

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## A FOUNDATION FOR DAILY LIVING

Men cannot all be Occultists, but they can all be Theosophists. Many who have never heard of the Society are Theosophists without knowing it themselves; for the essence of Theosophy is the perfect harmonizing of the divine with the human in man, the adjustment of his godlike qualities and aspirations, and their sway over the terrestrial or animal passions in him. Kindness, absence of every ill feeling or selfishness, charity, good-will to all beings, and perfect justice to others as to one's self, are its chief features. He who teaches Theosophy preaches the gospel of good-will; and the converse of this is true also — he who preaches the gospel of good-will teaches Theosophy.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

There is great confusion and misunderstanding in the public mind about the beneficent influence of Theosophy. It would be wrong to judge and condemn the great philosophy because of the limitations and weaknesses of its students and votaries. To belittle the teachings of the Buddha because professing Buddhists are not living according to the *Anchasila* would be an injustice to the Teacher and his pure teachings. Similarly, professing theosophists, being human, often do fail to live up to the very high ideals, the lofty principles and noble precepts of Theosophy; and, further, they do err in numerous ways; but that should not deter a justice-loving mind from examining and accepting Theosophy on its own merits.

Again, it would be unfair and wrong to condemn, for example, Jesus and his Sermon on the Mount because many of those who claim to be his followers preach doctrines he never taught, and propagate views he never held. If one wants to ascertain what the pure and genuine doctrines of Jesus are, one must go, not to the priests and prelates of any church,

but to the Sermon on the Mount and his other authentic sayings. Similarly, if anyone desires to find out what Theosophy actually is, he should not just read and listen to those who call themselves theosophists, but must read what the Teacher of Theosophy taught. Let a truth-seeking enquirer or a justice-loving doubter go direct to the writings of H. P. Blavatsky; let him read the simple, straightforward presentation given by her in *The Key to Theosophy*, for instance.

In her very first book, *Isis Unveiled* (II. 124), Madame Blavatsky gave three propositions which constitute the basis and foundation of Theosophic living:

- (1) Everything existing, exists from natural causes.
- (2) Virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment.
- (3) The state of man in this world is probationary.

Anyone desirous of living the life of the Soul will find in these three propositions all that is necessary. No doubt he will require further knowledge to grasp their implications, but as a starting point, and as a stable foundation for day-to-day living, any person will find these propositions of great practical value. All the ethical and metaphysical instructions to be found in the profound philosophy of Theosophy may be said to flower from this triple root. As Madame Blavatsky herself wrote:

We might add that on these three principles rested the universal foundation of every religious creed; God, and individual immortality for every man — if he could but win it. However puzzling the subsequent theological tenets; however seemingly incomprehensible the metaphysical abstractions which have convulsed the theology of every one of the great religions of mankind as soon as it was placed on a sure footing, the above is found to be the essence of every religious philosophy, with the exception of later Christianity. It was that of Zoroaster, of Pythagoras, of Plato, of Jesus, and even of Moses, albeit the teachings of the Jewish lawgiver have been so piously tampered with.

These three propositions may be examined briefly:

- (1) *Everything existing, exists from natural causes.*

This is not at all difficult for anyone to accept in this era when modern science is so greatly worshipped, for it only extends the scientific axiom that law governs the whole universe. Modern science asserts that law and order prevail everywhere in visible nature — in the dust

below our feet and in the stars above our head. Theosophy or ancient science accepts this teaching, but extends it to the invisible universe. Moral and mental conditions also are governed by Law, and there is the rhythm, harmony and order of Justice in the realm of human thought, will and feeling. In other words, there is no miracle and everything that happens is the result of Law — eternal, immutable, ever active. So-called miracles are but the results of the operation of natural laws not yet known to the world of ordinary knowledge; but such laws were and are known and their working can be theoretically understood and practically used in human service, just as the modern scientist utilizes the law of gravity, etc.

From this recognition of the entire universe as manifesting and existing under Law, men and women have to admit that their own love and labour, their own thoughts and feelings, their own relationship to others, are also governed by that Law. There is, therefore, the second proposition:

(2) *Virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment.*

Our greatest puzzle when we ourselves experience misery or face the sufferings of others consists in explaining the reasons. The religious explanation that vices, weaknesses, diseases and evils of all sorts are created by God is a most unreasonable, depressing and blasphemous doctrine. How absurd is the notion of an all-powerful God creating weaknesses, an all-wise God creating ignorance, an all-loving God creating hatred, an ever-living immortal God creating disease and death! Even man-made law does not without a trial condemn a person for crimes committed, but an all-just God visits agony upon the bodies of infants who have not had even an opportunity to commit wrong! Many sophistries are advanced as possible explanations, but none will satisfy our intelligent minds if we persist in our enquiry, and none will bring relief to our hearts troubled by afflictions of a hundred kinds. There is one and only one explanation and that is to be found in the Law of Karma or of Ethical Causation, which is embodied in our second proposition — “Virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment.” This Law teaches that each one of us must pay his own debts; that the hands which smite us are our own hands; and that we reap whatever we have sown.

It knows not wrath nor pardon; utter-true

Its measures mete, its faultless balance weighs;

Times are as nought, tomorrow it will judge,  
Or after many days.

By this the slayer's knife did stab himself;  
The unjust judge hath lost his own defender;  
The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief  
And spoiler rob, to render.

But even then, in the final analysis, it is not yet clear to us why we are here and what the purpose of life is. The puzzle and the riddle of life is solved when to the Law of Karma or Justice we add the truth of the third of our propositions:

(3) *The state of man in this world is probationary.*

All repeat that this world is a school and that each one of us is here to learn the lessons of life, to know himself as he really is, joined to this universe in which good and evil, light and darkness, continuously alternate. Shall it be ever and ever so? Shall we wake up but to go to sleep and then wake up again — for ever and for ever? Shall we go through the round of pleasure and pain for ever and for ever? The answer of Theosophy is simple and self-evidently true: "When the lesson is learnt, the necessity ceases." When we have perceived and realized life's objective, when all the lessons of life are learnt, Liberty and Enlightenment of Soul become ours. Life in this world is probationary — we are all on trial; pleasures tempt and pains test us; when the temptations are resisted and overcome and when the tests are faced and passed, the Soul enjoys the Bliss-*Ananda* of its own divinity and its own immortality.

Liberty of Soul springs from the enlightenment of the Soul; we therefore need knowledge of how to free ourselves from every kind of slavery, limitation and weakness. Theosophy is the science which enables us to achieve this illumination and to realize this liberty by making us stand on our own feet, breathe the air of freedom, and accept the responsibility for our own deeds.

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Arouse the inner attitude of attention and caution.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## THE CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL

Two of the contributions made by Theosophy towards the enlightenment of the race-mind concern the significance of cycles and the meaning of festivals.

Theosophy teaches that the involution-evolution of spirit-matter proceeds all the time, necessitating birth, death and rebirth for all forms, in an endless series. This Cycle of Incarnation or "Necessity," which is interrelated with the law of Karma — causes producing effects which become the causes of further effects — can be seen throughout a manifested universe and in the vast background of "numberless universes incessantly appearing and disappearing," as the Second Fundamental of the Ancient Wisdom states. The heavenly bodies in their courses take similar positions in ever-recurring cycles, and so does the Earth. Man's cycle includes birth, death and rebirth. What is gained by these changes is ever-increasing experience or knowledge — cohesion leading to sensation and then to instinct in the lower kingdoms of Nature, and to self-consciousness in man. Hence we have to view the cyclic progress as a spiral motion, leading to continuous growth.

Theosophy gives us a clue as to why, throughout all known ages, many festivals have been associated with the cyclic events in Nature, and sometimes also with religious events. Some festivals have at their basis the keeping alive in man's mind of the memory of those Great Souls who, by their life and teachings, have helped the spiritual growth of mankind. Also we have festivals to keep alive the memory of historical figures, such as great statesmen, warriors, literary giants and martyrs. Though some may think that there is nothing to be gained by remembering these giants among men and their deeds, whether of bravery on the battlefield, of sagacity in the political field, of compassion for all on the part of the philanthropists, or of martyrdom suffered for any great cause, yet without these memories humanity would be much poorer than it is today. Longfellow spoke truly:

Lives of great men all remind us  
    We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
    Footprints on the sands of time;  
Footprints, that perhaps another,  
    Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
    Seeing, shall take heart again.

Feasting and merrymaking are associated with festivals, but the true meaning of the exchange of gifts and the serving of food at festivals has now been lost, and what can only be called "orgies" take the place of remembrance of the sacrifice involved in the production of food for our sustenance, and of the recognition of the unity of all life. The good Christian gives thanks to his "God" for the food he receives every day; the Hindu is advised to think of Vishnu while eating; food is blessed by the priest, etc. The idea of serving food at festivals has its source in charity to the poor — not to one's own rich relations and friends!

When our thoughts are turned to the Christmas festival, the event it celebrates should be known. The tendency is to look upon it as a special birth, of the "only son of God," or as a psychological event. Sometimes to ignore the events traditionally associated with the birth of the infant Jesus and to centre on the concept of the birth of the Christ-spirit in us takes away much of the value of the lesson to be learnt.

Who was Jesus the Christ? H.P.B. wrote that "we revere him as a man"; he "gave us a glorious example"; he was "one of the greatest reformers"; "one of the grandest and most clearly defined figures on the panorama of human history"; "he was an Adept." It is the birth of this Adept that is celebrated at Christmas, and unless we bear this in mind much of the celebration ceases to mean anything of value to us. His coming to birth was to help mankind, not merely the Jews, and he is said to have told his followers: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice."

Remembering the Theosophical teaching about the birth of Jesus, we can understand more of the story given in the Gospels. We are told that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was visited by the Angel Gabriel — standing for the Higher Ego — and told: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Can we not see here that the descending Ego overshadowed the woman who was to give him his physical body and flooded her heart with joy? We know that she was chosen because she was pure and suitable enough to bear such a child; she was "blessed among women." We know she visited the mother of John the Baptist — he who was to be the forerunner of Jesus. And we know that she bore the child in the manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

The signs of the birth were being watched for by wise men from the

East, and when they saw the star which showed them where the child was born, they visited the babe with their gifts of gold (a suitable gift for a king or ruler), frankincense (used for countless ages as an incense in temples and having a healing quality), and myrrh (also having a healing quality to protect him). News of the event was also imparted to the shepherds by "the angel of the Lord," and to Herod, the king, who wanted to destroy the child. Is this just an exaggerated myth? If we turn our minds to the present day, do we not, as students of Theosophy, find ourselves watching for "signs"? Do not astrologers see signs portending a great event? The shepherds, surely, can be compared to ourselves, for they were able to "hear" the good tidings and to respond. Though we do not have any historically accurate account of the birth and life of Jesus, we should remember that there *was* an Adept born around 100 B.C.

