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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE TRUE FRIENDS OF HUMANITY

### II

IT SHOULD NOT be forgotten that to spread a knowledge of philosophical truths forms but a small fraction of the important work the Occultists are engaged in. Whenever circumstances compel them to be shut out from the world's view, they are most actively engaged in arranging and guiding the current of events, sometimes by influencing people's minds, at others by bringing about, as far as practicable, such combinations of forces as would give rise to a higher form of evolution, and much other important work on a spiritual plane. They have to do and are doing that work now. Little therefore do the public know what in reality it is that they ask for when they apply for *Chelaship*. They have to thus pledge themselves to assist the MAHATMAS in that spiritual work by the process of self-evolution, for, the energy expended by them in the act of self-purification has a dynamic effect and produces grand results on a spiritual plane. Moreover, they gradually fit themselves to take an active share in the grand work. It may perhaps be now apparent why "THE ADEPT BECOMES; HE IS NOT MADE," and why he is the "rare efflorescence of the age." (*The Theosophist*, V. 180, May 1884: "The Metaphysical Basis of 'Esoteric Buddhism,'" by Damodar K. Mavalankar)

I never gave myself out for a full-blown Occultist, but only for a student of Occultism for the last thirty-five or forty years. Yet I am enough of an Occultist to know that before we find the Master within our own hearts and seventh principle — we need an outside Master. As the Chinese Alchemist says, speaking of the necessity of a living teacher: "Everyone seeks long life (spiritual), but the secret is not easy to find. If you covet the precious things of Heaven you must

reject the treasures of the earth. You must kindle the fire that springs from the water and evolve the Om contained within the Tong: One word from a wise Master and you possess a draught of the golden water." I got my drop from my Master (the living one)... He is a Saviour, he who leads you to finding the Master within yourself. It is ten years already that I preach the inner Master and God and never represented our Masters as Saviours in the Christian sense. (*The Path*, X. 367, March 1896: H.P.B.'s letter of 1885 to Dr. Franz Hartmann)

Few, comparatively, of any generation have ever or in the nature of things could ever see the splendid phenomenon of a Mahatma's astral apparition; for merely the magneto-psychic law of attraction and repulsion keeps Adepts and the reeking stew of social corruption far apart. Sometimes, under very favourable conditions they may approach an individual devoted to occult research, but this happens rarely; for even he, pure though he be, is wallowing in the world's corrupt *akasa* or magnetic aura and contaminated by it. To his inner self it is as stifling and deadly as the heavenly vapour of carbonic oxide to his physical lungs. And, remember, it is by the inner, not the outer, self that we come into relations with Adepts and their advanced Chelas. One would not expect to hold ennobling conversation with a besotted inebriate, lying in a state of swinelike stupefaction after a debauch; yet it is quite as impracticable for the spiritualized Mahatma to exchange thoughts with a man of society, living daily in a state of *psychic intoxication* among the magnetic fumes of its carnality, materialism, and spiritual atrophy. (*The Theosophist*, V. 1, October 1883: "Projection of the Double")

What, then, are the Adepts doing? Not possibly could all their work be stated. But, for a part:

(a) Assisting all good movements by acting on men from behind the scenes through mental influence.

(b) Preparing as many men and women who are fit for it so that they may, in their next incarnation, appear in the world as active devotees to the good of the Human Family.

(c) Spreading now, through impulses given in many places which must not be mentioned, a philosophy of life which will gradually affect the race mind, and in particular the active, conquering Western peoples, thus preparing the whole people to change and evolve yet further and further until evils disappear and better days and people reappear. (*The*

*Path*, VII. 319, January 1893: "The Adepts: Some Objections and Answers to Them" by W. Q. Judge)

The *Adept* and the *Chela* or another Adept are like the two signallers at the two ends of a Telegraphic line. It is only when the batteries are out of order, or moisture or some such cause prevents the free working of the wires — that expense has to be undergone to restore or keep the communication intact. In the same way the Adepts have to use *no power* in communicating with one another or with their *Chelas of a certain degree*, unless either of them is ill or exhausted by fatigue, etc., or unless some antagonistic influence interferes with the Astral Wires, if I may use the expression. In the case under notice, Mme. Blavatsky, who is in constant communication with the Adepts, was there. The presence of all the *Chelas* helped to keep the Astral Telegraph free from any disturbance, and little or no power had to be used to send the letter in question to Mr. Ramaswamier. . . . What is "phenomenal" for an outsider, is not necessarily so for a *Chela*. If others were to see my MASTER as I see Him, they would consider it a "phenomenon"; I do not, for I know that as the usual mode of communication between an Adept and his *Chela*. . . . The absence of Mme. Blavatsky and other *Chelas* would have prevented the occurrence; for in that case an appreciable amount of "power" would have to be used to lay the Astral Telegraphic Line. (Supplement to *The Theosophist*, April 1884: Note signed "D.K.M." to letter headed "Phenomena")

It should at first be realized that the Mahatmas are constantly and incessantly engaged in the helping of the onward progress of humanity. The higher they rise the more they are united to the more permanent and more ubiquitous. In fact, it is this union which marks the progress. Thus in one sense the real Mahatmas may be said to be almost everywhere, although they may not take cognizance of everything. But at the same time they cannot help giving their attention to where the magnetic attraction draws them; and hence to come under the notice of the Mahatmas depends upon oneself. . . . You will thus see that no interference or recommendation is necessary, and that for the Mahatmas to assist anyone is the result of a purely psychological attraction — an immutable *Law of Nature*, which no one can override. (*The Occult Word*, May-June 1884: Damodar K. Mavalankar's letter to Mrs. Josephine W. Cables)

True independence we believe in, but not in that sort which, merely from the influence of ideas of political freedom based on theoretical equality, causes a man to place himself on such an equal footing with others that he will not accord to beings infinitely beyond him in degree the highest marks of respect . . . the Adepts, while human, are not "simply like the rest of us." The highest divine being is truly a human ego in perfection, but the difference between the state of such an ego and these lower unperfected human gods is beyond our power to measure. And the difference is so great that the writer's second last sentence ["While we all have the germs of adeptship within us, but few have the character to lead a life that shall bring it out"] should be altered to read that, "while a few amongst tens of *thousands* have the power to strive for Adeptship, hardly one in all those thousands is able to comprehend the Mahatma as He is." (*The Path*, IV. 23, April 1889: Note signed "Ed." to "A Word on Pronouns")

My Masters and *the* Masters are Yogis and Munis *de facto*, not *de jure*; in their life not in appearance. They *are* members of an *occult Brotherhood*, not of any particular School in India. One of their highest *Mahachohans* lived in Egypt and went to Tibet only a year before we did (in 1878) and he is neither a Tibetan nor a Hindu; this "Occult Brotherhood" has not originated in Tibet, nor is it *only* in Tibet now; but what I always said and maintain to this day is, *that most of its members and some of the highest* are, and live constantly, in Tibet, because of its isolation and freedom from Christians; that its origin is of untold antiquity, and is as much Masonic as present Masonry *is little* Masonic; . . . and finally that if I spoke only (to our Fellows of T.S.) of two or three Masters it is because my own Masters happen to be a Rajput by birth — and "Koothoomi" a Cashmerian, and therefore these were likely to be more authoritative with the Hindus than the rest of them. . . . I said and repeat, that they are *living men* not "spirits," or even *Nirmanakayas*, that their knowledge and learning are immense, and their personal holiness of life is still greater — still they are mortal men and none of them 1,000 years old, as imagined by some. (*Theosophy*, September 1951: From H.P.B.'s letter of July 5, 1890, to a personal friend)

The real adepts — as we are reliably informed — are the most happy of mankind, since their pleasures are connected with the higher existence, which is cloudless and pangless. The earliest among the changes

felt by the true Chela is a sense of unmixed joy to be rid of the carking cares of common life, and to exist in the light of a supremely great Ideal . . . to become an adept, one must expand the finite into the Infinite, the personal into the Universal, man into Parabrahm — if one so choose to designate that Thing unspeakable.

. . . the love of the adept burns only for the highest of the highest — that perfect knowledge of Nature and its animating Principle, which includes in itself every quality of both sexes, and so can no more think as either man or woman, than the right or the left lobe of one's brain can think of itself apart from the whole entity of which it is a component . . . the aspirant after adeptship must evolve out of his physical nature a higher, more essential self which has no sorrows because of affectional enslavements of any sort. (*The Theosophist*, IV. 125, February 1883: Unsigned review of *Mr. Isaacs*)

Whether or not the response came from the Master named, it bears at least the one great mark of genuineness that it affirms the very first, most cardinal condition of personal intercourse with our teachers. "First DESERVE, then desire" is the key-note always. (Supplement to *The Theosophist*, February 1884: Unsigned note to article on "Divination by the Laurel Cubes")

Let me give you an advice. Never offer yourself as a chela, but wait until chelaship descends by itself upon you. Above all, try to find yourself, and the path of knowledge will open itself before you. (From Master M.'s letter of February 5, 1884, to Dr. Franz Hartmann)

It is not best for you that I should specify exactly what you should do, or where you should go. . . . We are leaders but not child-nurses. The weak ones, not the strong ones, are in constant need of definite "Orders," and at times our chelas satisfy their wishes. This is willing slavery, but no healthy growth. Step forward and try to see clearly yourself what is most needed for the Society. Seek out what your duty may be, and carry it out. If you do the right thing, I will be at your side; but I will not give any advice, and will not involve myself in anything, unless it be unavoidably required, and you were in great doubt. (From Master M.'s letter of January 12, 1885, to Dr. Franz Hartmann)

## THE VISION WE NEED

WE ARE in a New-Year cycle, and with the increase in the light and power of the sun — the “visible symbol of the impersonal Deity” — we can so resolve and will as to make the coming year bring forth everlasting good. Though we may not understand exactly what is meant when it is said that “the astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter,” we can at least take advantage of the rising cycle to analyse ourselves and ask what we can do in the future.

