

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

VOL. XXXIX. No. 2

17th December 1968

## COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XV, pp. 97-98, for June 1945.—EDS.]

IN THESE DAYS of Kali Yuga, when time rushes by so swiftly, effect follows effect with such rapidity that we seem in a tornado of difficulties, and few of us pause to count our blessings. Our woes loom like storm clouds hiding from us the wonder and glory of the sunshine of life, and we forget our heritage. We forget, too, that we are in the service of those Lords of Light whose hands hold back the heavy Karma of the world — ours included.

So, let us count our blessings.

First, we have heard of, and responded to, the doctrine of reincarnation. There is no longer any thought of finality connected with the end of life; no longer any feeling that we may be losing some longed-for experience; no longer any feeling of dissatisfaction with the answer to the question — Who am I? No longer do we feel dread at separation from those we love, alive or dead.

Secondly, we have learnt what happens at death. There is now no possible fear of death; no Unknown, with its attendant horrors and loneliness. We have learnt that our condition after death is of our own making; we can make it radiant, or drab, comparatively speaking. Most of all, we have learnt that we are *free*.

Thirdly, we have learnt, theoretically, the main teachings of Karma. Bit by bit we are trying to grasp the stupendous fact that we can make of life, *any* life, a real success; nothing prevents us from making our lives sublime.” If we cannot achieve what we want this life, then the strength of present efforts success in the future is assured. We have learnt that no effort towards right living is ever wasted. We have

lost resentment against people and Fate; we need no longer envy or hate; the future holds no fear.

Fourthly, we have glimpses of such thought-expansion that they almost bewilder us, while urging us ever on. There are no longer any limitations to the horizons of Thought, no blackness, no monotony, no littleness. Instead, Infinity, Fullness, Duration lie before our gaze; we are part of them by the mere fact that we are capable of responding to them. Beginningless and endless we are; our future may be to be higher than Brahma, or less than a worm, but we can never hereafter cease to be.

Fifthly, we have heard of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. We know them through their writings and their lives; we have made two friends, friends of old lives, friends of this life, friends of all other lives. We have in each of them someone to love, someone to revere, someone who calls forth gratitude and service from our hearts. We have, through their work and life, sensed an ideal, been given work to do, been shown a mode of life to live. We have joined with others who have that ideal, that work, that mode of life. With such leaders and teachers and companions, such an ideal, such work and such a mode of life, we do not need to "drown our sorrows," to be bored, to hate life, to pass from ism to ism, from pleasure to pleasure, from satiety to nonentity. The little disturbances of life remain little, *i.e.*, they keep their proper proportion in relationship to hundreds of lives.

Sixthly, we have heard of the Masters of Wisdom and of part of Their work. We have heard: "The *Chiefs* want a 'Brotherhood of Humanity,' a real Universal Fraternity started." In our childhood we have read of Jesus gathering His disciples round him, of the Buddha and His Bhikkhus. Now we have heard "our" call. Nothing prevents us from taking advantage of the opportunity. As Jesus said to the rich young man: "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor . . . and come and follow me," so They say to us: "Study our philosophy, serve our humanity. . . . Come out of your world into ours."

Seventhly, we have learnt that we are desperately needed in the world. We have been able, in moments of clear seeing, to realize that the human souls who are "tossed by the fierce winds, chased by the gale" of life, need help. True it is today as it has always been, the "harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few." Were there more helpers there would be more "saved." This is an arresting thought. Also, not only do the almost-lost human souls need help, but the Great Human Souls need help; the former for their own sake, the latter

because Their work is almost more than They can do. Had They more helpers, They could do more. As They say: "Oh! for noble and unselfish men to help us effectually in that divine task!"

Can we look back in our minds to the time when we had never heard of these seven things? Can we visualize ourselves in the present circumstances of life without our knowledge of them? Can we look ahead to the future and imagine what it would be like if this knowledge was blotted completely out of our mind? Do we perhaps say we will keep one or two of the ideas? We *cannot*. Theosophical students who have heard of these things from Theosophy have that philosophy as the background for them; the Original Impulse gives them life; the magnetism of the Masters and H.P.B. is inherent in them. People who meet, say, reincarnation or karma, only in a novel, have no such background and are in a different category. For us, to take one or two of the teachings and refuse the rest is fatal to happiness.

The rich young man "went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." We often pass this by with a sigh, for most of us have few possessions from the worldly point of view. But we do have possessions, possessions of the personality, likes and dislikes, desires, ideas. It is these we often feel we cannot sell and give the price — time, money and energy — to the poor of this suffering world. It is not so much worldly riches they are in need of; it is the time, energy and money of those who know that little bit more of the meaning of life which, if passed on to others, would save them from starvation of the soul.

We find it difficult, also, to "come and follow me," as Jesus said to the young man, for we have little imagination. The price we really get through selling our possessions and following the Path is the gratitude of the Masters. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety-nine just persons, who need no repentance." And, "Ingratitude is not among our vices." And again, "All our knowledge, past and present, would not be sufficient to repay him."

Did we count our blessings more often, life would not be so stormy. Its cry would become a song, for we should see our place in the grand scheme of life, and we should sense more and more clearly the wonder and the glory of the spiritual world.

In a world of darkness and evil it is good to remember that *our* Masters are the Lords of Light. We, in however humble a capacity, can be Their messengers to the world of men.

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## THREE OBJECTS AND THREE DOCTRINES

[We reprint here the major portion of a speech delivered by W. Q. Judge at the Second Annual Convention of the European Section of the Theosophical Society, held in London in July 1892. It was reprinted earlier in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT* for March 1937.—EDS.]