Can we not see in the old man Simeon, who beheld the child Jesus and knew him as the Christ to be, those who will recognize the new Messenger and will repeat with Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace... for mine eyes have seen thy salvation"? Anna, too, a prophetess of 84 years, recognized the child as the future saviour and redeemer.

The slaughter of the "Innocents" by King Herod, who hoped the child Jesus, too, would be slain along with the rest, means not merely the slaughter of innocent children but of Initiates, for Initiates were called "Innocents" on account of their holiness. Herod is the type of Kansa, the maternal uncle of Krishna; and just as the latter was taken out of harm's way, so was Jesus. On his return to Jerusalem he astounded the teachers in the Temple — as Buddha astounded his teachers; and Krishna, his mother.

We read (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 23*, p. 8) that on the day Jesus was born, all Nature rejoiced and carried to the feet of the Babe her best and holiest gifts. Near the place where the birth took place, there grew three trees — an olive, a palm and a pine. The olive tree brought forth its golden fruit; the palm offered to the Christ-child its green and shadowy vault, as a protection against heat and storm; but the pine tree had nothing to offer, and so it wept bitterly. The stars, however, took pity on it and hosts of shooting stars fell down on it, twinkling and shining from every needle, from top to bottom. Legend has it that from that time on men have adopted the habit of ornamenting the pine tree with numberless little lights at Christmas time.

Lest we smile at this as an absurdity, let us remember the water that miraculously appeared to give the first bath to the babe Siddhartha, the Bo tree which spread its branches to give shade to the meditating Buddha, and the rocks that came together to prevent the stone hurled down by Devadatta from killing the Buddha. Let us also remember what *The Voice of the Silence* tells us about all Nature thrilling "with joyous awe," and the effect on it of a Buddha's triumph. If Nature is sevenfold, then spiritual events affect the inner side of it, and the essential kinship of all makes it thrill in response to these mighty events.

If we take the psychological or spiritual significance behind the story of the birth of Jesus, we could say that the manger stands for our heart in which the Christ principle is born; the domesticated beasts represent the animal passions which have been tamed and turned to use. Mary or the mother aspect in us is the matter side which has become pure enough to "find favour," that is, to have the good Karma to serve as the vehicle for the descent of the Christ-Ego. The slaughter of the "Innocents" reminds us that those who follow the path of higher integrity are always persecuted and have to suffer.

We should remember also the final crucifixion story and the burst of praise which came from the dying lips at the final moment of realization: "My God, how thou hast glorified me!" There comes a moment when all that has been suffered is seen as worth while.

The life story of each one of us from birth — brought about by the Christ in us, the Ego — through life to death — also brought about by the Ego — ends in triumph or sadness in proportion as we have lived for the Ego's experience, or grabbed the passing joys for the satisfaction of the animal man. Such stories as the Christmas story should warm our hearts and be a source of inspiration all through the year. Between Christmas and Easter, we are told, "the astral life of the earth is young and strong." We may inscribe it "with the history of noble deeds, days well spent," if we will "seize the diamond-pen" and fill up the "innumerable pages of our life record." It is up to us. "None else compels."

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## THE SUN—PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL

Once again the moving wheel of time has brought us to the festive season of Christmas, celebrated as the birthday of Jesus the Christ, the Prophet of Christendom, not only in the West but almost the world over. The date of Jesus' birth was not known but it was decided to celebrate it, several centuries after he passed away, on the 25th of December. That date was fixed because it is related to the great cyclic event in Nature, the Winter Solstice, when ancient nations had their celebrations centuries before. As stated by Madame Blavatsky:

We are in the Winter Solstice, the period at which the Sun entering the sign of Capricornus has already, since December 21st, ceased to advance in the Southern Hemisphere, and, cancer or crab-like, begins to move back. It is at this particular time that, every year, he is born, and December 25th was the *day of the birth of the Sun* for those who inhabited the Northern Hemisphere. It is also on December 25th, Christmas, the day with the Christians on which the "Saviour of the World" was born, that were born, ages before him, the Persian Mithra, the Egyptian Osiris, the Greek Bacchus, the Phœnician Adonis, the Phrygian Athis. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 28, p. 7*)

In the whole of Nature a great change takes place as the sun begins its journey northward once again and the earth receives a greater amount of light and life. The sun is usually recognized as the highest symbol of light and life physical, but it is seldom considered as the focus of light and life spiritual. Just as the earth and man are seven-fold in their constitution, so also the sun. What we see is the physical, objective side of the great luminary, but it also has its inner, indwelling, soul aspect, which radiates light and life spiritual. Without the warmth of the sun all things in Nature would perish; there would be no growth and development possible. Similarly, were it not for the storehouse of the spiritual light of the invisible Sun, there would be no soul-growth and spiritual unfoldment. So the golden orb that we see is but the objective reflection of the true Sun.

That which giveth sustenance to the Universe and to ourselves, from which all doth proceed and unto which all must return — That Thou Art. In the golden vase of thine earthly body may the pure Light of the Spiritual Sun shine forth, that thou may'st know the Truth, and do thy whole duty, on the journey back to the Sacred Seat!

From ancient times the sun has been worshipped reverentially in all parts of the world. In Zoroastrian philosophy the visible sun and its invisible counterpart are known as Khorshed and Meher. They are prayed to and invoked together, especially at sunrise, and are never separated. Herein lies a key to the true understanding of the great festival.

Madame Blavatsky has stated that "the astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter." Just as the dawn heralds the day, and everything is reawakened to fresh activity, so, too, the dawn of the year is the period of awakening, conducive to spiritual and physical vigour. This time of the year is considered appropriate for making right resolves which may fructify if properly sustained. To make this possible, the lower, personal self must obey the Higher Self, must always act from within instead of following impulses from without.

The sun shines equally on all, but all do not reflect its light to the same extent. Water sparkles in the sunlight, crystals and diamonds show forth their lustre and dazzle brilliantly, but not so the wood and the stone, unless they are polished and made smooth. In the same way, the light of the Spiritual Sun radiates everywhere, but all human beings do not mirror forth that radiation equally, owing to the unclean surface of the mind and the impurities of the heart, which have to be cleared by the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom.

It was during this particular season, ages ago, when humanity was in its infancy, that the great Solar Pitris actually incarnated upon this earth to light up the mindless men, making them self-conscious thinkers. So, in order to help Nature and work on with her, one has to be attuned to the Higher Self, our own Spiritual Sun, which can transform our lower nature and make it a fit instrument for the higher to work through.

Christ — the true esoteric SAVIOUR — *is no man*, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit *crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the "sepulchre" of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back *the stone of matter* from the door of his own *inner sanctuary*, he has *the risen Christ in him*. (*The Esoteric Character of the Gospels*, p. 2)

To resurrect the Spirit victimized by our lower passions and tendencies and attachments to our personal self is the task before each one of us. Difficult as this is, it must be accomplished to win our own freedom

from the bondage of Mara, the evil in us.

So, from every point of view, the Christmas season, the time of the Winter Solstice, the birthday of the Sun, when it enters the Zodiacal sign of Capricornus, is most appropriate for resolving to renew ourselves spiritually. This cannot be done overnight; the Kingdom of Heaven is to be taken by violence, meaning, by dint of effort in the right direction. The animal man has to transform himself into a human man first, and then only can he unfold the divinity within himself and the qualities of wisdom-compassion-sacrifice. The birthtime of the sun and of the sun-gods inspires us to follow in the footsteps of the Divine Instructors of humanity and prepare ourselves for the Second Birth. It is the character of man, his moral nature, which needs constant attention, and it is to be purified and refined while performing the daily duties of life. The seeds of peace and war germinate in the minds of men, so let us choose the right seeds and cultivate the soil for the sowing of those seeds, so that they may fructify in good time and bear luscious and nourishing fruits which will feed the world. As Tennyson said:

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

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As the sun returns in the east, so let our patience be renewed with dawn; as the sun lightens the world, so let our loving kindness make bright this house of our habitation.

—R. L. STEVENSON

## REPLIES TO AN ENGLISH F.T.S.

[In our last issue were reprinted from *The Theosophist* of September 1883 the questions posed by "An English F.T.S." and the introduction to the replies. The answers to Questions I and II reprinted here are from the same issue of *The Theosophist*. The replies to the other questions will appear in subsequent issues of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT.—EDS.]

### QUESTION I

#### DO THE ADEPTS DENY THE NEBULAR THEORY?

*Answer:* — No; they do not deny its general propositions, nor the approximative truths of the scientific hypotheses. They only deny the completeness of the present, as well as the entire error of the many so-called "exploded" old theories, which, during the last century, have followed each other in such rapid succession. For instance: while denying with Laplace, Herschel and others, that the variable patches of light perceived on the nebulous background of the galaxy ever belonged to remote worlds in the process of formation; and agreeing with modern science that they proceed from no aggregation of formless matter, but belong simply to clusters of "stars" already formed; they yet add that many of such clusters, that pass in the opinion of the astro-physicists for stars and worlds already evolved, are in fact but collections of the various materials made ready for future worlds. Like bricks already baked, of various qualities, shapes and colour, that are no longer formless clay but have become fit units of a future wall, each of them having a fixed and distinctly assigned space to occupy in some forthcoming building, are these seemingly adult worlds. The astronomer has no means of recognizing their relative adolescence, except perhaps by making a distinction between the star-clusters with the usual orbital motion and mutual gravitation, and those termed, we believe, irregular star-clusters of very capricious and changeful appearances. Thrown together as though at random, and seemingly in utter violation of the law of symmetry, they defy observation; such, for instance, are 5 M. Lyrae, 52 M. Cephei, Dumb-Bell, and some others.