The message of Theosophy is often said to be that of Hope, Responsibility and Immortality, but looking at humanity today we find, instead, Despair, Licence and a sense of Nothingness. Man has lost his vision, and with it, his stimulus to action. It is said that “without vision the people perish,” and we see this before our eyes today. But, and this is important, why do we, students of Theosophy, separate ourselves from the rest of the world? We know the tenets, no doubt, but have we made them practical? Do we really live in terms of them or are we in a world of happy day-dreams, experiencing a sense of satisfaction with what we think we know? Is our vision one of “mind-painted pictures of good deeds”? Are our dreams those of an eternity of sacrifice, selflessness and work?

The Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* states the difference between the stages of evolution of the lower kingdoms of Nature and those of man. Nature is moved and guided entirely by natural impulse; man has to evolve by self-induced and self-devised efforts. He has also to learn *how* to do this. Instead of being ruled by a common mind, the Universal Mind, his evolution is by individual effort. He is now a “self,” a being who can choose what he will do. And with this “gift” of the power to choose and to learn, he has been given a vision of what is right to do. Instead of being moved by the common instinct and therefore having no individual responsibility (within certain limits), he has to be self-governed; he has to accept responsibility for all he does and thinks and feels.

We long for knowledge and have the inherent desire to learn more and more, but we take most of our thinking from others without analysing what we take, so that we are, in fact, for the most part ruled by the common thought of the age. We fall a prey to mass psychology and are ruled by advertisements which create the desire to possess this or that, or which impel us to believe what we are asked to believe. In

his age of transition men are breaking through many of the old ideas, and this is good, but what is being put in their place?

We are apt to forget that we are not only thinking beings, but also moral beings. We are responsible for what we think or feel or do. The basis for man's moral nature is shown in the first sentence of the Third Fundamental Proposition, and also at the end. All souls come from the same root; all are going through the same journey; all are working towards the unity of mind and heart and action which has its seat in the harmony of Spirit. The Second Fundamental has shown that all is ruled by Law. Therefore, if man gains a knowledge of Law, he sees his responsibility not only to himself but to all beings derived from the Universal Oversoul, "itself an aspect of the Unknown Root." Man is immortal in his true nature, but he has to gain *conscious* immortality by evolving along these lines, and if he does not succeed in this *Manvantara* he has to continue his efforts in a succeeding period of evolution.

This is the vision man needs. It develops accuracy of action, not mere technical accuracy, but moral accuracy—a true balancing of cause and effect—and the perfect expression of the Ideas in the Universal Mind. It means that he uses Nature's laws after learning them, and so becomes a co-worker with Nature, helping her (since all aspects of Nature are sentient and progressing), and so in time taking his rightful position as the intelligence behind all Nature.

In order to reach this condition, man's moral or feeling nature has to undergo a change. From self-enjoyment and self-love, emotion has to rise to the universal level, and to do so, he needs the vision that all men and all creatures are brothers, that all belong to one family, where the wiser help the less wise, the stronger the weaker. The whole training given by the wise and the strong to the less wise and the weak is that of self-responsibility. Bit by bit we begin to appreciate the vision given us of the really Wise. Our heart responds in devotion to those Elder Brothers whose sacrifice we begin to glimpse, until we become, with full self-responsibility, their willing servants in carrying out their work, which is ours, namely, the service of humanity and of all Nature.

The sense of immortality is rooted deep in us, but it needs nurturing, and that is just what is wrong with our world today, more especially the world of the youth. Unless we are careful, the world to be of the very young today, as they grow up, will be no better.

The youth cannot live without vision, but what kind of vision do they need? The vision offered to them today is that of freedom from

responsibility. They are putting themselves back to the animal stage where instinct rules, and where uncontrolled actions and emotions hold sway. Live "naturally," they are taught. Why look after the body and its living conditions? Some animals don't. Why control anger, hatred, affection, or the urge for sensation? Animals don't. We have forgotten that in the human kingdom there is an added burden which we cannot escape. It is the power to recall sensations and to recapture them; to look ahead to them with pleasure, heightening the pleasure to the *n*th degree. Whether a man admits it or not, he is not merely an animal. He lives under different laws and cannot avoid bringing on himself disastrous consequences if he lives as an animal. Today he is being taught how apparently to escape from the results of his actions. He forgets natural law, and in time licence causes not only the lowering of moral standards but also disasters to health. Even more, it shows a lack of will-power, and once that goes, stagnation follows.

The tragedy is that the youth so need a vision today that they take to drugs, which temporarily seem to supply such a vision, or to some form of *yoga*. These endeavours for a "short cut," or for sensation and change, are like going to a village school to learn the highest scientific advances of today, or the higher mathematics!

As students of Theosophy, part of our trouble is lack of a reasoned vision in terms of its practical working out. The goal is so far away. But we can set ourselves lesser goals as resting-places *en route*. We need to take stock of ourselves and see how far we are better off in practical life than those who have not the advantage of our philosophy.

One of the successful chelas of whom we know a little, Damodar K. Mavalankar, wrote:

If each member were but to do his duty to search, to investigate, to study, to digest and join with his fellow-men, actuated by the same noble aspirations, in giving to mankind the benefits of their labour, the day would not be very far off when the Masters of Occultism might find the necessary conditions to enable them to once more live in the world as openly and freely as did their predecessors of times long, long gone by, and give to such a prepared people the benefits of THEIR knowledge.

We can, each one of us, take the points given in the above-quoted words and find out whether we are following them or not.

*Search:* This needs effort. We have the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, and the answer to any question we can ask is to be

found in the printed word. But we need to search for it with an open mind. We need to search also in the depths of our own heart.

*Study and investigation:* We have not only to study and investigate what we read in our books — which itself is a long and arduous process — but in all aspects of life we must develop an attitude of mind which investigates before accepting anything. We must prove to ourselves, by reason and knowledge, whether a thing is part of the harmony of life or the reverse. For example: does each one of us have a *personal* view as to the prohibition of alcoholic beverages? Leaving the method out of account, do we have a personal view as to the drinking of alcohol? What did H.P.B. and all the Teachers throughout the ages say, and why?

This brings us to the next point: *Digestion* of what is studied. Only after search and investigation can come the digestion of all the facts. Digestion takes time. Do we give it? If, as a result of our search, study and investigation, we feel that H.P.B. and the Great Teachers are right, then we must find ourselves agreeing with them. If we take the prideful attitude that we know more than they, then we need some more heart-searching. With digestion comes the recognition of our duty to humanity, what is due to it from us. As Damodar says, we are to give others the benefits of our study and labour.

“Ideas rule the world,” and the mere fact that true spiritual ideas are not ruling the world today means that we students are not thinking them and expressing them sufficiently! Are we living in terms of them ourselves? Or are we living in terms of selfishness, greed, laziness, self-satisfaction and lack of will-power?

A much greater familiarity with all the ideas put forth for practical living is needed by us. Once we are familiar with them, we must study them and digest them, so that in time we may pass them on to others, with our inner conviction that they are correct. But the first stage is to spread what Theosophy teaches on these everyday problems.

Let us analyse in what ways our instincts control our lives, thoughts, feelings, and also automatic actions; let us find out to what extent we are self-controlled, to what extent that control is in terms of our present knowledge and experience, and to what extent it is in terms of the principle “Thus have I heard.” This is self-examination, by means of which we can see ourselves and our walk in life more clearly.

One further point. Let us apply all this advice to *ourselves*, not to others. When we feel inclined to judge another, let us ask, “What have

*I done?"* Most of us will find that the beam in our own eye, that beam of wrong thoughts and feelings and actions, is far bigger and more penetrating than the mote we have discovered in the eye of another. This is very humiliating, but also very rewarding. Let our New-Year resolutions be along these lines so that we can truly prepare ourselves to be of use in the next Great Cycle which is so near!

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### A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

I AM your friend, and my love for you goes deep. There is nothing I can give you which you have not; but there is much, very much, that, while I cannot give it, you can take. No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in it today. Take heaven! No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant. Take peace!

The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it, yet within our reach, is joy. There is radiance and glory in the darkness, could we but see; and to see, we have only to look. . . .

Life is so generous a giver, but we, judging its gifts by their covering, cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard. Remove the covering, and you will find beneath it a living splendour, woven of love, by wisdom, with power. Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch the Angel's hand that brings it to you. Everything we call a trial, a sorrow, or a duty: believe me, that Angel's hand is there; the gift is there, and the wonder of an overshadowing presence. Our joys, too: be not content with them as joys. They, too, conceal diviner gifts.

Life is so full of meaning and purpose, so full of beauty beneath its covering, that you will find earth but cloaks your heaven. Courage, then, to claim it: that is all! But courage you have; and the knowledge that we are pilgrims together, wending, through unknown country, home.

And so, at this Christmas time, I greet you: not quite as the world sends greetings, but with profound esteem, and with the prayer that for you, now and for ever, the day breaks, and the shadows flee away.