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY has three objects. These objects are, first, to found the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, class, sex, colour, or previous condition. This is our first and our most important object; this is our only creed. It admits belief in any particular creed. It does not say you must give up this, that or the other — except what is bad or immoral. It asks you only to accept the idea that universal brotherhood is a thing we should strive for. And, in order to give support to that hitherto Utopian idea, it has two other objects, one of which is to study, investigate, look into, the philosophies and religions of the past, for that includes the present; because our philosophy and our religion have grown out of the past, they are but a counterfeit presentment of what the ancients knew and taught, and you have nothing of your own that is particularly new. Today, as of old, in the time of Solomon, it is true that there is nothing new in this world under the sun. We thought that the second object was important, because, while we are looking into the religions and philosophies of the past and present, we shall perhaps discover the one truth which must underlie all systems of religion and philosophy. We have come to believe that all systems of religion, Buddhism, Brahmanism, Confucianism, what you call Christianity, all rest on one basis, all flow from one old school. And if we can cut away the husks, the crusts, about this central truth, we shall at last have arrived at the truth about it. The only revelation which is possible is the revelation which comes to man by his own experience, by his own effort, by his own suffering. He learns in no other way, and all the revealed books of the past are revelations from the human heart and soul to itself.

Our third object, to support these other two, because we are living in the world surrounded by phenomena, is to investigate the psychical laws that govern man and nature. With these three objects we have covered the whole field. By the first we embrace progress in social life. If it were attained and made real it would cure all the evils that legislation vainly attempts to cope with, and which legislation hitherto has

failed in any way to cure. The last one, the investigation of psychical laws of man and nature, you may say has not been pursued by us. But we think it has been pursued by us in the proper way. We have in London and in America what people call the Psychical Research Society, which engages itself with what it grandly calls investigation into psychical phenomena, consisting, as far as my experience goes, in recording a number of dreams, visions, apparitions and thoughts, in the mass not so large as we have had before; but they give no explanation. We have discovered in the investigation of the ancient philosophies that they have thought out all the psychological laws of nature, and have given a system of philosophy which is scientific and explains them all. Some have been investigating this system of philosophy, so that when we come to look at the things about us we may be able to explain them without going to the trouble of making a lot of books recording these things without any explanation. We are, therefore, pursuing the last object in the proper way. Then we are prepared to show that we have discovered in this and other countries that certain faculties are coming out which are of a dangerous character. Psychical characteristics are showing themselves more than ever before. In my country I know that men and women are striving to exercise the powers which are indicated by what you call telepathy and hypnotism, for selfish purposes and for nothing else. Theosophy teaches us that it is a dangerous thing to go into phenomena of this character unless you have first prepared the ground by showing men why they should be moral, why they should not practise these things for selfish purposes. For we consider that those who practise telepathy, hypnotism, and the like, for their own selfish ends, are just as immoral as the dynamiter or the burglar. We think you have no right to burglarize the mind of another; and we know many men and women in this city and in other cities who would break open the minds of their fellows to discover secrets for their own profit.

The Theosophical Society has been investigating these three objects in a philosophical and scientific manner, and all we ask of anyone who wishes to join us is that he should believe and attempt to practise "Universal Brotherhood," so that we may begin to form the nucleus around which the real brotherhood may at last accumulate itself.

I have said that the Theosophical Society extends all over the world. I have seen it in India, America, and this country. It is in Africa, it is in New Zealand, it is in the Isles of Europe about the various seas. It is all over India, and is connected there not only with bodies which

are visible, but with bodies of men who keep themselves unknown. It is connected there with societies counting thousands upon thousands of men in their ranks, and they are all devoted to high purposes. They are not the heathen you think they are, but worshippers of a single God or spirit, and, as St. Paul has said to you, "an unknown God."

This Society, then, embraces Europe, Asia, Africa, and America — and this has been done in seventeen years. Do you consider that we have been snuffed out or that we have failed? I think not. We have succeeded against opposition such as no Society in this century has succeeded against. The press and the pulpit have attacked us without reason, have libelled us, and told lies about us. But we forgive them because we are weak human beings as they are, and we know the right will prevail; that is, justice will prevail; and we have enormous confidence that this Theosophical Movement will be the greatest movement of this or any other century, small as it seems today and weak as we appear to you to be.

The Theosophical Society is without a creed, but any society devoting itself to a definite object must at last accumulate within its ranks a number of members who all think more or less alike; and that is just what has happened in the Theosophical Society. A great many of us, the majority, I will frankly say, think about alike, but not because we have forced belief into each other. We have come together and said to each other, "Here are these ideas," and it has resulted in the majority having come to one conclusion. But the Society is always free and open. It has no dogmas. The doctrines we have put principally forward among a great many others for investigation cover everything; we are so presumptuous as to say that Theosophy is large enough to cover all Science and all Religion, to make indeed Science religious, and Religion scientific — but among all these doctrines we think there is a truth of the highest importance to humanity, because sorrow prevails everywhere, and we are attempting by our Society's work to find a cure for sorrow. We think that evils will never be cured by legislation. You have been legislating all these long years and have not succeeded. We have still our strikes, our sorrows, our poverty. We began without anything against us in America, and today there is the same thing there as here. As one of our great investigators of criminal records says, crime in America is worse than in England in proportion. With all your legislation here is the same evil, and so we bring principally forward three doctrines which we think of the highest importance.

The first is Justice; we call it Karma; you can call it Justice, but the old Sanskrit word is K̄arma. It is that you will reap the result of what you do. If you do good you will get good; if you do evil you will get evil. But it is said that man does not get his deserts in many cases. That is true under the old theory. But the next step is that we bring forward out of Christianity, Buddhism, Brahmanism, that doctrine under which it becomes true and that is Reincarnation. This means we are all spiritually immortal beings, and in order to receive our deserts we must all come to the place where we have done the good or the evil, so that today you have come to this life from some other life. If you have been good you are happy, if you have been evil you are unhappy, just because you lived in a corresponding way in that life. And if you are not caught up within this life you will be caught up within the next one which is coming. For after you die you have a slight period of rest, and then return to this civilization which you have made, and for which you are responsible, and for which you will suffer if its evils are not eliminated.

And the next doctrine is that all these spiritual beings in these bodies are united together in fact, not in theory; that you are all made of one substance; that our souls vibrate together, feel for each other, suffer for each other, and enjoy for each other; so that in far China people are suffering for the evils of people in London, and people in London are suffering for the evils of people in China, and in New York the same. We are all bound together with a bond we cannot break, and that is the essential unity of the human family; it is the basis of universal brotherhood.