Before an emphatic contradiction of what precedes is attempted, and ridicule offered, perchance, it would not be amiss to ascertain the nature and character of those other so-called "temporary" stars, whose periodicity, though never actually proven, is yet allowed to pass unquestioned. What are these stars which, appearing suddenly in matchless magnifi-

cence and splendour, disappear as mysteriously as unexpectedly, without leaving a single trace behind? Whence do they appear? Whither are they engulfed? In the great cosmic deep — we say. The bright “brick” is caught by the hand of the Mason — directed by that Universal Architect *which* destroys but to rebuild. It has found its place in the cosmic structure and will perform its mission to its last *Manvantaric* hour.

Another point most emphatically denied by the “Adepts” is, that there exist in the whole range of visible heavens any spaces void of starry worlds. There are stars, worlds and systems *within* as *without* the systems made visible to man, and even *within our own atmosphere*, for all the physicist knows. The “Adept” affirms in this connection that orthodox, or so-called official science, uses very often the word “infinite” without attaching to it any adequate importance, rather as a flower of speech than a term implying an awful, a most mysterious Reality. When an astronomer is found in his Reports “gauging *infinite*,” even the most intuitional of his class is but too often apt to forget that he is gauging only the superficies of a small area and its visible depths, and to speak of these as though they were merely the cubic contents of some known quantity. This is the direct result of the present conception of a three-dimensional space. The turn of a four-dimensional world is near, but the puzzle of science will ever continue until their concepts reach the natural dimensions of visible and invisible space — in its septenary completeness.

“The Infinite and the Absolute are only the names for two counter-imbabilities of the human (*uninitiated*) mind”; and to regard them as the transmuted “properties of the nature of things — of two subjective negatives converted into objective affirmatives,” as Sir W. Hamilton puts it, is to know nothing of the infinite operations of human liberated spirit, or of its attributes, the first of which is its ability to pass *beyond* the region of our terrestrial experience of matter and space. As an absolute vacuum is an impossibility *below*, so is it a like impossibility *above*. But our molecules, the infinitesimals of the vacuum “below,” are replaced by the giant-atom of the Infinitude “above.” When demonstrated, the four-dimensional conception of space may lead to the invention of new instruments to explore the extremely dense matter that surrounds us as a ball of pitch might surround, say, a fly, but which, in our extreme ignorance of all its properties save those we find it exercising on our earth, we yet call the *clear*, the *serene*, and the *transparent* atmosphere. This is no psychology, but simply occult physics, which can never confound “substance” with “centres of Force,” to use the

terminology of a Western Science which is ignorant of *Maya*. In less than a century, besides telescopes, microscopes, micrographs and telephones, the Royal Society will have to offer a premium for such an *etheroscope*.

It is also necessary in connection with the question under reply that "An English F.T.S." should know that the "Adepts" of the Good Law reject gravity as at present explained. They deny that the so-called "impact theory" is the only one that is tenable in the gravitation hypothesis. They say that if all efforts made by the physicists to connect it with Ether, in order to explain electric and magnetic distance-action, have hitherto proved complete failures, it is again due to the race ignorance of the ultimate states of matter in Nature, and, foremost of all, of the real nature of the solar stuff. Believing but in the law of mutual magneto-electric attraction and repulsion, they agree with those who have come to the conclusion that "Universal gravitation is a weak force," utterly incapable of accounting for even one small portion of the phenomena of motion. In the same connection they are forced to suggest that science may be wrong in her indiscriminate postulation of centrifugal force, which is neither a universal nor a consistent law. To cite but one instance: this force is powerless to account for the spheroidal oblateness of certain planets. For, if the bulge of planetary equators and the shortening of their polar axes is to be attributed to centrifugal force, instead of being simply the result of the powerful influence of solar electro-magnetic attraction, "balanced by concentric rectification of each planet's own gravitation achieved by rotation on its axis," to use an astronomer's phraseology (neither very clear nor correct, yet serving our purpose to show the many flaws in the system), why should there be such difficulty in answering the objection that the differences in the equatorial rotation and density of various planets are directly in opposition to this theory? How long shall we see even great mathematicians bolstering up fallacies to supply an evident hiatus!

The "Adepts" have never claimed superior or *any* knowledge of Western astronomy and other sciences. Yet turning even to the most elementary textbooks used in the schools of India, they find that the centrifugal theory of Western birth is unable to cover *all* the ground. That, unaided, it *can* neither account for every spheroid oblate, nor explain away such evident difficulties as are presented by the relative density of some planets. How indeed can any calculation of centrifugal force explain to us, for instance, why Mercury, whose rotation is, we are told, only "about one-third that of the Earth, and its density only

about one-fourth greater than the Earth," should have a polar compression *more than ten times greater than the latter?* And again, why Jupiter, whose equatorial rotation is said to be "twenty-seven times greater, and its density only about one-fifth that of the Earth," should have its polar compression seventeen times greater than that of the Earth? Or, why Saturn, with an equatorial velocity fifty-five times greater than Mercury for centrifugal force to contend with, should have its polar compression *only three times* greater than Mercury's? To crown the above contradictions, we are asked to believe in the Central Forces as taught by modern science, even when told that the equatorial matter of the sun, with more than four times the centrifugal velocity of the earth's equatorial surface, and only about one-fourth part of the gravitation of the earth's equatorial matter, has not manifested any tendency to bulge out at the solar equator, nor shown the least flattening at the poles of the solar axis. In other and clearer words, the sun, with only one-fourth of our earth's density for the centrifugal force to work upon, has no polar compression at all! We find this objection made by more than one astronomer, yet never explained away satisfactorily so far as the "Adepts" are aware.

Therefore do they say that the great men of science of the West, knowing nothing or next to nothing either about cometary matter, centrifugal and centripetal forces, the nature of the nebulae, or the physical constitution of the sun, stars, or even the moon, are imprudent to speak so confidently as they do about the "central mass of the sun" whirling out into space planets, comets, and what not. Our humble opinion being wanted, we maintain: that it evolutes out but the *life* principle, the soul of these bodies, *giving and receiving it back* in our little solar system, as the "Universal Life-giver," the ONE LIFE, gives and receives it in the Infinitude and Eternity; that the Solar System is as much the *Microcosm* of the ONE *Macrocosm*, as man is the former when compared with his own little solar cosmos.

What are the proofs of science? The solar spots (a misnomer, like much of the rest)? But these do not prove the solidity of the "central mass," any more than the storm-clouds prove the solid mass of the atmosphere behind them. Is it the non-co-extensiveness of the sun's body with its apparent luminous dimensions, the said "body" *appearing* a solid mass, a dark sphere of matter confined within a *fiery* prison-house, a robe of fiercest flames'? We say that there is indeed a "prisoner" behind, but that having never yet been seen by any *physical*, mortal eye, what he allows to be seen of him is merely a gigantic *reflection*, an

illusive phantasma of "solar appendages of *some* sort," as Mr. Proctor honestly calls it. Before saying anything further, we will consider the next interrogatory.

## QUESTION II

### IS THE SUN MERELY A COOLING MASS?

Such is the accepted theory of modern science: it is not what the "Adepts" teach. The former says — the sun "derives no important accession of heat from without"; the latter answer — "the sun needs it not." He is quite self-dependent as he is self-luminous; and for the maintenance of his heat requires no help, no foreign accession of vital energy, for he is the heart of his system, a heart that will not cease its throbbing until its hour of rest shall come. Were the sun "a cooling mass," our great life-giver would have indeed grown dim with age by this time, and found some trouble to keep his watch-fires burning for the future races to accomplish their cycles, and the planetary chains to achieve their rounds. There would remain no hope for evolving humanity; except perhaps in what passes for science in the astronomical text-books of Missionary Schools, namely, that "the sun has an orbital journey of a hundred millions of years before him, and the system yet but *seven thousand years* old!" (*Prize Book*, "Astronomy for General Readers")

The "Adepts," who are thus forced to demolish before they can reconstruct, deny most emphatically (*a*) that the sun is in combustion, in any ordinary sense of the word; or (*b*) that he is *incandescent*, or even *burning*, though he is *glowing*; or (*c*) that his luminosity has already begun to weaken and his power of combustion may be exhausted within a given and conceivable time; or even (*d*) that his chemical and physical constitution contains any of the elements of terrestrial chemistry in any of the states that either chemist or physicist is acquainted with. With reference to the latter, they add that, properly speaking, though the body of the sun — a body that was never yet reflected by telescope or spectroscope that man invented — cannot be said to be constituted of those terrestrial elements with the state of which the chemist is familiar, yet that these elements are all present in the sun's outward robes, and a host more of elements not known so far to science.

There seems little need, indeed, to have waited so long for the lines belonging to these respective elements to correspond with dark lines of

the solar spectrum to *know* that no element present on our earth could ever be possibly found wanting in the sun; although, on the other hand, there are many others in the sun which have either not reached or not as yet been discovered on our globe. Some may be missing in certain stars and heavenly bodies still in the process of formation; or, properly speaking, though present in them, these elements on account of their undeveloped state may not respond as yet to the usual scientific tests. But how can the earth possess that which the sun has never had? The "Adepts" affirm as a fact that the true *Sun* — an invisible orb of which the known one is the shell, mask, or clothing — has in him the spirit of every element that exists in the solar system; and his "Chromosphere," as Mr. Lockyer named it, has the same, only in a far more developed condition though still in a state unknown on earth; our planet having to await its further growth and development before any of its elements can be reduced to the condition they are in within that chromosphere. Nor can the substance producing the coloured light in the latter be properly called solid, liquid, or even "gaseous," as now supposed, for it is neither. Thousands of years before Leverrier and Padri Secchi, the old Aryans sung of *Surya* . . . "hiding behind his *Yogi*<sup>1</sup> robes his head that no one could see"; the ascetic's dress being, as all know, dyed expressly into a red-yellow hue, a colouring matter with pinkish patches on it, rudely representing the vital principle in man's blood — the symbol of the *vital principle* in the sun, or what is now called chromosphere. The "rose-coloured region!" How little astronomers will ever know of its real nature, even though hundreds of eclipses furnish them with the *indisputable evidence* of its presence! The sun is so thickly surrounded by a *shell* of this "red matter," that it is useless for them to speculate with only the help of their physical instruments, upon the nature of that which they can never see or detect with mortal eye behind that brilliant, *radiant zone* of matter.