—From a letter written by FRA GIOVANNI on Christmas Eve, 1603

## THE PATHS TO KNOWLEDGE

Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

—*Revelation*, xviii. 4

THE STUDENT LIFE in Occultism is a strange life because it finds no parallel in ordinary human experience. It has its own discipline and its own set of Rules. Its axioms are *sui generis* and are more often than not contradictions of modern scientific thought. This is especially so because science is limited to the sensuous side of nature and therefore fails to understand the supersensuous. One instance may be cited to advantage. Morals, however lax, are supposed in no way to limit the search of the scientist or to vitiate his findings. The immorality of the scientist has no effect on his microscope or on the numerous aids with which he surrounds himself. On the other hand, the slightest deviation from the paths of morality by an Occultist has the effect of tainting his mind and distorting his perceptions. Worse still, the slightest impurity has the effect of closing those passages which alone can give ingress to the higher planes of being. Once this calamity is attracted, the student's immorality not only poisons his soul but also poisons all those who come in contact with him. Foul waters are not potable and it is this truism which made Jude exclaim: "Hate the very clothing that is contaminated with sensuality."

When in this life a man starts searching for divine knowledge, he does not necessarily do so for the first time. The quest may have started in preceding centuries and among civilizations now forgotten. The returning soul but picks up the thread of his previous efforts according as the cycles of his life permit. He comes across fellow searchers of incarnations past and renews his ties of a comradeship in their endeavour and a sharing in their sacrifice. Those enemies to his spirituality that he slew in previous lives will no longer return in this life. Yet the armies of the foe are hydra-headed and have to be slain past resurrection. In this life, there are battles always. It is in an environment of perpetual turmoil that the student has to find his bearings. Matthew Arnold catching a glimpse in human psychology put his ideas in verse: "Tasks in hours of insight willed, Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled." The student has so to equip himself as to be able to live through these dark and threatening hours of gloom. Many there are who in the first flush of enthusiasm try to rush into a lower plane counterpart of the circle of ascetics. If the urge which motivates them is emotional,

their efforts will wax and wane as do emotions, and will ultimately die the death to which emotions are prone. There is a flash of great expectations which is succeeded by darkness as enthusiasm wanes and exhaustion spreads. It is one of the duties of a student to see that he carries no run-down spiritual batteries and that his enthusiasm is keyed to the exact pitch.

When the soul is ripe to recommence his studies from where he left off in a previous incarnation, he also becomes ready to acknowledge his kinship with other souls whose aspirations commingled with his can form a nucleole of effort. They must now join together awaiting a fusion of their natures. It is the degree of this fusion which will determine the strength or the weakness of their Brotherhood. Societies, lodges, brotherhoods, churches, leagues and congregations are thus born, live their life and die out if the cementing binding energy loses its cohesive properties. Though the ultimate aim of any group is to have one mind and one heart, the forging of this in the truly spiritual sense may take years and is necessarily delayed till the least of the brothers is ready for the great event. It is here that the mettle of each soul-unit is tested. Are you chafing at your brother's weakness? Have you criticized him; slighted him; paid him scant courtesy; looked down upon him from the eminence of your virtuous heights? It may be true that your erring brother has retarded your growth, but can you not also realize that your own self-righteous stance may have contributed in no small measures to an alarming backsliding of the entire nucleus? This fall from a high sense of unity, this backsliding due to the somnolence of units comes because the Higher Force is neither invoked nor treasured in all moments of striving. Earthly norms of behaviour, earthly drawing in of energy from the lower aspects of *Prana* are not capable of achieving spiritual results. The invocation of Ishwar, the remembrance of Ishwar, the readiness to sacrifice for Ishwar (see *Patanjali*, I. 23-27) is impossible of attainment amidst the clutter of emotional urges.

In the second chapter of the *Gita*, Arjuna is drowned in a torrential stream of emotions. His values become inverted; his reasoning becomes a slave to his moods; he cannot see himself to be in the wrong; he questions his previous decisions. He is so captivated by his despondency that he is prepared to declare that the fight would be contrary to all spiritual principles. This state of the mind is common to all Arjunas. Without the experience of this despondency, no Arjuna would be capable of progress. He finds his own reasoning perfect. Yet, he intuitively senses the falsity of his position. It is this tacit acceptance of the posi-

tion that intellect alone is incapable of guidance that makes Arjuna request Krishna for his advice. The intuitive knowledge of the perennial philosophy cannot be compared with the knowledge obtained through a reasoning intellect. The difference is not one of degree but of kind. The modern Arjuna often tries to evaluate the spiritual by comparison with the dicta of modern science as though that which is *sui generis* can be accepted only if it conforms to the error-ridden conclusions of modern scientific thought. The despondency comes because Arjuna loses faith in the infallibility of the spiritual. His conclusions are wrong because his premises are wrong — they have put wrong values on the eternal and the perishable. The hold of the non-eternal is finally loosened in the Eleventh Chapter when Arjuna's reawakened Soul makes the great penance: "Having been ignorant of thy majesty . . . I have at times treated thee without respect in sport, in recreation, in repose, in thy chair and at thy meals, in private and in public; all this I beseech thee, O inconceivable Being, to forgive." Ere the student can learn of that Faith with which the Twelfth Chapter deals, he has to learn to choose his premises. Without this knowledge, he becomes like a child playing at blind-man's-buff.

The great difficulty is that the intellect by itself will never be able to grasp the full Truth even though it be presented through printed words upon a page. Unless the heart accepts it, the Truth must for ever remain hidden. This is the invariable law. True knowledge is not to be found merely in a book or an academy. It has to well up within the man and fill up the vacant spaces. As it bubbles forth in drops or in streamlets, it has to pass through the complex structure of the man's mind. Long before the divine knowledge has the chance to emerge on the physical plane, it picks up from the man's mind the tinge and colour of his morality. That which began as a pearl may ultimately emerge as a speck of mire. The knowledge which is channelled through purity heals and becomes a benediction. The knowledge that gets tainted through the effluvia of a sensual mind becomes of the earth earthy and is a scourge that visits large sections of mankind. The student who through neglect or perversity allows the divine Knowledge to be sullied, partakes of evil and inherits the wages of that evil.

All evil and sin are the offspring of selfishness. The pandering to one's appetites, the hungering for name, power and love have their roots in the person who views himself as one isolated from other persons and who therefore seeks to extract his satisfaction at the expense of those other persons. Sometimes the selfish and therefore the sinful masquerades

under the guise of philanthropy, altruism, assumed virtue or outraged piety. It is this selfishness which provides the tainting media to Knowledge, and the personality of the man provides the instrument. Both of these have to be removed expeditiously but also with an abundance of caution. Constant practice and an eradication of desires are the chief cleansing agents. They effect a cure by the simple expedient of filling in all available spaces of the mind with thoughts and images that reflect only the Spirit and Soul. When a personal desire arises, it has to be crowded out so that it can have no staying ground in the man's make-up. This in fact is the procedure which conforms to the injunction: "Resist without resisting."

This grand experiment (of chasing the money-changers out of the temple) has to be undertaken — as all momentous experiments should be undertaken — under the alert and watchful gaze of the operator. As the crowding out of the undesirable takes place, discipline itself is raised from tedious boredom to an exercise of absorbing interest. Here again there is need for caution. There are nuances of the personal element which may still percolate through and ruin the entire effort. The desire to outshine another in the imposition of discipline, the urge to brush aside co-disciples so as to reach the goal ahead of them are indications that the selfish nature is still very much alive and seeks expression in unorthodox ways. These strayings from the path of rectitude are not only indications of a backsliding. These become tainting media which impart their colours — light, medium or dark — and so discolour the pure white light of Truth. The harm, however, is not limited to the defiling of Truth. It dries up the man's power to serve. It makes the disciple tired and denuded of the vitality which alone can hold him steadfast to his Cause.

It therefore follows that the art of conserving energy is an important stage in the life-endeavour of the disciple progressing towards his knowledge. As men, we have access to several types of cosmic forces which can be drawn upon by him who knows the art of commanding these wondrous powers. The athlete draws upon one type of energy; the poet, the mystic and the sculptor draw upon yet other types and subtypes of the cosmic force. All these replenish or deplete their reservoirs by an unconscious or semi-conscious obedience or resistance to laws which govern these forces. The student has, as a first step, to learn to discriminate between the frittering away of energy and the conserving and the transmutation of that same energy. In the first case, he but impoverishes himself as does the wastrel in any department of life. In

the second, the energy, though expended by use, transfers itself through that very use into a higher state and so conserves itself for the man who used it. There exist students who after long years of sacrificial service have become frustrated because unconsciously they had all along worked for a reward. There are others who drifted away because they found they were left behind and apparent favours were shown to those who in their opinion deserved them the least. Personality and selfishness are in them racing towards their ruin. In such instances, though there was the outward show and semblance of service, their actions were merely worldly acts motivated by inferior forces. The higher power was not drawn upon mainly because it is always beyond the reach of the selfish and the personal. What they drew upon was a terrestrial force, and that having exhausted itself left them bankrupts — derelicts on life's ocean and a constant danger to navigation.