We bring these three doctrines prominently forward because ethics must have a basis not in fear, not in command, not in statute laws, but in the man himself. And when he knows that he is united with everyone else, and is responsible for the progress of his brother, he will then come to act according to right ethics. And until he so believes he will not, and our sorrows will increase and revolutions will come on, blood will be shed, and you will only rise then out of the ruins of that civilization which you hoped to make the grandest that the world has ever seen.

We hope that the day will soon come when these doctrines will be believed and practised, which this movement, called the Theosophical Movement, has thus brought prominently forward.

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## THE BIRTH OF THE CHRIST-CHILD

THE BIRTH OF A CHILD is ever a joyous occasion. May not this be because a birth reminds us that we are creators, not mere creatures? Christmas time, when we celebrate the birth of the child Jesus, not only is a time for rejoicing, but also engenders feelings of unselfishness, love and goodwill to all. The story of his birth, as popularly known, has an emotional appeal, but it has also to be understood allegorically, as related to the ancient myth of the birth of the sun-god. The actual date of his birth is unknown, and the mere fact that the winter solstice was chosen to celebrate that birth should make us realize that we are dealing, not merely with the birth of a man, but with a cosmic symbol. As physical rebirth shows us continuity as far as man is concerned, so the belief that all the sun-gods are annually reborn shows continuity in Nature.

It is around Christmas time that the cycle of the sun's journey northward once again begins, and with the increase in the light of the sun there also commences a new cycle in Nature. Life stirs anew in the earth, the plant, the animal, and in man as well. Hence the joy with which we all greet the New Year — forgetting thankfully that in twelve months' time we shall equally joyfully ring that year out as an unpleasant experience!

The process of birth does not begin when the little blade of grass or the baby body sees the light. Much work of preparation takes place before that, at the seed stage. Helped by the principle of life, the sun, the little seed begins its journey to fruition, not to meet ultimately with death, but to produce within itself the means of survival of its species, thus showing the law of continuity as a fundamental principle of life.

It takes a few weeks or months for a seed to grow, and more weeks and months for the plant to reach its full growth before decay sets in and further seeds are left for the future. With the human babe, it takes nine months before it is ready to leave the shelter of the mother's womb. During those nine months it is fed and nurtured, not only with physical nourishment, but, if the mother is wise, with spiritual food, with love and good thoughts.

What we forget is that there is more than the growth of the physical body of the babe in the womb of the mother. Conception would not have been possible without the desire of the Ego of the unborn child, and there should be the recognition of this fact all the time until

the child is able to govern his own life.

Following the law of analogy, we can understand the birth of the Christ-child, the Divine Principle, in our own hearts, as also the birth of the sun-god, both at the beginning of a cosmos and annually. The main point to remember is the continuity of the invisible through the changes of form and the passage of time. The second point that should be noted is that, since a new-born babe is the result of its own Ego's wish for rebirth, through the instrumentality of a father and mother, there is non-separateness even on this plane. All men are one, linked together by unbreakable bonds, both spiritual and material.

Continuing the analogy, we can say that there is the seed of the Christ-child sown in the heart and the wish for its birth brought into being by thought and devotion. It is nurtured in the womb of our personality, which, like the mother of the unborn babe, has to sacrifice its own inclinations and comforts for the protection and nurture of the little seed within. Just as a human child is born because of the desire of its spiritual essence, so the birth of the Christ-child in the heart takes place by its own spiritual labour.

What are the characteristics of the Christ-child in the heart? By analogy, they are like those of any human babe. First, there is *devotion* and *love* towards those who made the birth possible. We learn that devotion to its spiritual creators and teachers was the first feeling to arise in the consciousness of infant humanity, when Manas was lit up. Secondly, there is the *willingness to accept help*, and the capacity to return it a hundredfold. Thirdly, there is *sacrifice*, once the recognition of the purpose of life has dawned.

One of the seemingly hard sayings in the *New Testament* is the remark of Jesus when told that his mother and brethren desired to speak to him. "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?" he asked. Another hard saying is his reproof to his mother when she came searching for him in the temple where he had tarried behind when only a boy — "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Yet both these sayings are vibrant with life when understood in the real sense. The whole physical side of life has to learn to subdue itself to the spiritual. If we look at the second statement above as referring not just to the physical mother but to the personality which surrounds the Christ-child in the heart, we can see how both the physical mother and the personal self have to learn to "let go." The time comes when they can no longer nurture their offspring.

But both can still help the development of the child. It is through the personality that the Christ-child expresses itself. It has a mission to perform; it must be allowed to perform it. While the mother bird drives its young out of the nest when it is time, the human mother often tries to keep her young with her; so also the personality tries to keep the Christ-child from taking charge of its life.

In the *Mahabharata*, Pritha is a good example of the devoted mother. She can be taken as a symbol of Mother Earth, who brings her children to birth, sacrifices for them and demands nothing for herself. Pritha stands behind her sons, suffering with them, giving them good advice, sacrificing herself for them. She does not intrude; she follows. Her wisdom is valued by her sons. We feel for her when she is left behind alone, unable to help her sons when they are banished. But the sons have to be on their own. Her own "sin" separates them at the end of the epic, for one truth she has kept from them. Because of her fear of acknowledging her first-born, the terrible battle between the sons is fought. She finally sacrifices herself by confessing after the battle, but it is too late. There is a great lesson for us here if we think of her as standing for the personality, the mother giving birth to the Christ-child. And we see why we must not have even one vice at the end of our soul-journey, but must have complete purity of heart. As Jesus drove the money-changers out of the temple, so must we drive the things of the self out of our heart, out of our personality. The Christ-child can be born in the heart only when that cave of the heart is inhabited by the controlled emotions and desires and not by the wild and ferocious passions.

We can understand why Jesus asked "Who is my mother and who are my brethren?" when we see what makes the family a unit — similarity of aim, purpose and teaching. "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." What, then, does Mary stand for? Tortured she must have been. Did not the wise man prophesy that "a sword shall pierce through thy own soul"? The personality does suffer the throes of birth to bring the Christ-child into being. The suffering is mutual. The Christ-child suffers because of the sins of the personality — its mother; the personality suffers because of its transformation as a true Christ-child.

