dream of a better world should watch words, which anon save us and anon damn us. But for anyone aspiring to live the spiritual life control of speech is a *sine qua non*, and all the Great Ones have enjoined the purification and restraint of speech.

In Lord Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path, the third step is that of Right Speech:

The Third is *Right Discourse*. Govern the lips
As they were palace-doors, the King within;
Tranquil and fair and courteous be all words
Which from that presence win.

(*The Light of Asia*)

To speak is to act; for speech is an avenue of action. Wise people discipline themselves, and such self-discipline includes the control of speech. Says Lord Buddha:

Let a man be watchful of speech-irritation. Let him control

his speech. Abandoning the sins of speech let him practise virtue with his speech. (*Dhammapada*, xvii, 12)

Well controlled indeed are the wise; they have mastery over body, tongue, and mind. (*Ibid.*, xvii, 14)

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Krishna describes thus the mortification (*tapas*) of speech:

Gentle speech which causes no anxiety, which is truthful and friendly, and diligence in the reading of the Scriptures, are said to be austerities of speech. (xvii, 15)

In any action five agents are necessary, declares Krishna, for its accomplishment. "These are the substratum, the agent, the various sorts of organs, the various and distinct movements, and, with these, as fifth, the presiding deities." (xviii, 14)

But what is speech? Speech is the use of words as audible symbols to establish communication with our fellow beings. Speech is a prerogative of man and is rooted in his own latent divinity. Words are the outward human symbols of "eternal Thought in the Eternal Mind." Thus the metaphysical counterpart or divine prototype of human speech is *Vach*, or the *Verbum*, the Voice and Word, the creative *Logos*. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (*John*, I. 1)

When we speak we are using a creative energy whose origin is truly divine. And hence to misuse or abuse or even use vainly this gift "from above" is to desecrate it—the sin against the Holy Ghost.

There is a close relationship between the creative energy of speech and the creative force of sex. Those who indulge in obscene and vulgar talk will find themselves lapsing into sexual promiscuity seemingly against their will. Indulgence in dirty and ugly speech makes for indecent behaviour. Thus the control and cleansing of one's speech is essential for the restraint of the sex urge.

In speech resides the power of sound and this is the scientific basis for the art of *mantras*. That power of sound unites itself in human speech to the language of symbols. For what are words if not symbols? Symbols which mirror and project forth our thoughts. The mind of each one of us is reflected in his speech. Confused

speech denotes a confused mind; loose and irrelevant speech, a distracted mind; precise and coherent speech, a lucid mind; and so on for every type of mind.

Our feelings too are expressed through our speech. The general quality of our moral nature as also the mood of the moment show themselves forth in our choice of words, as also in the tone which we use to utter those words.

Thus words are instinct with a life of their own, a life which continues after we, their progenitors, have begotten them and sent them out into the world. How wise the injunction of the old precept which states: "Watch thy tongue; out of it are the issues of Life"!

Indeed, life and death can both come from words; for words are builders and also destroyers. Words can unite and also divide; words can heal, but also wound; words can bless and curse; reconcile or antagonize; enlighten or delude and mislead; reveal or hide.

Yes, the spoken word is a great magician. Let us endeavour to heed the word of wisdom and to learn "to use with care those living messengers called words."

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubts, as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear, as young as your hope, as old as your despair. So long as your heart receives messages of beauty, cheer, courage, grandeur and power from the earth, from the infinite, so long are you young.

When all the wires are down, and all the central places of your heart are covered with snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then, and only then, are you grown old indeed, and may God have mercy on your soul.

—ANONYMOUS

SKANDHAIC ACTIVITY

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AMONG members of the same family, and even between twins, there often exists such a diversity of intellectual and moral perception that it challenges our intellect for a rational solution. Modern thought has put forward no satisfactory explanation. The doctrine of heredity as propounded by Western thinkers is at a loss when faced with these congenital differences in traits and tendencies. A satisfactory solution cannot be found outside of the twin doctrine of Karma-Reincarnation, for these differences are the result of antecedent causes. Paul wrote: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." With each person, the sowing varies according to the soil, the seed, the labour and the method. The harvest reflects that sowing. Our present characteristics are the crop. Our actions of today are the seeds that will yield the harvest of the morrow. Karma is the unerring law that adjusts the harvest to the sowing.