What each student is to be cautious about is that the freshness of his enthusiasm is not allowed to be drained away. When the mind is bent exclusively upon the contemplation of metaphysics (the personal and the selfish have the least chance to intrude here), a conjunction of the Manas and Buddhi takes place. The pulsation of the mind assumes a different vibration — the breathing, if one can call it that — is of an entirely different strata of *Prana*. The use of the higher force is induced by the act of living on a higher plane of consciousness. It is not a laboured manipulation of *Prana* — a practice deprecated by Theosophy. The energy so vitalized by the union of Buddhi-Manas remains with the man and is never entirely lost. It can be drawn upon for revitalizing the man and urging him on to greater efforts. The rationale of this lies in the fact that man is built up from every secret part of nature. From each such part must sustenance be drawn — not only through osmosis but now by invocation through the action of the awakened Will. It is for the recharging of his batteries that the student is advised to fall back upon the Spirit in all moments of leisure. Genuine recuperation is possible only by ascending to the higher planes of Being.

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## THE DRINK EVIL

[The first part of this article, dealing with "Moral Considerations," was reprinted in our last issue from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for January 1946. We reprint here the concluding portion.—Eds.]

### II.—WHAT DOES MODERN SCIENCE SAY?

THE ALCOHOL PROBLEM is coming to receive the scientific attention it has long merited. Three departments of modern science are concerning themselves with the problem of alcohol drinking: physiology, psychology and sociology. Therefore, for the study of the alcohol problem from the scientific point of view it may be examined from these three standpoints. It is admitted by the researchers themselves that their findings and knowledge in the field are incomplete, and their solutions, therefore, only approximations which must be adjusted as scientific knowledge progresses. Certain facts, however, have been discovered, and these should be made more widely known as a warning to laymen and especially to young people everywhere.

To glance first at some of the physiological effects of alcohol drinking: When an alcoholic beverage is drunk the alcohol is absorbed from the stomach and intestines. Alcohol is not digested. It passes directly into the blood and is carried rapidly to all parts of the body. By far the greater portion of it must be destroyed in the body by the process of oxidation, by which the body protects itself against alcohol as against other poisons. But alcohol undermines physical health and life by interfering with and depressing this greatest protective power of the body, namely, normal oxidation itself. Thus, alcohol cannot be considered as a food, since true foodstuffs stimulate oxidation while they themselves are being oxidized. When it is realized that oxidation lies at the root of all biological activity it may be clearly seen that any substance introduced into the body which interferes with this process must be health-destroying.

Further, every living organism, however simple or complex in structure, is composed of a cell or cells of protoplasm. The cell is termed by physiologists "the physical basis of life." From the aggregation of cells, tissues and organs are formed; and these in turn integrate into co-operative systems: muscular, nervous, circulatory, etc., and so form the body of the individual. What encloses the protoplasmic content of

cells is still somewhat mysterious, but it is called by many physiologists the cell-membrane. The first and immediate impact of ethyl alcohol, directly it enters the lymph space from the blood vessels, is upon these delicate cell-membranes. The action of alcohol on any organ is fundamentally due to its action upon the cell and its membrane. This membrane is essentially the cell's expression of its life under the conditions prevailing within and without it at any time. It is not a permanent structure but a vital dynamic one—the outcome of the protoplasmic response of the cell to its environment in relation to its own activity. Thus the cell membrane has the most direct relation to all functions, whether relating to digestion of food, excretion of waste products, manufacture of digestive juices, or any other; in a word, upon all the complex factors which constitute the processes of metabolism. This membrane is the principal controlling factor in all cell processes, and when it is changed the whole sequence of normal functional activity may be altered. It is because of the action of alcohol upon the sensitive cell membranes that its effects are so marked upon every tissue, organ and system of the human body. This membrane is the living barrier between health and disease, life and death, and alcohol is pre-eminently the barrier-breaker.

The nervous system consists of the brain, the spinal cord and the nerves. The pathologists' verdict is that alcohol is a protoplasmic poison with a special affinity for nerve and brain cells and fibres. Within a few minutes after it is drunk it passes the normal protective barriers of the brain directly into the cerebro-spinal fluid, and is thus brought into intimate contact with the whole central nervous system. The cerebro-spinal fluid cannot oxidize alcohol as rapidly as blood or liver does, so it remains longer in that fluid, causing consequently the greatest damage to that system. Common experience shows how alcohol drinking interferes with the functioning of the nervous system, hence the abstinence of sportsmen, airmen and surgeons when they wish to be at their best. Experiment shows with consistency and thoroughness that alcohol, even in the smallest doses, deadens or blunts the higher activity of the brain, weakening inhibition and control, and leading to neuro-muscular inco-ordination and diminished efficiency.

Today there is, generally speaking, a remarkable degree of unanimity amongst authorities on this point: that the direct effect of alcohol upon the nervous system is, in all stages and upon all parts of the system, to depress and suspend its functions. That it is, in fact, from first to last, a narcotic drug. All the commonly known and observable

effects of drinking may be ascribed to the paralysing effect of alcohol on the higher centres of the brain, the typical first stage of its action as a narcotic. By some scientists it is even classed as an anæsthetic because it depresses and abolishes the functions of the brain in descending order. First, judgment is disturbed, as also reason and thought; then voluntary movements are interfered with. There may even be, at one stage of its effects, a state of excitement induced by loss of control — but not from stimulation.

Most of the commonly known and observable effects on health of habitual drinking are brought about by its general interference with metabolism and nutrition, and to its specific action on the small blood-vessels; this latter leading to vaso-motor weakness and on to paralysis. Skin diseases are aggravated by alcohol, and the skin of habitual drinkers often becomes sallow and coarse. A connection is suspected between alcohol drinking and skin cancer.

It has long been recognized that among the most marked effects of alcoholic indulgence are those on liver, kidneys and stomach. Leaving aside minor derangements of these vital organs, the well-known major ones are: cirrhosis, latent cirrhosis and hepatitis (inflammation of the liver), especially in young people; and nephritis, inflammation of the kidneys. As to the stomach, alcohol even in strict moderation causes some retardation of gastric digestion, impaired movement and disturbance of normal secretion; there can be no doubt that alcoholic indulgence is responsible for a vast number of digestive diseases. In deep intoxication, digestive action ceases. Spasms are often produced in the muscular valve leading from the stomach to the intestines, causing vomiting.

Some other less widely known effects of alcohol drinking are:

(a) It upsets so radically the vitamin-calorie ratio in the body that vitamin deficiency results, bringing on the diseases commonly known as beriberi or “alcoholic neuritis,” and “wet brain,” a central neuritis, representing a complete absence of vitamin B<sub>1</sub>, which clouds consciousness and causes severe brain damage.

(b) It has been recently discovered that alcohol is actively harmful in many tropical diseases, *e.g.*, bowel diseases like dysentery; also sprue and cholera. As to the latter disease, one investigator writes: “Cholera ever attacks the intemperate first, and cholera prefers drinkers.”

(c) It has been found that excessive drinkers have a greater mortality and a shorter average life than moderate drinkers and abstainers.

(d) Alcoholic psychosis is a condition of mental disease in which

alcohol is either the primary cause or a secondary contributing cause. Writes Dr. C. C. Weeks, quoting Sir F. Mott:

The amount of alcohol which is daily consumed by the pillars of "Society" is quite sufficient to convert an epileptic or potential lunatic, or certain feeble-minded individuals, into criminal or certifiable lunatics.

Another interesting observation made by more than one investigator is that the thirst for alcoholic drinks is lessened in those on a vegetarian diet, and, conversely, is "more or less excited by animal food."

Recently reviewed reports of numerous experiments were summed up by scientists as showing that "the essence of the psychological effect of alcohol is that of reduced efficiency." After drinking alcohol it was found that muscular strength, reflex responses, skill, memory, reason, judgment and other measurable psychological functions were all impaired. This is indisputable. Psychiatrists, however, equally truly observe that people do not drink in order to be more or less efficient, but to obtain relaxation, to feel different, to gain confidence, or to get relief from pain, anxiety or fear. Both are right. By some psychologists the several reasons given for drinking are summed up as indicating a basic weakness of character in the drinker. To quote from the *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol* (Lay Supplement No. 10):

The degree to which one is ready to accept the fact that the world cannot be moulded to his wishes, the number of props he needs to support him against this inevitable fact, and the degree to which he avoids anxieties and frustrations, but particularly the degree to which his conduct is affected by these endeavours, make up the real difference between normal and neurotic and between neurotic and psychotic persons.

Based on the above is the psychologist's conclusion that alcoholism is a psychological disease. But now, what has the drinker to say? The average drinking person has many firm-fixed though false beliefs as to what "a drink" will do. Some of these are: it gives one a "lift"; it "restores energy"; it "peps one up"; it cures pain and fatigue. The experience of the drinker, which has a certain validity of its own, tells him that under certain circumstances he gains a comfortable, if careless, sense of well-being and cheer from his drinks. Is this then false? No. All these results of experiment and experience have a basis in fact. What then is the explanation?

The physical effects of alcohol drinking observed and recorded by

scientists, the reasons for drinking ascertained by psychologists and psychiatrists, the results felt by the drinker, are all explained by the numbing effect that alcohol has on the brain. Attention, judgment and the higher intellectual processes are all retarded at once by amounts of alcohol insufficient to intoxicate. In human life every impression which may lead to sensation or feeling passes first to the optic thalamus and is then passed to the cerebral cortex for the discriminating judgment and reasonable control which raise man above the level of the brute. The reactions of the human optic thalamus, *freed from the restraining influence of the cortex*, are an expression of the non-discriminating aspects of sensation. The bearing of this, when once it is realized that alcohol depresses and paralyzes cortical activity, is obvious.