As the seed takes time to germinate, as the embryo takes time to become a fully formed babe, so we are given hints about the preparation that must precede the arising of the Christ from the tomb or cave of the heart to become the glorified Saviour. All the virtues

are given us. They are all based on one principle: "Love thy neighbour as thyself" and "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." To love is to serve, to love is to give, not only to those who are our subordinates and equals, but to those who are our spiritual parents and who send that love back to us enriched out of all proportion. The Christian hymn, "Whatever Lord I give to Thee, repaid a thousandfold will be," does not refer to material possessions. The love returned by the Wise Ones to us enriches the world, and our capacity for giving increases a thousandfold. To reach this basis we need *Vairagya*-dispassion, the turning point. "Truth alone perceived" gives us *Virya*-energy; *Virya* in turn gives us the strength to fight towards the supernal TRUTH; and only by ceaseless contemplation can we reach the goal of knowing ourselves as true "sons of the Dhyanis."

The Christ crucified on the cross of matter is our own Divine Self. We need the vision to see that Self for what it is. The vision of the One SELF, the vision vouchsafed to Arjuna but lost by him as he was not yet ready for anything but a passing glimpse of it — that vision, if held, can culminate in one's saying, as did the Christ-Jesus — "I and my Father are One."

Working towards this glorious vision, if we could look upon ourselves as we now are, as personalities or "mothers" of the Christ-child within, we would grow in stature by consubstantiality with that wondrous Being. As the mother sacrifices, so must the personality; as the mother loves the unborn babe, so must we love that Divine Being within us. As the mother wards off all danger to her child, so must we ward off all evil thought and feeling. As the mother keeps the babe's body clean and well and properly fed, so must we cleanse and purify the heart in which the Christ-child dwells, and feed it with the food of right thought, feeling and action that will help it to grow and unfold. Let us remember that the Christ-child needs a personality, a body of various states of matter through which it can function and attain its goal. The building of the perfect personality is our task. It will contain within itself the best garnered through all the personalities that have helped the growth of the soul through its long, long journey.

So, we have to let the Christ be born in us. Our personality stands in the way. What shall we do with it this coming year?

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# STUDIES IN "LIGHT ON THE PATH"

## II

Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound.

—*Light on the Path*

THEOSOPHICAL LITERATURE emphasizes in many places the necessity for the control and purification of speech. As Mr. Judge has said: "To babble out words does not help on the evolution of humanity or inspire any other idea but the natural one that such conversation borders on the idiotic" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 67). This has to be remembered and applied by every student of Theosophy, and much more so by an aspirant who desires to tread the path of discipleship. There is an occult reason:

The very Name of Deity is represented by the symbol of the Word. Creative Logos is Man's highest appellation and the human mouth is designated as the Organ of the Creative Logos. That Organ, in Man the Microcosm, is derived directly from the primary vehicle which the Creative Logos uses to emanate by Sound the Macrocosmic principles. The voice in the spiritual sound is the Voice of the Most High. (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XXXII, p. 93)

Speech, therefore, is creative for good or ill, and a man can make his voice reflect the spiritual, the "Voice of the Most High," or he can use it to wound. A disciple is one who has undertaken the process of self-purification, and this includes speech. "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound," says the third unnumbered Rule in *Light on the Path*, which, together with the numbered Rules 8 to 15, forms the basis for this article.

"Listening" and "Speaking," as pointed out in the previous article, are the two main ideas which run through the whole book, and we will do well to keep them in mind, because they are the two keys which will unlock the doors to some of the mysteries of this book.

It is interesting to note that the developing of the sensitiveness of the inner ear, so that it can hear the voice of the silence, has to precede the cultivation of right speech. For anyone aspiring to lead the Higher Life, the control of speech is absolutely vital, because how

can one become a *Shravaka* or a listener without such control? One cannot hear and speak at the same time. The power to listen, then, has to be first developed, and this is one of the hardest things to do. It is only when the spiritual sensitiveness of the inner ear is acquired that the tongue can be controlled. A disciple must be able to repeat faithfully what he has heard, and this cannot be achieved until he becomes a *Shravaka*.

Man, as we know, is, broadly speaking, twofold, and equally true is this of the disciple, the only difference being that the disciple has undertaken a certain discipline to bring his lower personal nature under the control of the higher impersonal God, and to purify the lower so that it becomes a worthy shrine for the manifestation of that inner God. One vehicle for its manifestation is speech.

The first task, therefore, is to see which aspect of the disciple's nature is reflected in his speech—the lower personal, or the higher impersonal. If it reflects the personal, then it contains within itself the power to wound. We should be careful about not only what we say, but also how we say it. The tone used, the sound emitted, the note struck—these are as important as the words used. Just as one should not injure or wound another bodily, so, too, one should not injure by one's voice. A loud, strong, powerful voice can wound. To be emphatic where emphasis is not necessary; to be crushing when we mean only to be emphatic; to be dictatorial when we mean only to advise or to direct—all these represent aspects and expressions of the power to wound. The saying, "When you are strong you are wrong," is very apt.

The other extreme is also to be avoided. There are those who are so meek and mild that they are afraid to speak up, to raise their voice. They fear to hurt the feelings of others. But fear is an aspect of hatred; therefore here also is a manifestation of the "power to wound."

*Light on the Path* points out:

The "power to wound" includes much that men value, not only in themselves, but in others. The instinct of self-defence and of self-preservation is part of it; the idea that one has any right or rights, either as citizen, or man, or individual, the pleasant consciousness of self-respect and of virtue.

One of the first tasks in the cleansing of the lower nature, which will help the voice to lose its power to wound and hurt, is, therefore,

the purification of desire. Our desires are of two kinds, and as our speech reflects them, it also becomes twofold, higher and lower. The disciple finds himself as he is at present, made up of all his former thoughts and deeds which are both higher and lower, but equally true it is that he can create this day his chances for the morrow. The first step towards this end is to see what his predominant mental desire is. Is it higher or lower, Buddhic or Kamic?

If eventually to stand in the presence of the Master the disciple must develop a voice which no longer wounds, then all his desires should be centred on that, and thus reflect his higher nature. If, however, they are personal and self-centred, if the disciple is only concerned about his own progress and cares little whether he wounds others or not, then they are of the lower order. The path to the Master is through impersonality and unselfishness; the path that leads away from the Master is through the personal and the selfish.