If the "Adepts" are asked: "What, then, in your views, is the nature of our sun and what is there beyond that cosmic veil?" — they answer: *beyond* rotates and beats the *heart and head* of our system; externally is spread its robe, the nature of which is not matter, whether

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<sup>1</sup> There is an interesting story in the Puranas relating to this subject. The Devas, it would appear, asked the great Rishi Vasishtha to bring the Sun into Satya Loka. The Rishi requested the Sun-god to do so. The Sun-god replied that all the worlds would be destroyed if he were to leave his place. The Rishi then offered to place his red-coloured cloth (*Kashay Vastram*) in the place of the Sun's disk, and did so. The visible body of the Sun is this robe of Vasishtha, it would seem.—T. SUBBA ROW.

solid, liquid, or gaseous, such as you are acquainted with, but *vital* electricity, condensed and made visible.<sup>2</sup> And if the statement is objected to on the grounds that were the luminosity of the sun due to any other cause than *combustion* and *flame*, no physical law of which Western science has any knowledge could account for the existence of such intensely high temperature of the sun *without combustion*; that such a temperature, besides burning with its light and flame every visible thing in our universe, would show its luminosity of a homogeneous and uniform intensity throughout, which it does not; that undulations and disturbances in the photosphere, the growing of the "protuberances," and a fierce raging of elements in combustion have been observed in the sun, with their tongues of fire and spots exhibiting every appearance of cyclonic motion, and "solar storms," etc. etc.; to this the only answer that can be given is the following: the appearances are all there, yet it is not combustion.

Undoubtedly, were the "robes," the dazzling drapery which now envelops the whole of the sun's globe, withdrawn, or even "the shining atmosphere *which permits us to see the sun*" (as Sir William Herschel thought) removed so as to allow one trifling rent, our whole universe would be reduced to ashes. *Jupiter Fulminator* revealing himself to his beloved would incinerate her instantly. But it can never be. The protecting shell is of a thickness and at a distance from the universal HEART that can hardly be ever calculated by your mathematicians. And how can they hope to see the sun's *inner* body once that the existence of that "chromosphere" is ascertained, though its actual density may be still unknown, when one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, of their authorities — Sir W. Herschel — says the following: "The sun, also, has its *atmosphere*, and if some of the fluids which enter into its composition should be of a shining brilliancy, while others are merely trans-

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<sup>2</sup> If the "English F.T.S." would take the trouble of consulting p. 11 of the "Magia Adamica" of Eugenius Philalethes, his learned compatriot, he would find therein the difference between a visible and an invisible planet as clearly hinted at as it was safe to do at a time when the iron claw of orthodoxy had the power as well as disposition to tear the flesh from heretic bones. "The earth is invisible," says he, "and which is more, the eye of man never saw the earth, nor can it be *seen* without *art*. To make this element visible is *the greatest secret in magic*. . . . As for this feculent, gross body upon which we walk, it is a *compost*, and no earth but *it hath earth in it*. . . in a word, all the *elements are visible* but *one*, namely, the *earth*; and when thou hast attained to so much *perfection* as to know why *God* hath placed the *earth in abscondito*, thou hast an excellent figure whereby to know *God himself*, and how he is *visible*, how *invisible*." The italics are the author's, it being the custom of the Alchemists to emphasize those words which had a double meaning in their code. Here "God himself," *visible* and *invisible*, relates to their *lapis philosophorum* — Nature's seventh principle.

parent, *any temporary cause which may remove the lucid fluid will permit us to see the body of the sun* through the transparent ones." The underlined words, written nearly 80 years ago, embody the wrong hypothesis that the *body of the sun* might be seen under such circumstances, whereas it is only the far-away layers of "the lucid fluid" that would be perceived. And what the great astronomer adds invalidates entirely the first portion of his assumption: "If an observer were placed on the moon, he would see the solid body of our earth *only in those places where the transparent fluids of the atmosphere would permit him*. In others, the opaque vapours would reflect the light of the sun without permitting his view to penetrate to the surface of our globe." Thus, if the atmosphere of our earth, which in its relation to the "atmosphere" (?) of the sun is like the tenderest skin of a fruit compared with the thickest husk of a cocoanut, would prevent the eye of an observer standing on the moon from penetrating everywhere "to the surface of our globe," how can an astronomer ever hope his sight to penetrate to the *sun's* surface, from our earth and at a distance of from 85 to 95 million miles,<sup>3</sup> whereas the moon, we are told, is only about 238,000 miles! The proportionately larger size of the sun does not bring him any nearer within the scope of our physical vision.

Truly remarks Sir W. Herschel that the sun "has been called a globe of fire, *perhaps metaphorically!*" It has been *supposed* that the dark spots were solid bodies revolving near the sun's surface. "They have been *conjectured* to be the smoke of volcanoes . . . the scum floating upon an ocean of fluid matter. . . . They have been *taken* for clouds . . . *explained* to be opaque masses swimming in the *fluid matter* of the sun. . . ." Sir John Herschel, whose *intuition* was still greater than his great learning, came — all anthropomorphic conceptions set aside — far nearer the truth than any of those modern astronomers who, while admiring his gigantic learning, smile at his "imaginative and fanciful theories." His only mistake, now shared by most astronomers, was that he regarded the "opaque body" occasionally observed through the curtain of his "luminous envelope" as the sun itself. When saying in the course of his speculations upon the Nasmyth willow-leaf theory — "the definite shape of these objects, their exact similarity one to another . . . all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vaporous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature" — his spiritual intuition served him better than his remarkable knowledge of physical science. When he adds:

<sup>3</sup> Verily, "*absolute accuracy* in the solution of this problem (of distances between the heavenly bodies and the earth) *is simply out of question!*"

“Nothing remains but to consider them *as separate and independent sheets, flakes . . . having some sort of solidity . . .* Be they what they may, they are evidently *the immediate sources of the solar light and heat*” — he utters a grander physical truth than was ever uttered by any living astronomer. And when, furthermore, we find him postulating — “looked at in this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as *organisms* of some peculiar and amazing kind; and though it would be too daring to speak of such organization as partaking of the nature of life, yet *we do know that vital action is competent to develop at once heat, and light, and electricity,*” Sir John Herschel gives out a theory approximating an occult truth more than any profane ever did with regard to solar physics.

These “wonderful objects” are not, as a modern astronomer interprets Sir J. Herschel’s words, “*solar inhabitants, whose fiery constitution enables them to illuminate, warm and electricize the whole solar system,*” but simply the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the *vital* electricity that feeds the whole system in which it lives, and breathes, and has its being. The sun is, as we say, the storehouse of our little cosmos, self-generating its vital fluid, and ever receiving as much as it gives out. Were the astronomers to be asked — what definite and positive fact exists at the root of their solar theory; what knowledge they have of solar combustion and atmosphere — they might, perchance, feel embarrassed when confronted with all their present theories. For, it is sufficient to make a *résumé* of what the solar physicists *do not know*, to gain conviction that they are as far as ever from a definite knowledge of the constitution and ultimate nature of the heavenly bodies. We may, perhaps, be permitted to enumerate:

Beginning with, as Mr. Proctor wisely calls it, “the wildest assumption possible,” that there is, in accordance with the law of analogy, some general resemblance between the materials in, and the processes at work upon, the sun, and those materials with which terrestrial chemistry and physics are familiar, what is that sum of results achieved by spectroscopic and other analyses of the surface and the inner constitution of the sun, which warrants anyone in establishing the *axiom* of the sun’s combustion and gradual extinction? They have no means, as they themselves daily confess, of experimenting upon, hence of determining, the sun’s physical condition; for (*a*) they are ignorant of the atmospheric limits; (*b*) even though it were proved that *matter*, such as they know of, is continuously falling upon the sun, being ignorant of

its real velocity and the nature of the materials it falls upon, they are unable "to discuss of the effect of motions wholly surpassing in velocity . . . enormously exceeding even the inconceivable velocity of many meteors"; (c) confessedly — they "have no means of learning whence that part of the light comes which gives the continuous spectrum . . .," hence no means of determining how great a depth of the solar substance is concerned in sending out that light. This light "may come from the surface layers only"; and, "it may be but a shell . . ." (truly!); and finally, (d) they have yet to learn "how far combustion, properly so called, can take place within the sun's mass"; and "whether these processes, which we (they) recognize as combustion, are the only processes of combustion which can actually take place there." Therefore, Mr. Proctor for one comes to the happy and prudent idea after all "that what had been supposed the most marked characteristic of incandescent solid and liquid bodies, is thus shown to be a possible characteristic of the light of the glowing gas."

Thus, the whole basis of their reasoning having been shaken (by Frankland's objection), they, the astronomers, may yet arrive at accepting the occult theory, *viz.*, that they have to look to the sixth state of matter, for divulging to them the true nature of their photospheres, chromospheres, appendages, prominences, projections and horns. Indeed, when one finds the greatest authority of the age in physical science — Professor Tyndall — saying that "no earthly substance with which we are acquainted — no substance which the fall of meteors has landed on the earth — *would be at all competent to maintain* the sun's combustion"; and again: ". . . multiplying all our powers by millions of millions, we do not reach the sun's expenditure. And still, notwithstanding this enormous drain in the lapse of human history, we are unable to detect a diminution of his store . . ." — after reading this, to see the men of science maintaining still their theory of "a hot globe cooling," one may be excused for feeling surprised at such inconsistency. Verily is that great physicist right in viewing the sun itself as "a speck in infinite extension — a mere drop in the Universal sea"; and saying that, "to Nature nothing can be added; from nature nothing can be taken away; the sum of her energy is constant, and the utmost man can do in the pursuit of physical truth, or in the applications of physical knowledge, is to shift the constituents of the never-varying total. The law of conservation rigidly excludes both creation and annihilation . . . the flux of power is eternally the same." Mr. Tyndall speaks here as though he were an Occultist. Yet, *the memento mori* — "the sun is cooling . . . it is

dying! . . .” of the Western Trappists of Science resounds as loud as it ever did.