Now man's great prerogative is to rise from more or less blind animal-like instinctive action to reasonable and deliberate self-conscious control; to bring every sensation and desire to the bar of judgment before allowing it to issue in action. It is thus that man develops from animal-man into a really human being, from which stage he can aspire to still higher states of life and conduct in which he may enter into communion with the Good, the Beautiful and the True, in a word, with the Divine. In all this upward movement, and indeed in all that makes for civilization in the true sense of the word, the brain is man's supreme instrument. When the instrumentality of the cerebral cortex is reduced or impaired, then man is dethroned.

By understanding that alcohol affects *first* the higher brain centres which control the voluntary behaviour, acting on these as a depressant or an anæsthetic, it is easy to grasp why relaxation and cessation of anxiety through suspension of judgment and the critical faculty, etc., result. Also how aggression and free expression of the lower sense propensities ensue; and how the time-sense and balance, both physical and mental, are upset.

Modern psychologists have come to the point of saying that: "If it were known *why* there is inebriety and alcohol addiction it could probably be prevented and cured." Further, they admit that alcoholism is probably most often caused by psychic sensitiveness or abnormality. They know that they have not solved the problem yet. They admittedly have no way of knowing who will become a habitual drinker and who will not. Therefore they warn against the so-called "tonics" which contain alcohol, for these have been found in many cases to be the physical-plane starting-point of the drink habit. And this brings us to consider

a few facts of the third, the social aspect of the problem of alcohol.

If tonics containing alcohol are detrimental to all and may prove fatal to some, the same is even truer of the socially popular cocktail. The tragedy of the "cocktail party" lies not merely in the physical damage to liver, digestion and other bodily organs caused by alcohol *per se*, but to the peculiar combination in these drinks of alcohol and the essential oils, for if the former blunts the power to judge and to control, the latter excites the motor part of the brain. With the weakening of control plus excitation of motor mechanisms, speech becomes freer and easier, possibly superficially brilliant, until the fuller action of the drugs upon judgment and discretion tells a different tale. This is now so well recognized that doctors in the U.S.A. are warning both legislative and diplomatic bodies that alcohol "is the psychological medium through which much legislative business is handled," and that liquor has been found to be "the most potent weapon in foreign policy when dealing with Americans." The Washington psychiatrist, Dr. M. M. Miller, insists that a man whose brain is bathed in alcohol can neither vote nor legislate wisely.

In many of his activities, man combines voluntary and automatic actions. As a result of education and practice, motor driving, for example, becomes almost automatic. The impairment by alcohol of neuromuscular co-ordination in a motor driver, whose own life and the lives of others may depend on his rapid and accurate movements, is a widely recognized and serious social problem. Reactions to stimuli require guidance and control by discrimination and judgment. When driving a motor, we see, we think, we act, and this trinity must be integrated for appropriate response. Alcohol inhibits this integration. Motor and traffic accidents are known to be so closely related to even slight intoxication on the part of those involved, that a whole legal procedure has come into being relating to alcohol and accidents.

Industry also is interesting itself in the problem of alcohol. Not many facts in this field have so far been obtained, but investigation is going on from the economic point of view.

Social workers have long known and warned that alcohol is the enemy of morality. It is an aphrodisiac, and because of that and its power to blunt conscience, it is one of the chief supports of prostitution and its powerful ally. International experience and statistics indicate, moreover, a close association between alcoholism and suicide.

The relation of alcohol to home life and children, and especially to

cruelty to children, are problems of the first magnitude. Sociologists state, and statistics bear them out, that the children of alcoholics are more apt to become alcoholics themselves than are the children of temperate parents. The three reasons given for this are:

1. Poor home environment of alcoholic families, with consequent neglect of children and lack of parental control.
2. The parents' example of excessive drinking.
3. Many alcoholics are from families in which mental disorders and abnormalities of personality are common. Members of such families are often much less able to resist intemperance and so become addicts.

Liquor drinking causes quarrelsomeness, carelessness, and callousness to the ordinary social duties and to the human obligations of life. The needs and cries of children make no impression on a brain dazed with alcohol; the finer parental feelings are blunted; normal affection and desire to protect are smothered. Statistical graphs show that convictions for cruelty to children fall with decreased consumption of alcohol. And one thing is clear and indisputable: mental and moral degeneracy of all kinds are found in the closest association with alcoholism.

The amazing story that physical science tells of what the beverage alcohol does to the human brain should be made widely known. Physiological, chemical, psychological and sociological facts are there to be used for educational purposes. Scientists are, in fact, using them with increasing success to popularize the humane belief that alcoholism is a sort of illness, and that the alcoholic deserves, not moral degradation, not jail sentences, but the dignity and assistance of medical care. So far, so good. But if such education and belief were the solution of the problem, why the appalling number of educated drinkers? In Canada and the United States a late estimate is that 43 million people out of 145 million drink; that there are 45,000 new cases of chronic alcoholism each year; and that alcoholic deaths in North America number about 25,000 annually! The fact is that even higher education is no safeguard against alcoholism. A recent survey showed that among those with alcoholic psychoses in public hospitals only 6 per cent were illiterate. Obviously, "trained brains succumb to alcohol as readily as untrained ones."

With their immense collection of facts in hand, earnest researchers are now enquiring whether there is any positive solution, and are beginning to add to their educational literature, designed primarily to appeal

to reason, an additional appeal to the ambition and the humanitarian tendencies of the young whom they desire to save. It is deeply significant, from the Theosophical viewpoint, that investigators are realizing that the problem is basically a psychological one. Unfortunately, the faulty assumptions and insufficient knowledge of the modern psychologists stand in the way of an adequate solution. The profound and detailed system of ancient Oriental psychology presented by H. P. Blavatsky in the synthetic system known today as Theosophy will contradict none of the facts which the modern scientists have discovered. But, making clear the *why* of man's desire to drink, it can equip him with the knowledge necessary to face his problems squarely and to rise above the temptation of alcohol.

### III.—A THEOSOPHICAL VIEW

[The following extract is reprinted from a letter from W. Q. Judge.—EDS.]

GENERALLY SPEAKING, the habit of drinking intoxicants is due to a desire to get rid of what might be called the present personal consciousness. When people drink to try and drown sorrow, pain, worry, they clearly do it with that motive in view. But others drink without any such ostensible motive, though still with the same actual motive, for they long to get rid of what is to them an intolerable sense of identity, of monotony, of sameness. It is an effort to produce by extraneous aids what can only be done properly and lastingly by interior development. People read trashy novels, gamble and so forth with the same motive, that is to say, with the intention of getting rid of their personal identity for the time being. Ultimately, the race will come to realize that this can only be achieved by identification of the ego with the higher instead of the lower nature. Meanwhile, and for the ordinary person, healthy and interesting occupation is the best cure for such a habit. If possible, he should be made to understand that the desire for drink is now a habit in certain lives in his body whose very existence depends upon their being fed with alcohol. The desire is not in himself unless he is foolish enough to identify himself with the desire. Once he ceases to so identify himself, the desire will lose more than half its power over him.

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## PREDESTINATION OR FREE CHOICE?

PREDESTINATION, often called Kismet, or just Karma, is difficult to comprehend, for it embodies two aspects: (1) the binding force of Kismet or Karma, action and reaction, and (2) the position of the actor-recipient of Kismet or Karma.

One of the main arguments for predestination, when the subject is viewed apart from the pseudo-religious aspect, is that Karmic action "may be known by calculation from cause to effect; and this calculation is possible because the effect is wrapped up in and is not succedent to the cause" (Aphorism No. 8 on Karma, *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*). And if each life is the outcome of previous lives, then man is doomed by those previous lives.

Here we leave out the aspect of the actor who acts and who receives effects, for we say we, the personality we now are, did not perform those prior actions, and that therefore it is unfair that we should receive the effects. We regard these effects as bringing the difficulties we meet, and fail to remember that not only the bad but also the good in our present character, our present environment, our present opportunities, is a heritage from the past for which we, the present personality, did not work and strive. They are a "free gift," and the balance of Nature is such that the "good" that comes to us is capable of overwhelming and conquering the "bad." In the process of overcoming the difficulties, we gain in character. The poet Robert Browning felt this intuitively when he wrote that we should welcome each rebuff because of its value to our character. Our present life, therefore, with its environment and opportunities (or lack of them) should not be thought of as merely composed of difficulties and sorrows and suffering, but as an opportunity to overcome them and to strengthen the good or spiritual in our character, our environment and circumstances.

How shall we progress within these limits? By using our inherent power to choose how to act, how to accept, how to reject. Granted that the strength and wisdom or otherwise of the power which enables us to choose is a "gift" from the past, yet *we* have to use the power; no one else does it for us.

What is it that makes us choose in a particular manner in any circumstance? Let us try to see the factors that govern our choices: (1) desire of that which is pleasant; (2) avoidance of what is unpleasant; (3) in-

decision as to what should be done; (4) recognition of universal law and the spiritual nature of man and of the universe.

The first two of these factors should hold no place in our choice at this stage of our evolution, though, unfortunately, they are the main deciders of choices today. The last two factors deal with the voice of conscience and the voice of the Ego. Indecision ceases when we appeal to the conscience (what we should not do), and then to the higher voice (what we should do in terms of the highest knowledge we possess). Conscience is like a tool given us to use. It is the knowledge gained by past experiences. The voice of the Inner Ego is a tool we are fashioning for use today and in the future. It is the use of these tools that guides our choices.