Neither the perception of the inner eye nor the hearing of the inner ear can be achieved if the voice of the God within is drowned by the desires of the lower, personal nature. These are hindrances, and the disciple's first step on becoming aware of them as such must be to note to what extent he is able to look upon others, including his fellow disciples, not as passing personalities, but as immortal souls or gods in the making. "As the individual has voice, so has that in which the individual exists." If humanity has a Voice, and the disciple lives in the midst of human beings, what does his ear hear? What do his eyes perceive? Does he see and hear only the ugliness and weaknesses all around, in short, the evil side of the world, or is he able to see "sermons in stones," and more difficult, hear the message issuing forth from the stony heart?

Does his voice reflect his likes and dislikes, wounding others in the process? Are all his actions performed from the standpoint of personal likes and dislikes, regardless of others? He will have both failures and successes in the process of acquiring the power of higher speech and of overcoming the power to wound and the power to feel hurt. Does he feel despondent at the failures and proud of the successes?

The remedy for this is to make all actions spring from definite choices, and not from circumstances which have forced the disciple to do first this and then that. If all is under Karma, then nothing comes which is not deserved. Actions are to be performed after definite choices, and those choices in turn are based on desires. If lower desires

rule the disciple's choices, then he becomes the slave of those desires. Something must be done to prevent this from happening. A disciple lives two lives at once — externally in the world of men, and internally within himself. His relations with his fellow disciples and others with whom he comes in contact are his external relations; his internal relations consist of his thoughts, feelings and desires, his motivation for thinking this, desiring that. The first, the external, may be called his business transactions in life; the second, the internal, his book-keeping and accounting. The two go together, and at each moment the disciple is casting the balance-sheet of the God within, showing a profit or a loss.

Under the title "Desire Made Pure" (*Lucifer*, October 1887; reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 13) much that can be said on the subject of purification of desires is summed up. The three steps given there should be followed. "The first step towards this purity is to kill out the desire for the things of matter, since these *can* only be enjoyed by the separated personality." These "things of matter" *Light on the Path* describes as comfort, separateness, sensation, hunger for growth, desire of life — all those things which, in the terminology of *The Voice of the Silence*, come in the category of "the personal, the transitory, the evanescent and the perishable." This does not mean that we must give up living in the world, give up things which bring happiness and pleasure, and retire to the forest to live a life of rigid austerity. It means rather killing in oneself the desire, enjoyment and craving for these things. It means a life of moderation rather than a life of indulgence, a killing out of all those things which make the personality grow and become strong at the expense of the higher within. As *The Voice of the Silence* expresses it, "the bud of personality must be crushed out; the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection." For, "the Self of Matter and the SELF of Spirit can never meet"; one of them must disappear; there is no place in the life of a disciple for both.

This brings us to the second step in purifying desire, and that is to "cease from desiring for oneself even such abstractions as power, knowledge, love, happiness, or fame; for they are but selfishness after all"; in other words, those things which will bring benefit to oneself at the expense of someone else. There is nothing wrong with any of these in themselves; it is the selfish use they are put to that is wrong. There is likewise a difference between righteousness and self-righteousness. One is unselfish, the other personal and selfish. It is living to benefit mankind in thought, word and deed, plus the practice of the six glorious virtues, that will destroy selfish interest in the

result of any action and in all that goes to strengthen the selfishness of the personality.

The third step is achieved only when all personal desires have been killed out, so that there is only the one desire, *i.e.*, desire "for the purely abstract," desire which "has lost all trace or tinge of 'self.'"

Life itself teaches these lessons; for all such objects of desire are found Dead Sea fruit in the moment of attainment. This much we learn from experience. Intuitive perception seizes on the *positive* truth that satisfaction is attainable only in the infinite; the will makes that conviction an actual fact of consciousness, till at last all desire is centred on the Eternal. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7, p. 13*)

The disciple, therefore, in turning within, realizes that only the desire for that which is "beyond" himself and is "unattainable, because it forever recedes," can draw forth his strength and energy. Though beyond him, it is within him, and it is "the only light that can be shed upon the Path." With its help, perception begins to grow, the ears begin to hear, and the voice begins to lose the power to wound. In the process, the disciple begins to realize that he is but one of the drops that make up the ocean, a single ray of the one Sun. This is the highest as also the most practical step that can be taken; it is the essence and source of brotherhood.

The powers, the peace, the possessions which the eternal man, the God within, desires are those which "must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united," not until then. To feel oneself "abiding in all things, all things in SELF," is possible. The sacred peace desired can only be found within, for it resides in the inner centre of peace and harmony which has to be sought after and looked for; it is useless to look for it outside.

The power which is desired, and the only one which can be desired by the disciple, is "that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." This attitude alone will bring true humility, because, as *The Voice of the Silence* states, not only is it necessary to "be humble if thou would'st attain to Wisdom," but it is even more necessary to "be humbler still, when Wisdom thou hast mastered."

A complete reorientation must take place in the life of a disciple if all this is to be achieved; the currents of feelings, thoughts and actions, all of which have hitherto strengthened the personality, must

be given a different direction, that is, turned inwards towards the real man, the warrior, so that his voice is heard and his feelings, thoughts and actions performed.

The power to speak without wounding comes only when the use of the two inner senses, hearing and seeing, has been acquired. Speech is a gift which "comes only with knowledge." The outer nature will be transformed only when the selfish desires which formerly prompted it have been killed out, thus allowing the inner nature to manifest.

Just as there are three steps to the acquirement of inner hearing, so too with speech. The first is being able to repeat faithfully what is heard. For a disciple, this means that he has become first and foremost a listener and acquired the spiritual sensitiveness of the "inner ear." Then only can the tongue be controlled, by the aid of what is heard, and the spiritual voice arise. But the two processes are simultaneous — like thinking and speaking, though thought precedes, or ought to, words.

The second step is the purification of speech. This comes when desires have become pure and the Inner God has been heard, so that the voice has lost the power to wound.