It is our purpose to examine some of the agencies through which our quantum of merit or demerit is brought home to us and our characteristics receive a longer or a shorter lease of life.

There is no dead matter anywhere. Says H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 248-49):

ALL IS LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE, though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism.

Every form of matter, therefore, whether "organic" or seemingly inert, is a form of life. All processes of nature are acts of incessant borrowing and giving back between these forms. They are composed of sentient points or lives which are in constant ebb and flow from the human to the other kingdoms and back. These sentient points are receptive to magnetic impresses which they have the power of retaining for long periods. There may be almost

indelible impresses, which may expend themselves only at the threshold of Pralaya. These lives give each man his characteristics; and as the process of throwing off and taking in is not confined to post-mortem states, but is incessant, a man's characteristics may undergo as phenomenal a change as any that nature presents.

This constant interchange of lives is without any break, and it helps in changing human characteristics. The process is steady, for nature never works by fits and starts. At birth, the man brings his characteristics—*skandhas*—from previous incarnations and from them as germ or basis builds up a new set of *skandhas* for the new life. It is indeed the thirst for life inherent in these *skandhas* that forces reincarnation. These become the foundations of his personality and lay down the trend of the life that is to be lived. Traits that have been built up through lives cannot be thrown away in a day, no matter how great the present effort. For man, there is always a "circle Pass-not" for any given incarnation, and that is one reason why one does not achieve perfection in a single birth. The old lives resist change, and thus give the man time to think and choose deliberately. Of the *skandhas*, some last throughout the span of a man's life. They have their youth, maturity and old age; and as it is on them as a substratum that the personality is built, their separation leads to decrepitude and death. Other *skandhas* are more nebulous, and are replaceable in a comparatively short time. It is these that make possible a rapid change in the personality, for weal or woe.

The lower man is a compound divisible into five *skandhaic* groups. There is a sevenfold classification referred to by H.P.B., but not much is said about the two higher groups. The five consist of *Rupa*—the body with its four capacities of *Vedana*—the perception of pleasure and pain; *Sanjna*—the cognition of things; *Sanskara*—the action that leads to passion, aversion, etc; *Vidyana*—the knowledge of external things. The assemblage of these at birth forms a man's personality. Pertaining, however, to man's transitory aspect, they cannot be said to be permanent, though some portion of them may attach to the returning Ego and persist over a series of lives. Neither can it be said that the final dispersion of the groups

means the annihilation of the individuality. Quite the contrary. Their final dissolution—transmutation really—would mean liberation and the attainment of *Nirvana*.

The mystery of the building up of the body and the personality is locked up in the *skandhas*. When their function is grasped and it is considered that they have their re-embodiment in future lives, one sees why in one the body is weak and in another strong. How often we deplore our lack of virility and the congenital disorders of our organs and attributes! We ought instead to trace our *skandhaic* lineage to see what led up to the effects; and then we should not shrink from Karma, but pay tribute to it. What we readily see in reference to the limitations of the body applies no less to the other groups. More subtle, because more hidden, their qualities are nevertheless even more palpable in their effects upon the personal man. The ebullitions of the personality are hard to check, yet it is with these groups that a man has to deal, as they intimately affect his psychic and intellectual nature. Here are the roots of passion, anger, greed. Here lies the thirst for things. These are activated or they atrophy with the changing of the *skandhas*.