We are therefore bound by the effects of actions performed in past lives. We cannot change our stature, or our race, or our family line. We cannot change our civilization. But in all conditions we have the power of free choice, and we are never bound by any circumstances to act in a way we do not want to act. The only thing we are bound by as regards present actions is their effects. For example, no one compels us to get up in the morning and go to work. But we get up because of the effect our not getting up would have on our work and on ourselves. Here we know the effect. But in many other complicated cases we do not know what the effect will be, and so we choose without true knowledge. Krishna says that we must be unconcerned as to the results of our actions. Let us act rightly — and we all know the moral principles which should guide our actions — and leave the effects to themselves. As by our present actions we are predetermining the effects which will come to the Ego's new personality in another life, we have to think of this angle to predestination.

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Look! the clay dries into iron,  
But the potter moulds the clay;  
Destiny today is master,  
Man was master yesterday.

—EASTERN PROVERB

## LINES OF EFFORT

Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY presents a consistent philosophy. Its cosmogony is stupendous in its scope and the evolutionary stages are set out in startling clarity. Proceeding to ethics, the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation are explained and their rationale demonstrated as precisely as any theorem of Euclid. Even to the average mind, Theosophy appears more profound than the sentiments aroused by the bell, book and candle of exoteric religions. Theosophy sees life, not as a struggle of one human unit against another, but as an opportunity for conducting a grave and momentous experiment in living.

In the context of the impersonality that Theosophy advocates, the concept of duty takes on a different aspect from that which prevails in either the philosophy or the ethics of the day. Theosophical discipline demands that the personal be eschewed and the selfish eradicated. That which is passionate, that which promotes the interests of one group or one unit against those of another, has to be brushed aside — eliminated. In the context of such a philosophy, it often becomes puzzling for the student to chart out his duties for the living of a Theosophical life. It is evident that such duties have to be of universal application and must deal with the progression of the soul. Set out below are some duties suggested by ideas culled from a letter written in the early days by the Great Master of Wisdom:

(1) Before you attend to your own salvation, be self-sacrificing enough to search for all possible means by which the right path may be seen and chosen by those who are near to your circle of effort. Then seek to expand your circle of influence. It matters not if such effort seems to retard your own advancement.

(2) Bigotry and superstition are just as rampant among men of science as they are among men of religion. If the materialistic way of life has touched you, you too are contaminated and are thus a potential carrier of the infection. These poisonous weeds have to be first killed in yourself and then in others.

(3) You have to demonstrate in your own life the possibility that animal propensities can be curbed and overcome, and also adduce proof by reasoned arguments that your case for the eradication of these propensities is just. People generally accept that it is wrong to be angry or to be jealous. Very few know the reason why. It is excellent discipline to tabulate your own reasons.

(4) In all ages, the ignorant masses have followed the lead of the intellectuals. When people in the mass have ceased to evaluate correctly the ideals of discipline, sacrifice and gratitude, know that the rot must have started with the intellectuals of the race. So, work to effect a change in the moral fibre of the so-called learned. Prepare yourself to meet the intellectual on his own ground and then bend his intellect towards the Light. You have the right to do this.

(5) When you have yourself lived Theosophy and benefited by it, it becomes your duty to canalize its waters to irrigate other fields. For this, preach and popularize a knowledge of Theosophy. In your grand aloofness, do not for a moment say: "If they desire Theosophy, let them come to me, my doors are open." The work of the missionary is best performed by a roving ambassadorship among the populace. It were foolish of you to expect that the field will come to your doorstep for the sowing of seeds. Remember that it is the missionary who is nearest to martyrdom.

(6) The Theosophical Society was chosen by the Initiates as the corner-stone — the foundation of the future religions of humanity. The edifice for which the Theosophical Society served as foundation has yet to be built. Will you be a layer of bricks and a carrier of stones? Have you attained the required proficiency?

(7) To achieve brotherhood among the many, an intermingling of the high and the low of society was decided upon. There was a time when the high looked down upon the low. The tables are turning and the low are now beginning to assume the high positions. But the sharp cleavage exists and motivates vast multitudes of men. Can you contrive to bring this conflict to a halt and promote a genuine friendly striving where both unite enthusiastically to reach a common goal?

(8) The combative natural instinct of man has led to tyrannies, enslavement and tortures, and may yet visit humanity with unheard-of cruelties unless it is restrained through the soothing influence of brotherhood and the practical application of the esoteric doctrines. If you would lend a helping hand, practise brotherhood first in your

family and immediate environment.

(9) It is your duty to acquire enough knowledge to carry conviction to the many and to be able to demonstrate that the fundamental doctrines of all religions are identical in their esoteric meaning. Study along this line is incumbent. It is one of the three objects of the Theosophical Movement.

(10) It is your duty that you efface the personal ego in order that the true Self be perceived. This Self has to be enthroned in a transcendental divine life.

(11) It is your duty to go on teaching the multitudes that this earthly existence is a burden and an illusion. What men call "the struggle for life" applies to this illusion only. The same "struggle" is non-existent on the moral planes of being.

(12) It is your duty to preach to the world the noble ideals of benevolence, philanthropy and reform. But take care that you live up to these ideals and do not make of them a mockery in your own life.

(13) Your mission sooner or later is to concern yourself with the care of the teeming millions and especially of their hereafter. Abandon your posture of a grand isolation. Enter upon your missionary duty with the zeal born of an unquenchable love.

(14) They are not fit to receive Knowledge who have no thought for the many. Beware lest you give of the hard-earned Knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, to such selfish seekers after Knowledge.

(15) Make it your mission in life to be born again and yet again for the benefit of mankind. You may have to subject yourself to misery, to imprisonment in flesh, to all the sorrows of life, so that out of your self-sacrifice you may become the means for the securing of salvation and bliss in the hereafter for a handful of men.

(16) In Theosophy lie the solutions of the great problems of the dual principles of right and wrong, of pain and pleasure, of egotism and altruism. Search for these solutions diligently, for they have the power to transform your life. Having secured your bounty, go you out among your brothers and help them to a like transformation. He who thinks he can preserve to himself the fruits of spiritual advancement labours under a serious error. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

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## THE SEEDS OF WISDOM

THE SEEDS OF WISDOM are the immortal and eternal ideas of all ages given out by the Great Teachers to humanity. They have appeared, disappeared and reappeared in the world of mortals at different times and places, clothed in different languages and different forms suited to the needs of the people. They have been given out time and again, but such is the frailty of human nature that they are soon forgotten and the mighty art of life gets lost. People first get slack in application, then careless, indifferent and lazy, and somehow prefer to drift along in the ocean of ordinary existence rather than to set sail according to right principles in the direction of the haven of peace and concord.

Just as it is not possible for ordinary seeds to grow in a barren soil or a ground full of weeds, so also with the seeds of Wisdom. They can only fructify in a soil well cultivated and well nurtured with daily efforts along the right lines. There must be first the awareness that such seeds exist, then there must be the inner urge and yearning to acquire them. Once acquired, they cannot be neglected or misused for selfish purposes.

These seeds of Wisdom were first impressed upon the mind of infant humanity by high exalted Beings, Divine Intelligences who had perfected themselves in prior fields of evolution. In the Ninth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna states: "I am the origin and the dissolution, the receptacle, the storehouse, and the eternal seed." These are significant words. Krishna, the One Self, the Omnipresent Spirit, is the eternal seed of all Wisdom, the storehouse of Eternal Verities, the origin and dissolution of all forms. Herein lies the key to understanding the origin of all Wisdom, the archetypal ideas and archetypal forms. It is from that eternal seed that have sprung all religions, sciences and philosophies. This is the reason why in the Fifteenth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna states: "Men say that the *Ashwattha*, the eternal sacred tree, grows with its roots above and its branches below, and the leaves of which are the *Vedas*." A contemplation on this subject opens our minds and hearts to the way this seed took root and spread for millennia upon millennia, and still remains in the custody of the great perfected ones. Great truths came down to humanity at first orally, from one generation to another, then a record was made in geometrical signs and symbols, and much later on it was written down.

In the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Krishna mentions

his divine pedigree:

This exhaustless doctrine of Yoga I formerly taught unto Vivaswat; Vivaswat communicated it to Manu and Manu made it known unto Ikshwaku; and being thus transmitted from one unto another it was studied by the Rajarshees, until at length in the course of time the mighty art was lost, O harasser of thy foes! It is even the same exhaustless, secret, eternal doctrine I have this day communicated unto thee because thou art my devotee and my friend.

It is an eternal fount whose life-giving waters ever assuage the thirst for Wisdom of all aspirants and earnest seekers after truth, though the mighty art disappears from the public world in course of time. Krishna the eternal seed! Therein lies the clue to all mysteries of nature and man. Underground vaults and mountain caves may contain vast libraries of recorded knowledge about life on earth and beyond the gates of death, about the laws of Nature, about sorrow and suffering and how to remove them, and various other subjects, but it is well to recognize that the source of all Wisdom is the eternal seed. And once that realization dawns, life takes a different turn altogether.