Until this is accomplished, the third of the higher form of speech cannot be achieved, for "the demand of the neophyte remains unheard until the voice in which it is uttered has lost the power to wound."

These are not arbitrary laws of discipleship, but "are drawn from the traditions of the lodge of the Great Brotherhood." They are written "in the antechamber of every living Brotherhood," and only when they have been mastered can one enter the chamber itself. When this stage is reached, the disciple has earned the right to ask for and possess Real Knowledge. It should also be noted that Knowledge not only flows unto him but flows in with such a momentum that it passes on to "the deep places where their light shines not at all."

In claiming the power of speech, as it is called, the Neophyte cries out to the Great One who stands foremost in the ray of knowledge on which he has entered, to give him guidance. When he does this, his voice is hurled back by the power he has approached, and echoes down to the deep recesses of human ignorance.

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## THE TRUSTFUL COMPANIONS

ONE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS of moral greatness is readiness to trust others, for trust is inherent in man's soul and pertains to his spiritual nature. The scriptures of the world fully illustrate the fact. Great beings like the Buddha and the Christ, and even some lesser ones, trusted and hoped till the very end. Did not the Christ forgive those who betrayed him and hope for a change in their hearts?

Trust characterizes the kinship of man to man, of spirit to spirit, of soul to soul. It is reliance upon the great Law of the universe, which embodies ultimate good and perfect justice. Does not every day's experience teach us that the power of immortal good ultimately overcomes the forces of evil? Trust has a positive, dynamic aspect. It calls upon the will to carry out all that is fair and generous, whatever the consequences to oneself might be. Real trust is the power of Love which transcends death and knows of no limitations as to space and time. It has in itself the quality of timelessness. It further permits a range of vision which knows of no horizons. The heart of the one in whom trust abides brings others to an apperception of that which is enduring and truly real as opposed to that which is temporary and illusionary.

It is from that basis that we must understand what trust, as a quality of the immortal soul, really is. It is not blind confidence in others. It does not imply lack of discrimination or a faulty judgment, but rather a clear-seeing into the depths of the human heart. Real trust instils courage in others, stimulates their imagination and moves them to perform the proper actions. In its negative aspect, trust is long-suffering; it arises from the quality of patience sweet that nought can ruffle, and does not allow the shadow of doubt either about oneself or others to approach the threshold of the heart-mind.

What does a deeper analysis of that shining quality tell us? Trust is intimately linked with the power of free will. In the lower kingdoms, free will is exercised within the limits of the law. Instinct is that unerring power which guides the actions of animals, who can be said to trust unwaveringly the laws of Nature. The more evolved the creatures, the greater the range of choice. But it is only in man that trust finds its full expression and scope, for its possibilities are infinite.

What is free will? It is a gift from the gods to mankind. It is a sacred and, to a certain extent, secret power. Being divine and of

the nature of spiritual light, its real exercise should never be impeded or obstructed. It is upon the exercise of such power that true equality among human beings is established. From the meanest to the greatest among men, this is the power that compels us to choose and to act. Thus is a sense of true responsibility born.

The exercise of free will forms also the basis on which real brotherhood can be realized. It requires, first, that we understand the spiritual nature of man — man as a free-thinking being, eternal, incarnating from age to age, gifted with powers divine, and not man the creature of one day, who can be manipulated or turned into a puppet, one among many others. Every man is unique, and such uniqueness and originality is the outcome of countless individual choices. To oppose the exercise of such power is to oppose the law of divine love and compassion, and work against the establishment of universal harmony amongst men. Egotism, selfishness, and the desire to lead create peculiar conditions which result in forcing human beings to act in accordance with a certain definite pattern which leaves them very little initiative or opportunities to think for themselves. But it must always be remembered that whatever the outward pressure might be, it is in the power of any man to refuse to yield. It is also the duty of every man to detect subtle forms of persuasion by remaining constantly mentally awake and spiritually aware. Thus both the saint and the criminal can stand up and assume full responsibility for their deeds of mercy as well as for their deeds of injustice. It is that power which saves or damns. It is through the exercise of that power that the criminal is able to redeem himself, and this is why we must love and trust him.

All human beings have to exercise their creative faculties; the raw material is the whole of life to come; the final product their own, either a work of art or a chaotic jumble. It is trust in the exercise of that power for good which helps, heals and comforts. History tells us that martyrdom has been cheerfully endured, time and time again, in order to preserve intact that birthright of man. This relates to the power of ideas, which are said to move the world, and of considerable importance is the idea of freedom of thought and freedom of speech, for which men have sacrificed unhesitatingly their dearest possessions. For, without the freedom to speak up, to exercise freely one's mental powers and faculties and express one's heart energies, man is no longer man. There has always existed a feeling of kinship among all men, based on that knowledge, whatever their colour, creed or other barri-

ers. Without it, there is no tolerance possible and no real love to enable one to overcome differences by understanding them. The creative urge in man craves for such freedom of expression by means of which he can communicate with others.

Real trust is born of mental equipoise and dispassion. It is that quality of dispassion which Krishna in the *Gita* tries to instil into Arjuna's heart. True Yoga or union with our Higher Self enables us to achieve that higher type of indifference with regard to personal desires and longings. It is a long and hard discipline. The whole of Krishna's discourse is underlined with that quality of spiritual trust. Never does Krishna doubt Arjuna's courage and virtue, and yet he never exerts pressure, which is well illustrated at the very end when he says to Arjuna: "Act as seemeth best unto thee." Our judgment is often clouded by our likes and dislikes, and thus we mistrust and cause suffering. Indifference to pain and pleasure begets fearlessness with regard to personal consequences which might ensue from our trusting others.

Perhaps a word or two could be said as to the reasons why men let doubt and mistrust dwell in their hearts. Some of the reasons may be inferred from what has already been said. Doubt and mistrust take subtle forms of egotism and often lead to gossip and slander. Mistrust is a form of fear, fear of taking over responsibilities, of having to give up dear possessions, of having to exert oneself for the good of others. The whole of this study could, perhaps, be summed up in these words: "Man, know thyself!" For, unless we trust in the divinity and immortality of our real Self, no logic or philosophy can impel us to trust our own brothers.