When a man dies, a process analogous to digestion takes place. Just as the nutritive essence of foods is separated for assimilation, while the refuse is brought together for elimination, so after death nature forces a separation between good and evil tendencies. The good and beneficent ones are assimilated and accompany the *Devachanee*. The evil ones form the *Kama-rupa* which begins to disintegrate, leaving the lives forming it, with their impresses, to mingle with lives of the same polarity and to hover about seeking forms most suited to the working out of the impressions. A violin string tuned to a particular pitch when vibrated will set in vibration another string tuned to the identical pitch. So with these lives. Any form not attuned to their pitch is unsuitable for them. But a form in tune with them through consubstantiality creates a kind of magnetic sympathy which exerts a pull sufficient to take them in. Some are thus absorbed by our fellow men, some by animals, others by lower kingdoms. Lives which bear impresses of anger, envy, hate and passion tend towards a lower level. In their transmigrations

they stir human minds to base activities, or exhaust themselves in the kingdoms below ours.

In each kingdom the original impress produces corresponding outward manifestations, till the journey from form to form ultimately overshadows the memory of the detailed events that gave the impress and leaves only the essence of the desire or the quality. But through all these gyrations, the karmic responsibility of the person who gave the impress is heightened. The lives that bear his impress are his ambassadors who carry his curse or his blessing to countless living entities. They knit him with those who react to his impresses. In active life he may have been oblivious of giving a sentient point its polarity. But the act once committed is past recall. Either at his death or sooner, the polarized sentient point goes out to engender right or wrong tendencies in others. That his action was not deliberate can avail him little. Karmically he is linked by strong magnetic threads with his ambassadors in their movements through space, and the law demands that he shall reap the consequences in time to come. This reaping may take the shape of strengthening or weakening characteristics brought by the returning lives which await the Ego at the threshold of *Devachan*.

The *skandhas* are our progeny, and because they reflect our true qualities they are of great potential usefulness. When they hold the mirror to us, we shrink from the reflection, not realizing that they are our true friends who show us an unretouched photograph of ourselves. If they show the pallor of disease, the unhealthy flush of passion, the vacant expression of the intellectual bankrupt, is it the fault of the reflection? Instead of remedying the defects, mankind has been too prone to kick against the pricks—a useless course, for “the pricks seem to enjoy it.”

A critical stage in the purgation of the *skandhas* is reached at death. If one is to live in the eternal, then the suffering due to existence through the five groups must be stopped. Anything that tends to heighten *tanha* or thirst for life in the *skandhas* reacts for the worse on the future personality. The wide implications of a solitary lapse from the discipline are not therefore

incomprehensible. The living of the higher life assumes paramount importance, for thereby alone can the desires be starved out. Forming the habit of thinking correctly is a task which might daunt the stoutest heart, but victories are to the victorious. It is helpful to remember that Karma aids our efforts to purify the *skandhas*, by adjusting to our strength the magnitude of the immediate task.

Two verses in the *Dhammapada* show what part the *skandhas* play, and what our attitude should be:

202. There is no fire like that of lust; there is no (moral) breach like that of ill-will; there is no suffering like that of existence through the Five Groups [*skandhas*]; there is no bliss like the Highest Peace.

374. As soon as he has considered the origin and the destruction of the Five Groups, he finds happiness and joy which belong to those who know the immortal.

The *skandhas* must therefore be transmuted, their earthly dross eliminated and a stamp of spirituality given them instead. The five bonds of egoism, doubt, false belief, lust and hatred have to be cut. The disciple must, "free from hate, live happily among those who hate"; "free from ailments and lust, live happily among the ailing and the lustful." This he can do only when he has gathered unto himself Faith, Energy, Mindfulness and Spiritual Insight. Once consubstantiality with the perishable elements is severed, no power on earth can reattach them to the soul. He whose hand is unwounded may touch poison; it can affect him not. No sin can attach to him whose ills are dead and quit. He may reincarnate to fulfil his destiny, but never will yearnings torture him, nor sins stain him, nor ache or earthly joys and woes invade his safe eternal peace.

Socrates, indeed, when he was asked of what country he called himself, said, "Of the world"; for he considered himself an inhabitant and a citizen of the whole world.