No, we say; no, while there is one man left on the globe, the sun will not be extinguished. Before the hour of the “Solar Pralaya” strikes on the watch-tower of Eternity, all the other worlds of our system will be gliding in their spectral shells along the silent paths of infinite Space. Before it strikes, Atlas, the mighty Titan, the son of Asia and the nursling of Æther, will have dropped his heavy manvantaric burden and — died; the Pleiades, the bright seven Sisters, will have upon awakening hiding Sterope to grieve with them — *to die themselves for their father’s loss*. And, Hercules, *moving off his left leg*, will have to shift his place in heavens and erect his own funeral pile. Then only, surrounded by the fiery element breaking through the thickening gloom of the *Pralayan* twilight, will Hercules, *expiring amidst a general conflagration*, bring on likewise the death of our sun: *he will have unveiled by moving off the “CENTRAL SUN”* — the mysterious, the ever-hidden centre of attraction of our sun and system. Fables? Mere poetical fiction? Yet, when one knows that the most exact sciences, the greatest mathematical and astronomical truths went forth into the world among the *hoi polloi* from the circle of the initiated priests, the Hierophants of the *sanc-tum sanctorum* of the old temples, under the guise of religious fables, it may not be amiss to search for universal truths even under the patches of fiction’s harlequinade. This *fable* about the Pleiades, the *seven* Sisters, Atlas, and Hercules exists identical in subject, though under other names, in the sacred Hindu books, and has likewise the same occult meaning. But then like the *Ramayana* “borrowed from the Greek *Iliad*” and the *Bhagavad-Gita* and Krishna plagiarized from the Gospel — in the opinion of the *great* Sanskritist, Professor Weber, the Aryans may have also borrowed the Pleiades and their Hercules from the same source! When the Brahmins can be shown by the Christian Orientalists to be the direct descendants of the Teutonic Crusaders, then only, perchance, will the cycle of proofs be completed, and the historical truths of the West vindicated!

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## OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Master, it is said: "Beware of change! For change is thy great foe." Yet the whole teaching of evolution is that of perpetual change. Also we read that adaptation to changes is one of the chief virtues of the disciple. Will you please explain?

Friend, what causes change? Let us decide that first. Then let us see what it is that changes and what remains unchanged.

Master, life itself causes change; it is that indefinable urge throughout Nature and life as we know it that brings about perpetual changes which make for growth or evolution. It takes us into new environments for the body; new ideas take root in our mental environment, or we war against the old ideas; our feelings, too, alter with time. Our reaction to circumstances varies as we grow older, and changes are not welcome to us.

As for *what* changes, it is surely our environment, whether we think of it as outer — home, friends, race, nation, etc. — or inner — our emotional and mental make-up. I rebel against what life has brought me, or become apathetic. "Why should these things happen to me?" I say.

Therefore all is change. Nothing is permanent; nothing is trustworthy. I am tossed hither and thither by Fate!

Friend, here is a perfect example of lack of adaptability! Life places you where you will best learn the necessary steps in evolution. Why not adapt yourself to the changes?

But, Master, my environment may be bad. Do I have to adapt myself to it? Is this what is meant by being tolerant?

Friend, you must try to apply the knowledge you possess of life's meaning and purpose. Have you not learnt that duality pervades all things, and that therefore there are bad environments which we must accept and adapt ourselves to in the proper way, and bad environments which we have to change or leave? Remember that "bad" and "good" are relative words and we ought to keep it in mind that Good Karma is that which is pleasing to Ishwara," *i.e.*, according to Law, and therefore correct. But the main issue is our adaptability, or lack of it, to the circumstances brought to us under Law, as the result of our past actions.

Here we should remember the Third Fundamental Proposition of the Secret Doctrine — we progress by self-induced and self-devised efforts. We often stop here and forget that these are “checked by our Karma.” Or we say, “If my Karma prevents me, why should I bother! It is all too much for me!” A Master once wrote that patriots might break their hearts in vain if the cycle was against them. No effort, however, is wasted. But do we pause to think on what plane the efforts are not lost?

Master, this sounds most depressing. Do you mean to imply that in spite of the best efforts I may make, I may not succeed?

No, my Friend, I do not mean that, but I do mean to ask you to analyse what environment you yourself can change without any possibility of failure. We tend to forget that we have an inner as well as an outer environment. We may fail when we try to change the outer, for there are others in that environment and it is made up of a group, including ourselves. The one and only place where we have full control is our inner environment, our own character, and here we must take into consideration that it takes time before the results of our efforts appear.

Master, do you mean that when I see wrong being done I am to do nothing about it besides improving my own character? Surely this is the path of selfishness!

O my Friend, how quickly your mind jumps from one point to another, like a butterfly poising on one flower and then flying to another! This is just the difficulty with so many. H.P.B. advised us to *think*. One's duty to oneself and to one's environment, which includes others, is often not thought out. (See *The Key to Theosophy* on what we owe to ourselves.) Duty to another is not to be determined in terms of our own emotional thinking. The way to deal with any and every situation is to think about it first, then feel, and then decide whether or not to act. Thought is instantaneous in a crisis, and is in terms of our make-up and character. Feeling is also instantaneous in the same way. Even action in a crisis, when action is imperative, is instantaneous. But all these instantaneous reactions are indications of our character, and this character is the result of our thoughts, feelings, actions *in the past*.

But now is the time to prepare ourselves for the future. Whenever there is the time, even a minute, in which to think, we must base our action and feeling on conscious and deliberate thought. The man who impulsively jumps into the water to rescue a drowning man may or may not succeed; if he is not a swimmer then there are two lives lost instead of one! There is an old saying, "It takes all the wisdom of the wise to correct the folly of the fool." We must learn to keep the balance between the emotional wish to help or to do something, and our capacity to render that help. In other words, we must learn to develop the patience which will enable us to know *when* to help or act.

All this is not to take away the respect we must feel towards such brave people who, without thought of their own safety, plunge in to help another. But before we are in such a predicament let us prepare ourselves by developing a character which is thought-formed, emotionally stable, and accurate in application!

Master, I think I begin to see. You mean that only by altering my *own* character can I be of real use to others, and the place where I can alter it is where I am, in the changing environment. I must use that environment and not let it use me!

Friend, do not stop at this point. Go on *thinking*. How can we use the environment for ourselves only? Is there not still another aspect of our duty to our neighbour in our environment? Apart from not trying to alter conditions which are not of our own making, but in which we are, so to say, thrown, there is the aspect of the outer environment which we make for others. Are we stupid enough to feel that *we* never cause trouble in our environment, that *we* never mislead others? Are we sure that our dislike for changes—non-adaptability to them—does not hinder others? Again, are we sure that our ability to adapt ourselves is not looked upon by others as acquiescence in wrong? Let us strive harder to devise for ourselves and induce lines of action that by self-effort we can apply to all conditions, and begin to build that unchanging attitude to life which is able to see changes for what they are—temporary glimpses of the working of LAW, the examinations set to man as he progresses slowly to that condition of consciousness which enables him to say, "I am immortal; all changes are mortal, but are necessary for growth."

## THE POWER OF MAGIC

It was . . . during the highest point of civilization and knowledge, as also of human intellectuality, of the fourth, Atlantean Race — that, owing to the final crisis of physiologico-spiritual adjustment of the races, humanly branched off into its two diametrically opposite paths: the RIGHT- and the LEFT-hand paths of knowledge or of Vidya. “*Thus were the germs of the White and Black Magic sown in those days. The seeds lay latent for some time, to sprout only during the early period of the Fifth (our Race).*” (Commentary)

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 192 fn.

Magic is the most ancient and venerable system of true Wisdom and has been on earth as long as man himself, though our so-called “enlightened” civilization rejects the idea as superstition. Modern savants claim that Magic originated among primitive savages. This is disproved by finding the root of this word with an honourable meaning in the two oldest languages known to our civilization, Sanskrit and Avesta. “*Magva*,” from which “Magic” is descended through Greek and Latin, was itself rooted in Avesta. The *Vendidad*, which is an ancient scripture, makes mention of a class known as *Magva*. They were a group of people who remained celibates, practised beneficent magic and taught Wisdom. These were the original Magi. Turning to Sanskrit, there is the word *Magha-van* which has a meaning similar to that in the Avesta; it is also one of the names of Indra, the Celestial Magician. There is also the word *Maga* — a magician, a priest of the Sun; it is also the name of a people who lived in Sakadvipa, and their work is the same as that of the Magi of Persia.

True Magic, then, is Wisdom; and a Magician, a man well versed in this Wisdom or Esoteric Knowledge, the synonym of all that was honourable and reverent, though the term has now come to be wholly perverted and is applied to one who is a pretender and a juggler.

Magic is the science of communicating with and directing supernal, supramundane Potencies, as well as of commanding those of the lower spheres; it is a practical knowledge of the hidden mysteries of Nature and of man known only to the few, because they are so difficult to acquire without falling into sins against Nature and man. Magic is not something supernatural. It is the study of the *laws* governing man and Nature. This study shows the omnipresence and omnipotence of Life. Knowledge of his intimate relation with Nature gives

man the power to use these laws and principles to bring about certain results. That application is the art of magic. If it is misapplied it is black magic or sorcery; if used altruistically, it is true or White Magic. Both exist.

The results obtained from the practice of Magic and the phenomena produced are in no sense miraculous. They occur under laws now hidden from most men, and are produced by the use of the powers latent in all. The two constituent factors of any magical performance are motive and method. If the motive is rooted in purity, harmlessness, altruism, the practice tends towards White Magic. *The Theosophical Glossary* describes White Magic as "Beneficent Magic"; it is "*divine* magic, devoid of selfishness, love of power, of ambition, or lucre, and bent only on doing good to the world in general, and one's neighbour in particular." The slightest attempt to use one's abnormal powers for the gratification of self, makes of these powers sorcery or black magic.

The fact that we are always striving to obtain something for our personal selves shows what kind of magicians we are, and why we have so little power. A vast reservoir of force lies within us, but we cannot use it as we are selfish and want to gain powers without giving anything. The most wonderful phenomena that ever have been performed can be duplicated by any human being. The most wonderful powers that ever have been used can be obtained by any human being. But they cannot be obtained for selfish purposes; they can be obtained only by understanding the Teaching and living the life.

Spiritism, necromancy, is a form of black magic in which poor, diseased mediums are used by harmful invisible beings. One needs to beware, also, of hypnotism. Animal sacrifices in the name of religion, like all performances connected with blood, are black magic; such sacrifices are corrupting the pure Hindu religion. Many other so-called religious rites and ceremonies, like many scientific practices, also come under the category of black magic.

Who, then, are the White Magicians? Their whole natures, from the inside out, are of one kind. They are all in accord. They never seek anything for themselves. They use all the powers and all the possessions that come their way for the benefit of the rest of the world. In their thought, will and feeling all the time is the ideal progression of Humanity. By these motives, they naturally draw from the Highest, and everything they do has its effects for good, not only

upon their fellow men, but upon the kingdoms below them. If we can understand that, then we have some idea as to what true White Magic is.