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THERE IS THAT in every human being to be trusted — That which stands behind his human nature, the Witness, the Spectator, the Knower, the Judge, the Avenger of every thought and deed — noble or ignoble, pure or vile. *That* may be trusted. In *That* all Faith resides and comes to rest. It is the Power which is exhaustless and eternal, the Power at any time to take a better course, when the old is exhausted, when the old has brought defeat, disgrace. However much my friend may betray me, I can have faith that some day, somewhere, he will repair the evil done to me and to all beings, however long ago.

—From the *Book of Confidences*

## RAHULA'S INHERITANCE

[Reprinted from THE PATH, Vol. II, pp. 296-300, for January 1888.—EDS.]

\* \* \* \* The spirit promised me that I should dwell with the crooked moon in her eternal beauty."

IN THAT WONDERFUL AGE which our nurses call Once-upon-a-time, the Prince Rahula came into the Hall of Sages and demanded his birthright. The Wise Ones heard him in silence, and he seemed to be dismissed without an answer. On the following day he came again, with the same ill success; so the third time and up to the seventh demand, being always unnoticed and even, as he thought, unseen. On the eighth day a messenger returning to the Council of Sages, found Rahula seated upon a plinth at the entrance to the temple.

"What doest thou there, my Lord?" demanded the messenger.

"I have taken up my abode here, nor will I stir hence until the Wise Ones shall have heard me," answered Rahula.

"But is it meet that thou shouldst sit here so lowly, Prince that thou art?"

"It is meet that a man do all things to obtain his birthright. For him there is nothing else, and great or small, honey or poison, mine shall be mine."

The messenger bowed before him. "Thou art more than royal; thou art wise," he said. Then he hastened within, and when the Sages heard what he had seen they sent for Prince Rahula, who presently saluted them reverently and said: "I am come to claim mine own. I am the Prince Rahula and I am well known to you; seven times already have I claimed it."

"Yes, my Son," answered the Elder; "but it is customary to prove a man, that his determination may show him the true heir, so that no impostor shall receive the inheritance kept for him by the Sons of Wisdom. Only those who know their rights and wrest them from Fate by strong courage are true Princes of the royal line. But there is still a sign and countersign to pass between us ere we bestow thy birthright upon thee. Dost thou know them?"

The young Prince smiled a smile that was rarely sweet, drew himself to his full height, and tossing back his mantle, displayed to the Sages a crimson heart, transfixed with a golden lance. The Sages rose

and saluted the Emblem, and parting their robes, each showed such a heart beneath his own breast. Only in the centre of theirs was written the word *Humanity*, and the lances were of living light, and a musical throb that was in itself a perfume was the pulse of each heart.

“Thou knowest the sign indeed,” said the Elder to Rahula. “Take now the countersign. Remember that the wise and perfect heart pulsates for man alone. Thou hast demanded thy birthright in the name of the pierced heart: take it, and go in Peace.”

At his signal the messenger brought to Rahula a large and brilliant crystal. It was shaped like the crescent moon: one side of it was covered with hieroglyphs cut into the stone; the other sparkled from innumerable facets like a field of hoar frost at sunrise. Rahula looked at it seriously. “A strange gift for a warrior,” he said. “What is its use, my Lords? What shall I do with it?”

The Elder answered: “It is the birthright deposited with us at thy coming into the world and we can give thee no other. Its use is for thee to discover. We are but the guardians, not the interpreters. I have spoken.”

Vainly Rahula besought him; no other word was uttered; the Sages had resumed their silence and at last, lit by the rays of the shining moon, Rahula left the temple and re-entered life. Long he considered the jewel; of the characters he could make nothing. So he determined to hang the great crystal beneath the royal gateway, where all men might see it, and perchance its use might be discovered. This was done, and the life of the great city passed on beneath the mysterious crystal. Soon strange tales were told of it; at night its wonderful brilliance shattered the darkness with a thousand rays, which were never so softly penetrating as when they lit the weary to his home, or pointed out his task; which were never so blinding and sharp as when they shone into the face of sin and confessed it. These living rays seemed to single out certain men, and passing before them, to light them to happiness and good fortune. It was found that such men had always sought after the light with single hearts, so that people began to desire to be well considered by the spirit of the gem, and to take its rays for guidance. Others still, looking for the solution of grave problems of labour and of want, found the answer in the hieroglyphs of the crystal moon, and translated them into many longing lives. Nor was this all. The gem reflected the heavens and their mysteries to those who looked down upon it from hard-won heights, and

cast also an illumination from those holy lands upon the wayfarers beneath who could not climb so far. It shed from its resplendent facets the life and warmth of the sun, and through the solemn marches of the nights it testified to the living Truth beyond the stars, and so renewed the religion of the people. All who appealed in faith to its hidden spirit were helped: the sick who struggled to touch it were made whole or given great patience and content. At the first touch of sunrise, at the last ray of sunset, seven musical notes rang from its flashing rim and turned to ineffable harmony the lives of all who heard them. Thus the light of a great peace fell over the city; friend and foe alike came from afar to share it, and the reign of Rahula blessed even his enemies.

The Prince thought long over the strange power of the crystal as the happy people passed and repassed beneath it. He thought it too diffused; he determined to concentrate and heighten it, and summoning his servants, bade them take down the crystal from the gateway and bring it into one of the great halls of the palace. When this was done, and the soft shining no longer lit those stony ways, the people murmured, so that the Prince went out and himself spoke with them:

"I have been long learning the use of my birthright," he said. "The crystal is too rare a thing to hang thus exposed to the elements, to the enterprise of my rivals, the greed of envious men and to all the chances of fate. I have built an altar in the palace hall; the gem shall hang above it; incense shall rise; the gods will answer me from between the horns of my crystal moon, and send riches to me and to my kingdom. These I will myself dispense to you, and the jewel shall still bless you, but my foes shall be confounded."

All were silent a moment. Afterwards a woman in the crowd fell to weeping and cried out: "Do not this thing, my Lord! Hide not the light of thy birthright from us. We love the gem, and that love is more to us than any riches."

"You shall still love it," replied Rahula; "more, you shall worship it, for this crystal is the abode of a mighty spirit; it is the signet of the Gods."