—CICERO

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Solomon, son of David and king of Israel in the 10th century B.C., is noted for his wisdom and magnificence, and especially for the temple he is said to have built—"a splendid temple to the Lord, composed of successive courtyards, each one more holy than the next, with the innermost containing the Ark." Yet, little is known about who Solomon really was, and even the very existence of such a personage is being debated by scholars. In *Time* magazine (April 16) we are told:

Outside of the Bible, there is only the scantest evidence of either King's existence [David and Solomon]. A mere two commemorative inscriptions have been found referring to a "House of David," both from a later period. Solomon's trail is even colder.... Few experts believe that the father-and-son team's Unified Kingdom could have stretched, as *Kings* claims, "from the [Euphrates] River... to the border of Egypt." A vocal minority of historians known as biblical minimalists claim that most of *Kings* was a myth concocted hundreds of years later to legitimize a later regime. The minimalists argue that there is no good reason beyond piety to think that Jerusalem in 1000 B.C. was a major city or that David and Solomon were anything more than tribal leaders.

And the Temple?... Very few scholars doubt its existence, in part because the testimony to its destruction is so eloquent. By 715 B.C., Jerusalem had indisputably turned into a prosperous capital of a major Judahite kingdom, documentable through both archaeology and written accounts. By 586 B.C., it was rubble....

Whatever of the first Temple may eventually be dug up, its most glorious remnant will not be physical. Scholars quibble over whether what they call ethical monotheism had fully developed before the city's fall or was realized by the Jews only on their return from exile in Babylon. But it was in the Temple, or with the memory of its grandeur tempered by the harsh wisdom of the stateless, that the Jews refined their embrace of a God who was the only God, who involved himself in human

history and who wanted his people to do right.

According to a Jewish tradition, says H.P.B., “the stones which were used to build Solomon’s temple (an allegorical symbol taken literally and made into an actual edifice) were not chiselled or polished by human hands.” In her article “Is Theosophy a Religion?” H.P.B. refers to

the temple of Solomon’s wisdom, in building which “there was neither hammer, nor axe, *nor* any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building” (*I Kings*, vi); for this “temple” is made by no human hand, nor built in any locality on earth—but, verily, is raised only in the inner sanctuary of man’s heart wherein reigns alone the awakened soul....

[Solomon’s] 700 wives and 300 concubines, by the bye, are merely the personations of man’s attributes, feelings, passions and his various occult powers: the Kabalistic numbers 7 and 3 showing it plainly. Solomon himself, moreover, being, simply, the emblem of SOL—the “Solar Initiate” or the Christ-Sun, is a variant of the Indian “Vikartana” (the Sun) shorn of his beams by Viswakarma, his Hierophant-Initiator, who thus shears the *Chrestos*-candidate for initiation of his golden radiance and crowns him with a dark, blackened aureole—the “crown of thorns.” (See *The Secret Doctrine* for full explanation.) Solomon was never a living man. As described in *Kings*, his life and works are an allegory on the trials and glory of Initiation.

In *Isis Unveiled* (II, 391-92) we are further told:

The building of the Temple of Solomon is the symbolical representation of the gradual acquirement of the *secret* wisdom, or magic; the erection and development of the spiritual from the earthly; the manifestation of the power and splendour of the spirit in the physical world, through the wisdom and genius of the builder. The latter, when he has become an adept, is a mightier king than Solomon himself, the emblem of the sun or *Light* himself—the light of the real subjective world, shining in the darkness of the objective universe....

In the East, this science is called, in some places, the “seven-storied,” in others, the “nine-storied” Temple; every story

answers allegorically to a degree of knowledge acquired. Throughout the countries of the Orient, wherever magic and the wisdom-religion are studied, its practitioners and students are known among their craft as Builders—for they build the temple of knowledge, of secret science.