There are two primary objects in studying about Magic. First, we want to learn to protect ourselves from the dangerous influences in our modern civilization, so that we can maintain our soul integrity. This is not a selfish motive any more than is the maintaining of physical health so as not to be a menace to others. The second object is to use for good such knowledge as is available to us.

The best protection is purity of life, a clear conscience and a firm desire to benefit humanity. Ordinary goodness is not enough. The purity required includes purification of will, of imagination and of magnetism. Will, volition, determination, is the Magician itself; it must be unfolded and developed; its purity is purity of motive. Imagination is the power to create images and pictures in terms of our own choice; the imagination must create pure and radiant pictures. Our mind is made up of images and pictures of our thoughts and ideas. Their quality is determined by our motive; the intensity of will and motive which went into them determines how long they remain in the mind. The mind should be a Temple with the mental images true Idols, made living images by heart energy.

In the astral body is the magnetic fluid which all men possess and constantly radiate, especially through the eyes and finger tips, though generally unconsciously to themselves. Whenever we act, wherever we look, we affect other people and objects with our magnetism, so that we are all practical magicians, whether we know it or not.

True purity is more than physical cleanliness; it is of the magnetic fluid, and it is determined by the quality of our past thoughts and our present moods. All objects have their own magnetic emanations, though only man can direct the magnetic fluid at will and control its quality.

We can take the example of the housewife in the kitchen: her bad mood, impatience or irritability can poison the food she is cooking. Not only has each foodstuff its own magnetic property, but there is also the magnetism of the housewife herself, which affects the food she cooks. Similarly, the clerk in the office, the business men who compete with one another, may, unconsciously to themselves, practise a species of black magic.

Not only do the right images have to be formed in our minds, but they must be energized and made living by heart perception.

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## LIBERTY—CHOICE AND EVOLUTION

Seldom does one associate the idea of liberty with evolution, yet there can be no true evolution without liberty and freedom of choice.

When we approach this subject of liberty or freedom to choose the types of thoughts we shall accept or generate, the types of feelings or emotions we shall encourage or engender, or the types of actions we shall perform, we must dissociate the ancient concept of true liberty from the modern one, which often fails to distinguish between liberty and licence.

The Theosophical idea of liberty is the same as the true ancient conceptions of that term, and implies evolution carried forward to its ultimate end, which is freedom from the bondage of matter through spiritual insight and determination. Such freedom comes about by the acquisition of discernment and discrimination, the natural concomitants to the deliberate choice of spiritual ideals and ideas as opposed to their material counterparts.

When the desire to know the truth arises in the mind-heart of man, and the will to serve his brother-man flows as a result of such desire, a crucial stage is reached, and according to the choices made will be the progress or retrogression of the "chooser."

This idea that our choices lead either to progress or retrogression will make us perceive the necessity for right choice, and right choice implies the acquisition of true knowledge and its application in the fields of our mind, emotions and physical nature.

The first step towards the acquisition of true knowledge is not just the desire and determination to acquire it, but rather the purification of the inner motive, or the reason why we desire such knowledge. As Mr. Judge states in *The Ocean of Theosophy*: "Even a Buddha or a Jesus had first to make a vow, which is a desire, in some life, that he would save the world or some part of it, and to persevere with the desire alive in his heart through countless lives." With the right motive of helping or serving others, the next step that naturally follows is that of finding ways and means to serve. It is here that the necessity is seen for the study of the Teachings, testing them by the process of application in daily life, in the light of service or help rendered to others. Not all types of "service" are helpful to others; so, as our knowledge increases through study and application, our ability to discriminate between right and wrong service is also strengthened.

It will be seen that freedom of choice plays a most important part here; we are constantly choosing, every moment of the day, in one way or another, but choice with the motive of service behind it produces a more deliberate, discerning and discriminative attitude of mind, which in turn gives rise to actions more beneficial and helpful to the whole "stream of evolution" on our planet Earth.

Just as individual choice in the right direction is responsible for the progressive evolution of any one individual, so, too, the collective choices of all result in the progressive advancement of all beings in the scheme of evolution. Here will be seen the responsibility of the individual in clearly setting before his mind's eye the goal of service instead of that of liberation. *The Voice of the Silence* explains why the Path of Renunciation is superior to the Path of Liberation. It is the goal of renunciation that is kept in view by all true Theosophists who wish to follow in the footsteps of the Great Teachers of Humanity, who are also "the True Servants of Humanity."

Evolution consists "in raising up to a higher state all the matter concerned in the chain of globes to which the earth belongs" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 62). This is the work in which all individuals are engaged, whether they are consciously aware of it or not. Are we not told in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom. Unsullied by the hand of matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of Spirit — the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms.

To become conscious co-workers with Nature is the prerogative of all human beings, who alone have the liberty or freedom of self-choice; and upon this choice depends the harmonious progress of all the beings evolving with us on our planet Earth. To end this short article, another quotation from *The Voice of the Silence* may be given:

Which wilt thou choose, O thou of dauntless heart? The Sam-tan of "Eye Doctrine," fourfold Dhyana, or thread thy way through Paramitas, six in number, noble gates of virtue leading to Bodhi and to Prajna, seventh step of Wisdom?

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## “LUCIFER” CORRESPONDENCE

### “THE EMPTY VESSEL MAKES THE GREATEST SOUND”

[Reprinted from *Lucifer*, Vol. III, pp. 436-37, for January 1889.—EDS.]

Miss Susie C. Clark, of Cambridgeport, Mass., says in substance:

“I am a mental healer. . . . Of late rumours reach me of prominent theosophists who are confirmed invalids, of others who use quinine for ailments, not scorning to lean on the arm of the servant — matter — when the infinite resources of the Master (Spirit) are at their command. Even *Lucifer* countenances the use of mineral and other remedies. If the Truth maketh free, why not free from all physical bondage? Why are we, on the lower rounds of the ladder, freer than those who have climbed higher? I have been raised from invalidism to immaculate health.” She then goes on to ask us for our views on what she calls “metaphysical thought” in America, and wishes us to exclude what is known there as “Christian Science,” on the ground that it “has not yet grown to recognize or to hold to proper conceptions of the Wisdom Religion.”

ANSWER. — This reply is not exhaustive of the subject but will cover the inquiry. We cannot give the “views” asked for, since it is not clear what is wanted. The correspondent speaks of “metaphysical thought,” evidently meaning the strained use made in America of the term. As we do not wish to pronounce on this without experience on the spot, the writer’s wish cannot be gratified. But we cannot help noticing that she claims for her branch of this so-called “Science” a pre-eminence over a rival in the field, namely “Christian Science,” the latter being the same as the other, however, except that it is more or less closely attached to Christianity. As our correspondent infers that, because she has been cured, “the infinite resources of the Master are at her command,” those resources and that Master (or Spirit) could easily show her that Christian Science is just as good as her own.

We know little of either, except, perhaps, that both show an arrogance in their supposed superiority over Science, Theosophy, and everything else in creation, with results that do not seem to us proportionate with the loud claims made. We have received, however, a letter from a prominent Christian Scientist who is as distinguished a metaphysician as she is a valuable and good theosophist; and we mean to treat of it at length in our next number. Meanwhile, we must reply a few words to Miss S. Clark’s queries.

The main question with her is, why do prominent, or any, Theosophists use medicine for cure of disease? We think all Theosophists have the right to do so or not, as Theosophy is not a system of diet, or that which is simply to help our bodies, but is a metaphysical and ethical system intended to bring about among men right thought to be followed by action. There are deep questions involved in the matter: deeper than our correspondent will solve in one life. We have no objections against anyone getting cured in any way they think good, but we have decided objections to "mind-curers" or "metaphysicians" taking theosophists to task for not adopting their system and at once discarding all remedies. They argue that because they were thus cured others must go the same road. This is our present difference with mental healers, and our correspondent should know that theosophists grant to all the right to use or dispense with medicine and claim for themselves similar privileges. They do not meddle with other persons' liberty of thought, and demand the same independence for themselves.

Evidently Miss Clark has not reflected that "prominent theosophists" use medicine because of some bearings of Karma upon their lives and on account of its occult properties; nor has she, apparently, thought of what is called "delayed Karma"; nor that, perhaps, through too much attention to her body she is reaping a temporary enjoyment now, for which, in subsequent lives, she will have to pay; nor that again, by using her mind so strangely to cure her body she may have removed her infirmities from the plane of matter to that of the mind, the first effects of which we can trace dimly in her strictures on "Christian Science," as she has acquired a slant, as it were, against the latter and in favour of her own, and a tone of lofty superiority with the Theosophists.

The claim that "the infinite resources of the Master" are within our present reach is not tenable, and the use of the text, "Truth shall make us free," to show freedom from ills is not permissible. At any rate, *truth* does not seem to have made *all* Mental Scientists free from conceit and prejudice. The man who uttered the words had, himself, a certain infirmity, and we think freedom of mind and soul is meant only. The acceptance of Truth and the practice of virtue cannot avert Karma waiting from other lives, but can produce good effects in lives to come, and what the extreme practice of mental curing does is to stave off for a time an amount of Karma which will, later on, reach us. We prefer to let it work out naturally through the material part of us and to expel it quickly if we may with even mineral remedies. But for all

that we have no quarrel with mental healing at all, but leave each one to his or her own judgment.

Finally we would say that whenever it shall be proved to us and the world in general that among all the hosts of Mental Curers, Mind Healers, Christian Scientists, *et hoc genus omne*, there is even a large majority in *perfect bodily health*, instead of as at present only a minority, though a noisy and boastful one — then will we admit the justice of the arrogant claims made by our correspondent.

Cures — real, undeniable cures have been effected at Lourdes also, but is that any reason why we should all become Roman Catholics?

“When you begin with so much pomp and show,  
Why is the end so little and so low?”

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Never measure the height of a mountain until you have reached the top. Then you will see how low it was.

The longest journey is the journey inward.

Never look down to test the ground before taking your next step: only he who keeps his eye fixed on the far horizon will find his right road.

Do not look back, and do not dream about the future. It will neither give you back the past nor satisfy your daydreams. Your duty, your reward — your destiny — are *here and now*.