The seeds of Wisdom cannot sprout and grow in airless space. To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in Maya's realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless SAT, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions. (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 28)

Here we are given the means and the method of cultivating the seeds of Wisdom within ourselves. We are advised to soar beyond illusions. Most of the time we are affected and influenced by the fleeting panorama of life, the experiences of pleasure and pain, success and failure, etc. We have to learn to recognize them as passing shadows, remembering that they create obstacles in the quest of Truth. Fancy's false suggestions are to be turned down as unreal and impermanent. The mind has to breathe the pure air of the high altitude of the immortal soul to reflect its light and radiance, its glory and power, its wisdom and compassion. The earthly atmosphere clogs the mind, and a hundred chords of desire and sense inclinations bind it till finally the soul becomes a victim of the lower self. The mind needs breadth of vision and depth of understanding to keep on its own track of soul-light without wavering and without turning back. The mind-soul has to work in unison and

harmony. "Thyself and mind, like twins upon a line, the star which is thy goal burns overhead" (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 21). This has to be kept in mind always. The mind and soul, though twins upon one line, are at the present time divorced and in eternal conflict with one another. What are the "points" that will draw the mind towards the Diamond Soul? The assuming of a firm position; reliance on the Higher Self and the Great Law; the constant practice of Raja-Yoga, the Kingly Science and the Kingly Mystery; service of our fellow beings; in one word, altruism. One of the main "points" should be to keep before the mind's eye the ideal of the great perfected beings, the custodians of the seeds of Wisdom. Concentration, meditation, performance of all duties without thinking of the reward, are all of the utmost necessity in living the life of the soul. The mind must change its level from the personal to impersonal and universal ideas.

These seeds of Wisdom cannot be bought or sold. Madame Blavatsky states:

There was a time when the acquirement of Divine Wisdom (*Sapientia*) required the sacrifice and devotion of a man's whole life. It depended on such things as the purity of the candidate's motives, on his fearlessness and independence of spirit; but now, to receive a patent for wisdom and adeptship requires only unblushing impudence. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 32*, p. 6)

People usually like short cuts, but we are warned against them by Theosophy.

The last effort was made by the Masters of Wisdom during the last quarter of the 19th century when they sent out their Messenger, Madame H. P. Blavatsky, with a few of the seeds of Wisdom suited to the age and to the mind of the race. Future efforts will very much depend upon the use made of the seeds given already and their proper growth. It is the duty and the responsibility of every student to nurture the seeds so that they may bear fragrant flowers and luscious fruits which will remove the starvation of the soul.

The seed produces the tree and the fruits, which in their turn produce other seeds, and thus from the eternal seed emanate seeds of Wisdom, the accumulated Wisdom of the ages. The study, application and promulgation of the seeds leads us to the eternal seed, Krishna, the Divine Self which permeates all and everything.

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## LOWER MIND, A GOOD SERVANT BUT A BAD MASTER

“BEHOLD, I KNOW,” says the lower mind, and so saying, shuts the door in the face of further knowledge on any particular subject. The knowledge we possess is now our master.

“Thus have I heard,” says the “I” in us which is the master of the lower mind. If today we have learnt by hearing, tomorrow we may do the same; there is no finality to our knowledge. We recognize that there is that which can teach the lower mind.

Of what value, then, is the lower mind? Its work is to make the effort to understand the knowledge it has been taught. It is the tool of the knowledge we have heard. When the lower mind acts on its own, it can only look at life through sense impressions, reason and logic. But as reason and logic rest on the premises of knowledge already possessed or gained from sense impressions, the conclusions reached are often untrue, or biased. It is therefore essential that reason and logic should guide us in our understanding of what we have “heard,” and this applies mostly to what we have heard from the lips or writings of someone wiser than ourselves. By applying our logic and reason we shall find that these sayings throw light on what our senses tell us.

The next stage is to prove by application what has been heard. Then we neither say, “Behold, I know,” nor “Thus have I heard,” but with the Buddha we can say, “Behold, I show you the truth.” What is of value, then, is neither what we know nor what we have heard, but what *is*. We become a pure channel through which Truth can be expressed. The mind becomes the servant of the Truth, carrying it to all. Truth alone is the Master.

“The Mind is the great Slayer of the Real. Let the Disciple slay the Slayer.” To doubt oneself is to forget that we are the divine, but to doubt the lower mind and sense impressions is necessary for growth. Reason has to be seen as a good servant but a bad master, for it shuts out man’s spiritual perceptions, his soul intuitions. We can only reason in terms of what knowledge we possess, but if we remember the law of analogy and start with the basic idea of the oneness of Life and the universality of Law, reason will prove to us that our intuition is true.

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

[We reprint here, from *The Theosophist* for November 1883, the concluding part of this series, which began in our November 1966 issue.—EDS.]

### QUESTION VII

#### INSCRIPTIONS DISCOVERED BY GENERAL A. CUNNINGHAM

WE HAVE carefully examined the new inscription discovered by General A. Cunningham on the strength of which the date assigned to Buddha's death by Buddhist writers has been declared to be incorrect; and we are of opinion that the said inscription confirms the truth of the Buddhist traditions instead of proving them to be erroneous. The above-mentioned archæologist writes as follows regarding the inscription under consideration in the first volume of his reports: "The most interesting inscription (at Gaya) is a long and perfect one dated in the era of the *Nirvana* or death of Buddha. I read the date as follows: *Bhagavati parinirvritte samvat 1819 Karttike badi 1 Budhe*, that is, 'in the year 1819 of the Emancipation of Bhagavata, on Wednesday, the first day of the waning moon of Kartik.' If the era here used is the same as that of the Buddhists of Ceylon and Burmah, which began in 543 B.C., the date of this inscription will be  $1819 - 543 = \text{A.D. } 1276$ . The style of the letters is in keeping with this date, but is quite incompatible with that derivable from the Chinese date of the era. The Chinese place the death of Buddha upwards of 1000 years before Christ, so that according to them the date of this inscription would be about A.D. 800, a period much too early for the style of character used in the inscription. But as the day of the week is here fortunately added, the date can be verified by calculation. According to my calculation, the date of the inscription corresponds with Wednesday, the 17th of September, A.D. 1342. This would place the Nirvana of Buddha in 477 B.C., which is the very year that was first proposed by myself as the most probable date of that event. This corrected date has since been adopted by Professor Max Müller."

The reasons assigned by some Orientalists for considering this so-called "corrected date" as the real date of Buddha's death have already been noticed and criticized in the preceding paper; and now we have only to consider whether the inscription in question disproves the old date.

Major-General Cunningham evidently seems to take it for granted, as far as his present calculation is concerned, that the number of days in a year is counted in the Magadha country and by Buddhist writers in general on the same basis on which the number of days in a current English year is counted; and this wrong assumption has vitiated his calculation and led him to a wrong conclusion. Three different methods of calculation were in use in India at the time when Buddha lived, and they are still in use in different parts of the country. These methods are known as *Sauramanam*, *Chandramanam* and *Barhaspatyamanam*. According to the Hindu works on astronomy a Sauramanam year consists of 365 days, 15 ghadias and 31 vighadias; a Chandramanam year has 360 days; and a year on the basis of Barhaspatyamanam has 361 days and 11 ghadias nearly. Such being the case, General Cunningham ought to have taken the trouble of ascertaining before he made his calculation the particular *manam* (measure) employed by the writers of Magadha and Ceylon in giving the date of Buddha's death and the *manam* used in calculating the years of the Buddhist era mentioned in the inscription above quoted. Instead of placing himself in the position of the writer of the said inscription and making the required calculation from that standpoint, he made the calculation on the same basis on which an English gentleman of the 19th century would calculate time according to his own calendar.

If the calculation were correctly made, it would have shown him that the inscription in question is perfectly consistent with the statement that Buddha died in the year 543 B.C. according to Barhaspatyamanam (the only *manam* used in Magadha and by Pali writers in general). The correctness of this assertion will be clearly seen on examining the following calculation.

543 years according to Barhaspatyamanam are equivalent to 536 years and 8 months (nearly) according to Sauramanam.

Similarly, 1819 years according to the former *manam* are equivalent to 1798 years (nearly) according to the latter *manam*.

As the Christian era commenced on the 3102nd year of Kaliyuga (according to Sauramanam), Buddha died in the year 2565 of Kaliyuga and the inscription was written in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga (according to Sauramanam). And now the question is whether according to the Hindu almanac the first day of the waning moon of Kartik coincided with a Wednesday.

According to *Suryasiddhanta* the number of days from the beginning

of Kaliyuga up to midnight on the 15th day of increasing moon of Aswina is 1,593,072, the number of Adhikamasas (extra months) during the interval being 1608 and the number of Kshayatithis 25,323.

If we divide this number by 7 the remainder would be 5. As Kaliyuga commenced with Friday, the period of time above defined closed with Tuesday, as according to *Suryasiddhanta* a week-day is counted from midnight to midnight.

It is to be noticed that in places where Barhaspatyamanam is in use Krishnapaksham (or the fortnight of waning moon) commences first and is followed by Suklapaksham (period of waxing moon).

Consequently, the next day after the 15th day of the waxing moon of Aswina will be the first day of the waning moon of Kartika to those who are guided by the Barhaspatyamanam calendar. And therefore the latter date, which is the date mentioned in the inscription, was Wednesday in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga.

The geocentric longitude of the sun at the time of his meridian passage on the said date being  $174^{\circ} 20' 16''$  and the moon's longitude being  $7^{\circ} 51' 42''$  (according to *Suryasiddhanta*) it can be easily seen that at Gaya there was Padyamitithi (first day of waning moon) for nearly 7 ghadias and 50 vighadias from the time of sunrise.

It is clear from the foregoing calculation that "Kartik 1 badi" coincided with Wednesday in the year 4362 of Kaliyuga or the year 1261 of the Christian era, and that from the standpoint of the person who wrote the inscription the said year was the 1819th year of the Buddhist era. And consequently this new inscription confirms the correctness of the date assigned to Buddha's death by Buddhist writers. It would have been better if Major-General Cunningham had carefully examined the basis of his calculation before proclaiming to the world at large that the Buddhist accounts were untrustworthy.