How many people have ever lived on Earth? Demographers are debating the question; but with erroneous data to start with, their calculations are bound to be wide of the mark. To begin with, do they have any idea of when the human race began and what the birthrate and the total population were in bygone ages? This is how the current thinking runs:

Before the invention of agriculture [do they know when that was?] the global population was probably no more than 5 million to 10 million, kept low by the hunter-gatherer lifestyle. By A.D. 1 the population had risen to about 300 million, judging from fragmentary censuses in Rome, China, and the Mediterranean. Applying a high birthrate to that population, we can estimate a total 106 billion humans have been born. The 6.1 billion living at present therefore represent 5.7 percent of all who have lived. Rapid growth in developing countries has caused the global population to soar from just 1.6 billion in 1900, so the percentage currently alive compared with those ever born is actually rising. (*Discover*, May 2001)

Is the total number of people who have ever lived on Earth really increasing as statisticians assume? Theosophists would word the question a little differently: Is there a varying number of souls or egos belonging to our globe, or is it a fixed quantity? In other words, is a new soul created for every new-born infant? H.P.B. answers this in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 302-3). Mr. Judge explains in *The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 83):

It is true that so far as concerns this globe the number of Egos belonging to it is definite; but no one knows what that quantity is nor what is the total capacity of the earth for

sustaining them. The statisticians of the day are chiefly in the West, and their tables embrace but a small section of the history of man. They cannot say how many persons were incarnated on the earth at any prior date when the globe was full in all parts, hence the quantity of egos willing or waiting to be reborn is unknown to the men of today. The Masters of theosophical knowledge say that the total number of such egos is vast, and for that reason the supply of those for the occupation of bodies to be born over and above the number that die is sufficient. Then, too, it must be borne in mind that each ego for itself varies the length of stay in the *post-mortem* states. They do not reincarnate at the same interval, but come out of the state after death at different rates, and whenever there occurs a great number of deaths by war, pestilence, or famine, there is at once a rush of souls to incarnation, either in the same place or in some other place or race.

At present, most people are engrossed within narrow boundaries, and what they lack most is perception of perspectives. What is needed is right education, which would enable the individual to grow into his or her highest possibilities, not merely physical and mental, but also ethical and spiritual. "Education for character development" is of prime importance today, writes Kireet Joshi in his article under that title in *The Advent* (April 2001):

In the first place, we need to clarify ourselves as to what we mean by education for character development. In simplest terms, character implies well-trained will to be straightforward, fearless and honest, coupled with sincerity to act and even to fight nobly and courageously in order to embody in one's own life and in the life of the society all that is true and all that can foster solidarity and unity.

Character may be considered to have four dimensions, dimension of wisdom, dimension of heroic will, dimension of compassion and universal love, and dimension of competence, chiselled skill and untiring labour.

A well-developed character is an integrated character; it is able to sharpen inborn capacities and potentialities towards their own highest values. A developed character is a developed personality that harmonises the demands of physical education, vital education, emotional education, rational education, aesthetic education, ethical education, and spiritual education.

In our present system of education, all that we have conceived here to be relevant to the development of character is sadly missing. We do not emphasize the development of *imagination* as much as we emphasize the learning of *facts*. We do not give importance to the pursuit of truth; we propose only the pursuit of piecemeal assemblage of topics and subjects which are prescribed in our syllabus....Even our thinking on the subject of values which are central to character development is beset with confusion and doubts. Our first necessity is to explore the basic ideas in regard to values, to determine what they mean and what place they can be given and in what way they can be implemented in our system of education...

There is a common understanding in regard to truth, goodness and beauty which can be conceived as the supreme values of life. These three great ideals can guide us in developing all that we have spoken of as character and all that can be considered to be of highest value to integral personality....

Values that we seek in the moral and spiritual domain are those of sincerity, faithfulness, obedience to whatever one conceives to be the highest, gratitude, selflessness, freedom from egoism, equality in joy and suffering, in honour and dishonour, in success and failure, pursuit of the deepest and the highest, and of the absolute and the ultimate, and progressive expression of this pursuit in thought, feeling and action.

While in modern India Sanskrit is considered a dead language, in the West there is a growing number of people who look upon it as "fascinating," "a language in which the genius of the human civilization was perfected to its fullest," writes Ajit Kumar Jha in *The Express Magazine* for June 10. Strange as it might seem, even

more than half a century after independence it is actually the Occident that is busy discovering the genius of the Orient.

Ever since 1786 [writes Jha], when Sir William Jones, in a paper presented to the Royal Asiatic Society, in Calcutta, said, "the wonderful structure of the Sanskrit language is more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either," the West has been busy learning from Sanskrit.