You cannot play with the animal in you without becoming wholly animal, play with falsehood without forfeiting your right to truth, play with cruelty without losing your sensitivity of mind. He who wants to keep his garden tidy doesn't reserve a plot for weeds.

—DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD

# THE FOUR STAGES OF GROWTH

## II.—THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XVIII, pp. 138-40, for July 1948.—EDS.]

Nevertheless, Occult Science — having survived even the Great Flood that submerged the antediluvian giants and with them their very memory, save in the Secret Doctrine, the Bible and other Scriptures — still holds the Key to all the world problems.

Let us apply that Key to the rare fragments of long-forgotten cosmogonies and try by their scattered parts to re-establish the once Universal Cosmogony of the Secret Doctrine. The Key fits them all. No one can study ancient philosophies seriously without perceiving that the striking similitude of conception between all — in their exoteric form very often, in their hidden spirit invariably — is the result of no mere coincidence, but of a concurrent design: and that there was, during the youth of mankind, one language, one knowledge, one universal religion, when there were no churches, no creeds or sects, but when every man was a priest unto himself. And, if it is shown that already in those ages which are shut out from our sight by the exuberant growth of tradition, human religious thought developed in uniform sympathy in every portion of the globe; then, it becomes evident that, born under whatever latitude, in the cold North or the burning South, in the East or West, that thought was inspired by the same revelations, and man was nurtured under the protecting shadow of the same TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.—*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 341.

If the first stage is one of aspiration, this is the stage of learning. It is, in this sense, an outward-going process, a garnering of knowledge prior to its assimilation, though a garnering which must be done without moving from the central unifying point, if the mind is not to be caught up and lost in the learning. The “particulars,” the details gathered, have to be sifted and co-ordinated in the light of Universal principles.

To many people this idea of study is repellent, opposed to their conception of the Spiritual Life. If, they say, the intuitive wisdom of the inner nature transcends head-learning, what have we to do with the latter? Why also should Those who claim to be the Custodians of the Wisdom need to keep written and graven records if those records are registered within the inner nature, or photographed upon the film of the Astral Light, the retainer of all impressions? The argument is

false. The power to make operative the inner storehouse of wisdom does not develop with the awakening of aspiration. We are obliged to work with this lower mind in our bodily existence, but if it is not attuned to the higher mind, there can be no transfer of the wisdom of the higher, which thus remains like silent music on its own abstract plane. The written records, the intellectual study, are needed by the brain-mind as "food," the assimilation of which will enable that brain-mind to transform itself into an instrument capable of reflecting, embodying and expressing the higher nature. When there are no such study and assimilation, the lower mind can feed only on its own substance, thereby producing the false images of the mistaken mystic, or even of the madman.

But this study is not the collecting of facts, axioms, hypotheses and what not, to be stowed away as one packs a portmanteau. It is the open-minded and orderly examination of truths which, because of their fundamental nature, have the power within them to develop the spiritual insight rooted in the fundamental nature of the student.

What, then, are the subjects of study? Theosophy is the science of Life; therefore it covers the laws of Life and its nature and constitution, as a whole, as in its parts. Theosophy is the art of living, and gives the rationale of right ethics. And, as the Wisdom-Religion, it is the source from which have come all the Religions and Philosophies of the past, each one presenting originally one or more basic aspects of the Wisdom-Religion that, in its entirety and essential nature, must remain for ever "the Secret Doctrine."

What is the method of study, and the great key to understanding? How shall we sift, collate, codify and prove this vast mass of evidence before us? We have sensed the unity of the ONE; how shall we bridge the gulf between THAT and this heterogeneous panorama that we call 'existence'? The answer lies, first, in the key number, seven. For, though Life remains eternally and unconditionally ONE as a Root Principle, it *appears* under seven aspects in manifestation. There are seven principles of great nature as of man's nature. There are seven states of consciousness, whether cosmic or individual. There are seven planes of matter, as there are seven grades of density in the garments of the soul. There are seven forms of force, whether universal or focused in the living dynamo that we call the human being. There are even seven senses; for, though our five senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell collect impressions from the world around, there is the mental

sense that records them, and the seventh that draws from that mental record the lasting "spiritual fruition and remembrance." The law of periodicity that moves all forms to rhythm is itself governed by the number seven. It dominates the groupings of the elements and the vibrations of heat, light and sound. It is an essential factor in the production of occult phenomena. Manifestation itself is divided into seven "Eternities," the seven, or seven times seven, periods, according to the method of calculation.

These "Eternities" belong to the most secret calculations, in which, in order to arrive at the true total, every figure must be  $7^x$  (7 to the power of  $x$ );  $x$  varying according to the nature of the cycle in the subjective or real world; and every figure or number relating to, or representing all the different cycles from the greatest to the smallest—in the objective or unreal world—must necessarily be multiples of seven. The key to this cannot be given, for herein lies the mystery of esoteric calculations, and for the purposes of ordinary calculation it has no sense. "The number seven," says the Kabala, "is the great number of the Divine Mysteries"; number ten is that of all human knowledge (Pythagorean decade). (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 36)

The Intelligences of the living scale of Life group themselves in seven Hierarchies. There are seven kingdoms of Nature—three degrees of elementals, nascent centres of force, as well as the four kingdoms recognized in the world—mineral, vegetable, animal, man. Human nature itself is divided into seven gradations of good and evil. Those who would become Initiates of Life have to master the seven Divine Sciences, just as they have to engender in themselves the seven Virtues, the Divine Paramitas. The keys of the mysteries were also seven.

Thus the sevenfold scale is an abstract formula to be applied to every form of life. Every myth and allegory, every symbol, whether word, image, hieroglyph or geometric figure, has a sevenfold meaning, from the purely material to the purely spiritual. There are seven main branches of the Wisdom-Religion. For, just as there are six points of view from which any object may be seen by the eyes and thus depicted, *i.e.*, from north, south, east and west, zenith and nadir, and a seventh viewpoint which is a mental, abstract image, synthesizing all the six aspects, so there are six *Darsanas* or viewpoints from which life may be perceived by the mind and so described, the seventh being a still more inward synthesis. All religions and philosophies fall into one or another of these groups, but with the key of their sevenfold unity,

the student sees them to be complementary, and thus avoids the layman's error of considering, for example, the doctrine of *Sannyasayoga* (renunciation of action) as uncompromisingly opposed to the doctrine of *Karmayoga* (right performance of action). This reconciliation of opposites is only possible with the inner key that unlocks also the numerous apparent contradictions and inconsistencies in Theosophical textbooks. For these are written as they are in order to develop the intuition, by forcing the student to keep clearly in mind the fundamental principles unifying the details.

The abstract formula, applied by analogy, is the key to the nature of Life. In like manner the correspondential key to the working of Law and laws is the cyclic vibration of ebb and flow, flux and reflux, operating on the infinitesimal and the overwhelmingly vast alike. There is not a single science — biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy, what you will — for whose problems this Law of Periodicity does not afford fresh clues. Further, knowing this dual motion of all cycles, it becomes easier to judge what must lie behind the present mysteries of life. In the cycles of waking and sleeping, life and death, by studying the segments that are within our power to know, we can recognize the consistency of the doctrines dealing with the portions unknown. Reincarnation, for example, becomes something, not merely *felt* to be so, but something the reason confirms as logically inevitable, in view of the indirect evidence available, the authoritative testimony of great minds and the unbroken universality of the Cyclic Law.

But if this triune key — of analogy, based on the unity of life, of the periodic motion inherent in life and of the sevenfold manifesting scale of life — is essential to the theoretical study of existence, still more vital is it in the most important subject of all, the practical study of oneself. We must study the personal self, its activities and its nature, and study it with dispassion, in order to know it for what it is, before we can really let go its domination, as we let go a dream on awaking. And the clearer we can make the image of the ideal of the true Self, Its nature and Its powers, so much the easier will be the approach to Its state.

But the theoretical key, as given above, becomes, in its practical application, first, Brotherhood; next, Karma, the law of moral compensation, whose justice brings to each the crop of his own sowing; and, lastly, Yoga or union. Brotherhood is the key, since, by analogy, we can read the hearts of others with compassion, for we can understand

their joys, their hopes, their fears and sorrows, their errors, faults and sins — aye, even the greatest — by what we find of like nature in ourselves; Karma, since we accept the responsibility for our acts, knowing also that in order to create harmony at the right point in the cycle we must ask ourselves *what* is to be done, and *to whom*, *why* and *how*, and *when* and *where*, before we can answer the question *who*, or which part of the nature, higher or lower, is the initiator of the action; Yoga, as the integration of all our seven principles, with the Spiritual in supreme control, producing equanimity of mind and skill in action.

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*Question:* Will a person in his next incarnation express what he has assimilated?

*Answer:* No one can express what he has not assimilated; that is, has made a basis for action. But the question should be amended so as to read "Individual" instead of "Person." The "personality" is in any one life but a temporary aspect and action of the Individuality, and differs in each life, in the environments and in such changes as have been brought about in previous existences — in character, disposition and understanding; these may produce in the next incarnation a change of social relation, mental capacity, nature of body, physical environment, and even of sex. The Personality does not reincarnate; the Individuality at each rebirth projects a new personality, the qualities and tendencies of which are drawn from the sum-total of all past lives — not only the last one. All the past experience is within and behind each personality and can be reached and realized, yet may remain entirely latent or partially so, according to a more or less intensive conception of personality as a thing in itself, and of physical existence as the only reality.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

A few centuries ago, the hint that there might be a plurality of inhabited worlds was a heresy for which men were burned. But the heresies of the past are fast being accepted as facts today. Last month, in a U.S. TV programme on the subject of extra-terrestrial life, four scientists expressed themselves as being satisfied as to the theoretical possibility that there are living and sentient organisms in millions of planetary systems in the universe. They base their belief on the observed uniformity of certain physical, biological and evolutionary laws. (*The Times of India*, October 30)

In 1877, when Giovanni Schiaparelli declared that the peculiar markings on Mars were due to canals constructed by intelligent beings, he met with opposition and ridicule. Last year, the American Mars probe, Mariner IV, revealed that the Martian atmosphere is only a thousandth as dense as the earth's atmosphere. It was then decided that life on the red planet in any form was impossible. But now a team of two French astronomers and a Jet Propulsion Laboratory atmospheric physicist have come forward to say that they have detected "the spectral fingerprint of methane, or marsh gas, in Mars's thin atmosphere." Methane is a biological compound produced — on earth, at least — by living bacteria, and the team think this indicates that life exists on Mars. (*Newsweek*, October 31)

Scientists now believe that life can exist without oxygen. In fact, a life cycle which does not use either oxygen or carbon is now held possible.