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HELP thou thy brother's boat across and lo, thine own hath touched the shore.

—CONFUCIAN SAYING

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Though a handful of concerned individuals have for years been trying to awaken the people of the world to the grave and impending danger of a nuclear war resulting from a continued arms race, yet few seem to listen and respond to the alarm. Dr. Lester Grinspoon, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Senior Research Psychiatrist at the Massachusetts Mental Health Centre, in his concluding chapter from *International Conflict and Behavioural Science*, used by permission in *Fellowship* for July 1967 under the title "The Truth Is Not Enough," discusses why certain disquieting facts are unacceptable; what happens when people are suddenly made aware of alarming facts with which they have no way of coping; and finally whether there are not less frightening and more effective ways of confronting people with unwelcome truths.

Despite the magnitude, the imminence, the ever-present danger of nuclear accident and conflict, such a calamity is not accepted because, says Dr. Grinspoon,

people cannot risk being overwhelmed by the anxiety which might accompany a full cognitive and affective grasp of the present world situation and its implications for the future. It serves a man no useful purpose to accept this truth if doing so leads only to very disquieting feelings — feelings which interfere with his capacity to be productive, to enjoy life, and to maintain his mental equilibrium.

This remarkable ability to avoid the acceptance of compelling facts suggests that the individual is employing active psychological processes which protect him against uncomfortable feelings. These conscious and unconscious mechanisms involved in maintaining men's internal peace are protective and adaptive. They are employed by that agency of the mind known as the ego.

But truth alone is not enough. To make whole populations really appreciate the nature of the present risks, in the absence of concomitant means of dealing with them, might, in fact, lead to disastrous consequences. Men and women would be burdened with feelings with which they might have no way of coping constructively. For some, these feelings may precipitate serious mental illness, or fear might lead them to activities which would increase world tensions. As Dr. Grinspoon puts it:

... people living in the thermonuclear age cannot really accept the facts of this moment in history without a concomitant means or hope of altering them for the next. . . . A psychotherapist, for example, does not offer an interpretation his patient is not prepared to deal with. Furthermore, it is his responsibility to understand what the consequences of the interpretation will be, what it will mean to this particular patient in this particular relationship at this particular time. Similarly, the surgeon does not tell his patient he has cancer simply because he has it. Those who would have others know "the truth" must take into account what "the truth" would mean to them and how they would respond to it. . . .

There are existing models for making disturbing "truths" acceptable. One of them derives from the psychotherapy relationship. A patient or a group of patients can, on the strength of their relationship with the responsible and trusted therapist, accept from him "truths" which under any other circumstances they might not be able to deal with constructively. Another model might be a programme or activity which promises to modify unacceptable facts. If people believe that there is something they can do about an otherwise intolerable situation, they can come closer to a fuller appreciation of that situation. One can conceive of a model which represents a hybridization of the above two. In this case, a leader who commands the respect and trust of his people would not simply call their attention to disturbing facts; he would provide the means, or at least a belief in the means, by which they could be altered. He would, so to speak, take with one hand and give with the other.

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The All-India Institute of Medical Sciences has still to complete its decade-old research project on the effects of "yoga" and "meditation" on brain waves and the involuntary nervous system. The Institute scientists have not been able to get the answers to all their queries mainly because many "yogis" have not come forward to assist in this research.

A report in the *Delhi Statesman* for October 18 states:

The studies so far have made it clear that beginners feel relaxed because of yogic exercises and their energy requirements are less than those of others. . . . It was found that those who claimed to have stopped the heart beat or pulse only stopped the

sound by pressure of muscles and not the functioning of the heart. Only in one case a man was able to slow down the functioning. . . .

Some, who claimed that they did not feel any pain, were found to have the same sensation as a normal man but would not feel it. Another interesting case was that of a man sweating at any particular part of the body at will.

Some yogis claimed they could keep in a closed underground cell for long periods. They were kept in air-tight cabins and all body reactions were checked. It was found in one such yogi that he could reduce his oxygen requirement by 50% of what was his normal need in a state of rest.

As for meditation, the researchers found that the brain of a yogi in deep meditation was in an "awake but relaxed" state known as alpha activity. The state was explained as one of a car engine which had been started but the car was still stationary. In this state, the yogi was not disturbed by outside stimulation. This amounted to voluntary control of brain functions. . . . During the research there have been some very interesting cases like those of "nad yogis" who go into meditation through music. . . .

The scientists working on the project say that they would like to confirm several other claims made from time to time by yogis, to find the difference in several types of meditation and also to trace the development of body functions as a result of yoga from beginning to perfection or near perfection.

A good deal has been said in Theosophical literature about the danger of pursuing Yoga practices such as regulating the breathing, assuming certain postures of the body, etc. Mr. Judge wrote in *The Path* for March 1891 that he "instituted some experiments for the purpose of showing what is the effect, if any, upon the physical system of a certain sort of breathing used in Hatha Yoga practices," and he records the results of one such experiment for the benefit of inquirers. A physician assisted at the experiment. It was found that the pulse of the practitioner was reduced by 20 beats in 14 minutes, with an intermission of five minutes inbetween. Mr. Judge concludes: "As all the Hindu books invariably state that great caution should be used and that there are dangers, we can see here a very great danger found in an effect upon the heart's action."

There are many today who have adopted the name of Yogis, "with as little idea of true 'Yogism' as a poor Chinaman has of the ceremonials and etiquette of the Queen's Drawing-room" (*The Theosophist*, April 1881). Between the Raja Yogi and the Hatha Yogi there is a

fundamental difference, not generally recognized:

The *Raja Yogi* trains but his mental and intellectual powers, leaving the physical alone, and making but little of the exercise of phenomena simply of a physical character. Hence it is the rarest thing in the world to find a real Yogi boasting of being one, or willing to exhibit such powers — though *he does acquire them as well as the one practising Hatha Yoga, but through another and far more intellectual system.* Generally, they deny these powers pointblank, for reasons but too well-grounded. The latter need not even belong to any apparent order of ascetics, and are oftener known as private individuals than members of a religious fraternity, nor need they necessarily be Hindus. . . .

Practices of *Hatha Yoga* [are] conducive but of the production of physical phenomena — affording very rarely flashes of real clairvoyance, unless it be a kind of feverish state of artificial ecstasy. . . . Even in the case of the *Hatha Yogis* the cause for the production of the phenomena as well as the results obtained can be all explained scientifically; and . . . therefore, there is no need to either reject the phenomena *a priori* and without investigation or to attribute them to any but natural though occult powers, more or less latent in every man and woman. (*The Theosophist*, November 1880)

This [Yoga] system, evolved by long ages of practice . . . was not practised in India alone in the days of antiquity. The greatest philosophers of all countries sought to acquire these powers; and certainly, behind the external ridiculous postures of the Yogis of today, lies concealed the profound wisdom of the archaic ages; one that included among other things a perfect knowledge of what are now termed physiology and psychology. Ammonius Saccas, Porphyry, Proclus and others practised it in Egypt; and Greece and Rome did not shrink even at all in their time of philosophical glory, to follow suit. Pythagoras speaks of the celestial music of the spheres that one hears in hours of ecstasy; Zeno finds a wise man who having conquered all passions, feels happiness and emotion, but in the midst of torture. Plato advocates the man of meditation and likens his powers to those of the divinity; and we see the Christian ascetics themselves through a mere life of contemplation and self-torture acquire powers of levitation or æthrobacy, which, though attributed to the miraculous intervention of a personal God, are nevertheless real and the result of physiological changes in the human body. (*The Theosophist*, January 1881)

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Extensive research by the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association in Britain disproves the widely held belief that mental illness is mainly the affliction of the rich who have more leisure, money and, consequently, worry than is good for them. It has been found that there are three times as many mentally ill persons in the poorer urban areas than in the wealthier parts.

In India, estimates of the number of persons suffering from mental diseases vary from 10 to 13 million. The number of those sick in mind is on the increase everywhere, and much concern has been shown in regard to the matter, but will the concern lead to a reconsideration of the attitude and teachings which have contributed largely to this result? From the ethical basis that man is his body and nothing else, it largely results that the only right is might, that physical well-being is the highest good, and that any means of attaining it are justified so long as they do not result in personal jeopardy. People want something they do not possess, and very often lack the ability to achieve their object. This makes them disgruntled and they brood and brood over their "misfortune" until they find themselves in a state of "nerves."

The physical surroundings of the less affluent sections of society no doubt need to be improved, but this alone will not solve the problem of mental illness. There is only one means of amelioration — the elimination of selfishness. So long as men are taught from birth that "the enjoyment of the objects of their desires is the supreme good," so long will they "seek by injustice and the accumulation of wealth for the gratification of their own lusts and appetites," and will, "confounded by all manner of desires, entangled in the net of delusion, firmly attached to the gratification of their desires . . . descend into hell."

Thus the *Gita*, 5,000 years ago, pointed out the dark path which the "civilized" nations have steadily followed, and showed the only true rule of moral and mental sanitation:

... he who, free from attachment or repulsion for objects, experienceth them through the senses and organs, with his heart obedient to his will, attains to tranquillity of thought. And this tranquil state attained, therefrom shall soon result a separation from all troubles; and his mind being thus at ease, fixed upon one object, it embraceth wisdom from all sides. The man whose heart and mind are not at rest is without wisdom or the power of contemplation; who doth not practise reflection, hath no calm; and how can a man without calm obtain happiness?

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