According to Professor Richard Gombrich [the present occupant of the Boden Chair in Sanskrit at Oxford], "the reasons for studying Sanskrit today are the same as they ever were: that the vast array of Sanskrit texts preserves for us a valuable part of the cultural heritage of mankind, including much beautiful literature and many interesting, even fascinating, ideas."

The Sanskrit craze has caught up in the U.S. Unlike Britain, and unlike its own past, it is totally demand driven....

The last conference of the International Association of Sanskrit studies held at Turin, in Italy, was an eye-opener. There were a number of Sanskrit scholars from the Eastern European countries, including Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Russia. Unlike the U.S., most of these countries hardly have much of an NRI population. They hardly have any temples. No community funding, no involvement of local populations. Yet, the zeal for Sanskrit continues.

In *The Path* for May 1886, Mr. Judge prophesied that "the Sanskrit language will one day be again the language used by man upon this earth, first in science and in metaphysics, and later on in common life." It is, he said, a language "which is scientific in all that makes a language, and has been enriched by ages of study of metaphysics and true science." And H.P.B. called it "the most perfect as the most grand of all human languages."

In the article, "Was Writing Known Before Panini?" which appeared originally in *The Theosophist* for October 1883 (reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, May 1965), it was stated:

Everyone sees—cannot fail to see and to know—that for a language so old and so perfect as the Sanskrit to have survived

alone, among all languages, it must have had its cycles of perfection and its cycles of degeneration. And, if one had any intuition, he might have seen that what they call a "dead language" being an anomaly, a useless thing in nature, it would not have survived, even as a "dead" tongue, had it not its special purpose in the Reign of immutable Cyclic Laws; and that Sanskrit which came to be nearly lost to the world is now slowly spreading in Europe, and will one day have the extension it had thousands upon thousands of years back—that of a *universal language*.

In numerous ways the lesson is being driven home to us that the world is *one*. What happens in one region has repercussions in distant regions.

Often used when talking about trade, the term "global village" takes on a different connotation in the context of the global ecological system, where imbalances in one part of the globe impact on another region. For example, global warming and climate change are believed to be responsible for the increasing severity of storms in Northern Europe. But now cloud physicist Daniel Rosenfeld from Jerusalem's Hebrew University, and meteorologist Hans-Friedrich Graf of Germany's Max Planck Institute have said that the burning of vast tracts of tropical forest in distant corners of the globe—South America, Africa, Thailand and Indonesia—might play a role as well. Fires in these regions are typically set to clear forests for plantations. These fires, sometimes extending over hundreds of square kilometres, unleash huge smoke clouds that produce complex atmospheric effects, including a shift in storm tracks. The presence of a higher concentration of smoke particles in clouds causes water vapour to condense into many minute particles, never becoming large enough to overcome their natural buoyancy and fall to earth as rain. The researchers theorize that such fire-triggered suppression of rainfall initiates a complex chain of atmospheric events, including a shift in storm tracks over the

north Atlantic. According to Rosenfeld, a reduction of rainfall in one place will mean an increase in rainfall in another. Along with global warming, this might be another reason for the increase in the severity of storms hitting northern Europe in recent decades. (*Sanctuary Asia*, February 2001)

New scientific studies have identified the link between changes of mood and the way our immune system responds. Physical, mental and emotional enjoyment and satisfaction, even in small doses, can enhance immune function for hours afterwards, according to a new research from ARISE (Associates for Research Into the Science of Enjoyment). Consequently, many of life's small pleasures may have a cumulative effect in boosting the immune system over a longer period. (*The Sunday Review*, June 3)

One study examined how the immune system responds to happy and guilty memories. Happy thoughts showed a marked improvement in mood and clearly increased immune response, while guilty ones were shown to undermine it. Another study showed that even unpleasant odours modify the amount of secretory immunoglobulin-A that is produced, potentially weakening our resistance to any disease.

Study after study has confirmed the direct link between our moods and our state of health.

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