What little is said on the subject in Theosophy indicates that most of the planets of the solar system, as of systems beyond ours, are inhabited. But life on other worlds cannot be judged by the standards of terrestrial life.

It is better to rest content with the three conclusions which M. C. Flammarion . . . formulates as rigorous and exact deductions from the known *facts* and laws of science.

I. The various forces which were active in the beginning of evolution gave birth to a great variety of beings on the several worlds; both in the organic and inorganic kingdoms.

II. The animated beings were constituted from the first according to forms and organisms in correlation with the physiological state of each inhabited globe.

III. The humanities of other worlds differ from us, as much in their inner organization as in their external physical type. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 707)

Referring to Mars, *The Secret Doctrine* states:

*It is quite correct that Mars is in a state of obscuration at present* (I. 165). Theosophists will remember that, according to Occult teaching, Cyclic pralayas so-called are but *obscurations*, during which periods Nature, *i.e.*, everything visible and *invisible* on a resting planet — remains *in statu quo*. Nature rests and slumbers, no work of destruction going on on the globe even if no active work is done. All forms, as well as their astral types, remain as they were at the last moment of its activity. The “night” of a planet has hardly any twilight preceding it. It is caught like a huge mammoth by an avalanche, and remains slumbering and frozen till the next dawn of its new day — a very short one indeed in comparison to the “Day of Brahmâ.” (II. 660)

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Present-day astronomers have been divided about the age of the universe, with some estimates going as high as 25 billion years. But new calculations show that three cosmological timing mechanisms are in fairly close agreement. Allan R. Sandage of the Palomar and Mount Wilson observatories told a Columbia University symposium recently that the lengthening of the waves of light coming from distant galaxies, the brightness of ancient globular star clusters and the relative decay rates of Uranium 235 and 238 all indicate that the universe is between seven billion and thirteen billion years old. (*Newsweek*, October 31)

Students of Theosophy will find it of interest to compare these figures with those given in *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 68-70) from an old Brahmanical calendar, which H.P.B. calls “the best and most complete of all such calendars.” According to this ancient chronology, 1,955,884,687 years have elapsed “from the beginning of cosmic evolution, up to the Hindu year *Tarana* (or 1887).” A footnote explains: “The esoteric doctrine says that this ‘cosmic evolution’ refers only to our solar system; while exoteric Hinduism makes the figures refer, if we do not mistake, to the whole Universal System.” In the larger context, it is futile to talk of the “age” of that which is eternal; for the Universe *in toto* ever remains as a “boundless plane”; periodically “the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing.”

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Under the title "Claude Eatherly's Dark Star" the August *Progressive* (Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A.) prints an article adapted from Ronnie Dugger's book-length manuscript on the subject.

The life story of Claude Eatherly reveals the extent to which guilt feelings and a plagued conscience can ruin one's life. Towards the close of the last World War, Eatherly was assigned the job of assessing the weather over Hiroshima an hour before the atom bomb was dropped on the city. The "all clear" message radioed by him to the bomb-bearing plane sealed the city's doom, causing the death of about 100,000 men, women and children and injuring another 80,000 to 100,000. More, Eatherly had been chosen to drop the third atomic bomb, but after the first two bombings, of Hiroshima and of Nagasaki, the war ended and he felt at the time a sense of disappointment that he did not get his chance. He was thus guilty also in intention. After the war, however, remorse for his part at Hiroshima overcame him to such an extent that it led gradually to the deformation of his personality and his life.

He was set upon by horrible dreams about Hiroshima and tried to kill himself. A phantom of a man, fading in and out of shadows, he was treated at the same mental hospital nine times, the meanwhile forging checks, breaking into the post offices, and holding up grocery stores — once with a broken and unloaded gun, once leaving the money behind in a sack on the counter. He was jailed in Dallas and Houston, and he served nine months in a New Orleans prison. It has been the thesis of his case that he sought punishment for Hiroshima by committing illegal acts for which he would be punished.

At his trial in Abilene, Texas, in 1957, on a charge of breaking into two post offices and stealing government property, his psychiatrist testified that 12 years after Hiroshima Eatherly seemed to enjoy pain; he wanted punishment. Two doctors agreed that his feeling of personal responsibility for the Hiroshima tragedy preyed upon his conscience and was a cause of his chronic schizophrenia. The jury decided that he was not guilty because he was sick. Since then his story has been told and retold all around the world. In 1961, he was committed to the mental hospital indefinitely and against his will.

What happened to Claude Eatherly has a relevance to our times. It helps us understand that mass killing is subject to personal as well as official blame. Everyone associated with warfare and with the new apparatuses of mass death has one day — if not in this life then in another — to answer for his part. The *Progressive* article sums up the

lesson to be learnt from Eatherly's story:

The atomic bombings and the jelly-fire bombings before them stunned the conscience of man and forced us all back to the question of what we are. The hydrogen bombs and the new means of delivering them create serious doubt that we have enough time to change. Participating in the reconsideration of mankind since Hiroshima by forcing us to reconsider him since then, Eatherly has come to have a symbolic function; he has come to signify guilt itself, not only the guilt of the man who obeys an order to help cause mass death, but also the guilt of the man who cannot forswear, as if he had no self, his chances to better his own situation.

Might not his story provoke some thinking of value? Might we not see ourselves more truthfully in him? Might not the life he has led — the daily, nightly, now here, now there, up, down, around and about life he has really led — help bring to self-recognition those in Russia, the United States, Britain, China, France, who can give the orders or press the buttons or toggle the bombs to kill tens of millions of us? We may as reasonably hope to find clues for the treatment of a schizophrenic humanity in the tormented life of a nuclear pilot as in the crafty drafts of disarmament treaties or the sham concessions and cynical indignations that daily stain the front pages of the world.

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*Newsweek* for October 31 describes the concerted efforts being made in the United States to wipe out the cigarette habit, which, experts agree, is the major cause of lung cancer and a contributor to heart disease and other ailments as well. But, alas for human nature in general and its readiness to risk even health and life-expectancy in preference to making an effective stand against *Kama*, "the enemy of man on earth," cigarette consumption is once again on the increase, previous warnings having caused only a temporary drop in consumption.

In the mean time, new evidence indicting smoking continues to pile up. Health experts are now concerned about the role smoking plays in emphysema (a deterioration of the air sacs in the lungs) and chronic bronchitis. To prevent these diseases, they feel that "it will be necessary to work toward the ultimate rejection of smoking as acceptable social behaviour." Evidence also accumulates linking cigarettes and heart attacks, a major killer. Heavy smokers, it has been found, have

three times as many fatal heart attacks as a comparable group of non-smokers.

Most smoking Americans are all too aware of such depressing statistics; since January, all cigarette packages have carried the warning: "Caution: Cigarette Smoking May Be Hazardous to Your Health." But this has had little effect either on the adult smoker or on the young. To sway the latter, anti-smoking propagandists are now trying a new approach. They are emphasizing the immediate, rather than the long-term, effects of smoking: the performance of non-smokers in the sphere of both physical work and intellectual capacity has been found to be superior to that of smokers.

There is food for thought in the apparent readiness of millions to risk life for sensuous gratification. Until men come to look upon the body as a living temple, they will naturally choose stimulants on the basis of what will titillate sensation instead of what will keep the soul's vehicle in the best working order. People everywhere need to be educated in the matter.

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Some shocking facts on the death-roll of animals in captivity have emerged from the recent conference in San Diego on the role of zoos in the conservation of wild life (*The Times of India*, October 31). According to a former game warden, for every animal seen in a zoo eight more must have died in the process of capture. A delegate from Colombia pointed out that for every quetzal (a golden-green Central American bird with magnificent tail-feathers) caught, 50 more die. Something needs to be done to prevent the callous neglect which is at the root of these tragedies.

It is encouraging to learn that the FAO is currently compiling information on animal-catching techniques in various countries. Cultivators in Kerala, for instance, where wild elephants are prolific and a menace to crops, use bananas poisoned with chemicals to kill them. According to a forest official, it takes several months for the poisoned animals to die. A more cruel approach to wild life is hard to imagine. If such shocking methods of extermination are to be prevented, there must be a plan for keeping elephants away from inhabited areas by providing them with sanctuaries.

Methods of transporting captured animals are also quite often primitive and heartless. The Animal Welfare Board of India has re-

peatedly drawn attention to the cruelties inflicted on monkeys during their capture and transportation — not to speak of their fate after they are transported! Some time ago, the Bombay SPCA moved in the nick of time to save 12 rare deer which had been packed in narrow crates and lowered into the hold of a steamer. It is said that 600 species of birds have become extinct in Colombia in recent years because of cruel methods of capture and transportation.

Universal Brotherhood being a fact in Nature, man's callousness towards his younger brothers, the animals, needs must, in time, bring its own retribution.

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Social workers in Madras are reported to be greatly concerned over the reappearance of obscene cinema posters in many parts of the city (*The Times of India*, October 31). The posters had gone out of circulation as the result of an agitation launched last year, but during the last few months they are said to be again on display outside cinema theatres and elsewhere. Social workers have demanded that the posters should be subjected to pre-censorship in the same way as films. The complaint is that they depict scenes which find no place in the film advertised by them and are used only as a ruse to attract people.

The problem is not new or peculiar to Madras. Some years ago Acharya Vinoba Bhave led a campaign against obscene posters in Nagpur and other places. The question, however, is, who is to judge whether a cinema poster is obscene or not? Where to draw the line between vulgarity and decency? Obviously there is no simple or conclusive answer to the problem of obscene advertisements, whether of films or of anything else. It is all a vicious circle: the posters, as also the films that they advertise, cater to popular taste, and this leads to further debasement of tastes and lowering of standards. What the people want (and that which they want is not always desirable) is stimulation of the senses and of the Kamic nature, and the film producers, keeping the box-office in view, give them precisely this kind of stimulation. As a matter of fact, our entire civilization is built upon unnaturally stimulated desires. Men do not grow in strength, in knowledge and power to serve by indulging their senses and their desire nature. Instead, they are in danger of falling prey to forces that deaden and which finally destroy.

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