"To worship is not always to love," sobbed the woman, and the crowd complained loudly. But Rahula replied again: "The gem will make my reign renowned. It shall not be profaned by the dust and steam of the byways, by the fevered touch of the sick and the desecration of unhallowed eyes. In the shelter of a sacred place it shall shine

for the good alone, and those who do homage to me and who are taught of my priests, these the crystal shall bless, and not my enemies; yea, it shall still bless all my true people. I have said." Rahula disappeared and the crowd went away muttering.

A great change came over the city. Little by little, the old turmoil came back, the old discord and wrangling went on beneath the gateways. The memory of that soft shining died out of the fevered hearts, and soon only the aged and the little children remembered to mourn for the lost gem. But within the temple incense rolled, priests knelt consulting the oracles, wise men interpreted the hieroglyphs seeking riches and fame for Rahula, while over all the white moon hung pale and shuddering in the perfumed breeze. A change came over it like the change in the city. The smoke of worship obscured the rays, then obstructed them; then they ceased shining altogether and the face of the moon was veiled in mist. The temple music drowned the bell notes, and though it was stopped when this was discovered, those notes sounded no more, for the sunrise and sunset glow no longer flooded the crystal rim. The hieroglyphs told wonderful tales of fame and pomp and war, but all turned out illy, and Rahula found that his priests had read them backward; that only the people knew their language by instinct, as the language of their infancy. The glory and beauty of the great gem were gone; none but the priests would do it homage, and it hung, a dulled and impotent thing in the chill silence above the altar. Rahula felt a certain awe, a sense of coming disaster. He bade his servants take down the crystal, set cunning artificers to brighten and restore it, and then, ordering a great festival to be held, he had the stone replaced above the gateway, and waited for the joy and praises of the people.

Instead he heard jeers, flouting and anger. "Does he weary of his pleasure, that he flings it forth to us again?" cried some. Others said: "The stone has brought him ill fortune, and he would cast it over the city instead." Some pointed at it as an old superstition; some prostrated themselves in loud worship, but these were men of evil conscience who sought to propitiate the Prince for their own ends. Some indeed there were who tried to read words of comfort or peace in the gem, but the artificers of the Prince had altered the signs unknowingly and all the real meaning was defaced. While Rahula saw this, first with anger, then with deadly pain and grief, a black storm slowly rolled up, gathered, burst, and in an hundred lightnings the stone was shattered, its splintered fragments hurled down the tempest and lost.

The people fled the city in terror, crying that the gods had punished them for reverencing a birthright other than their own, as was forbidden to man. When the storm was over, one pallid star looked out of the clouds upon a deserted palace, and a lonely Prince brooding over his lost birthright, questioning the mystery of that destruction.

Long he searched his heart in the solitude, but it gave no answer that he understood; he too had forgotten a language. He rose with sudden recollection; he would go to the Hall of Sages. Even as he thought this the Elder stood before him. The Prince shot a glance of hope into that calm face, a glance that changed to one of dismay as the Sage said gravely: "What hast thou done with thy birthright?"

"I? Nothing," stammered Rahula. Mocking echoes multiplied the word. "Nothing! Nothing!" came back to him from all his empty halls like an accusation. He turned quickly upon the Elder:

"Answer me this," he said. "What is this gem, whose power and value are so great, and yet so small? What is it that is both everything and nothing?"

"It is Life. Life which bestowed upon the world is of priceless worth to thee and to all, and which for selfish ends is but an empty thing; Life which thou shalt lose if thou keepest it for thyself. Used as a means, Life is glorious in power and opportunity, fruitful in blessing. Used as an end, a thing sought and worshipped in itself, it is the scorn of mortals and the sport of gods. This was thy only birthright, and thou hast lost it."

"But I will find it again; I will seek the world for the fragments," spoke Rahula. "They shall once more mirror heaven and once more shine upon the people." He went forth to search strongly, a weary search of centuries, for wherever mankind may dwell, there still wanders Rahula, seeking those broken fragments, seeking to restore their scattered meaning. Happy he, who having received Life whole from the gods, gives it back to them in unbroken integrity through the lives of all the people.

—J. CAMPBELL VERPLANCK

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## MAN'S LATENT POWERS

BECAUSE man is the microcosm of the great macrocosm, he carries within his sevenfold nature centres through which the powers that manifest themselves in the Cosmos can find a focalizing point for their eventual conscious operation. There is no power in nature which has not a corresponding centre in man, yet how many of us are actually aware of the fact!

Latent powers are those which are not yet commonly used by mankind, but all powers can be made patent by proper usage in accordance with the basic Law of Nature, which, as *The Light of Asia* says, is "a Power divine which moves to good, Only its laws endure." Mr. Crosbie has told us that "we have to think and *practise* altruism before the higher and more recondite powers of the universe can be placed in our possession for our use."

According to the knowledge that an individual possesses will be the thought and energy generated by him, and such thoughts and energies find expression through the higher and lower aspects of man's mind or Manas. H.P.B. has informed us in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism* that the "Higher Ego cannot act directly on the body," but that "the 'lower' *Self* does"; and that although the Higher Ego "is of the divine homogeneous essence of 'Alaya-Akasa,' or Mahat — its reflection, the Personal Mind, is, as a temporary 'Principle,' of the substance of the Astral Light."

It is in this dual nature of Manas during the incarnation of the Manasic entity that lies the key to the understanding not only of the powers which are at present dormant in man's inner nature, but also of how the reflected aspects of those powers which show themselves in lower Manas can be transformed by spiritual growth into their counterparts, which have their seat and basis in higher Manas.

Inherent in all beings is the power of faith, and although the faiths of many are false, because based on ignorance, yet there is a true Faith which is founded upon right knowledge. It is lower Manas that tends to accept blindly, without checking, testing or verifying what is presented on the authority of an individual, a community, a religion, a philosophy or a science. This same power of faith, when it is expressed by Higher Manas, requires complete freedom to investigate and verify what is presented by any individual or group of individuals. Only that is accepted which the soundest reasoning and intuitive perception have found

to be derived from universal truth and to be based upon universal natural Law. Inherent in every human heart is the faith that Truth exists, and when this power of faith is made active by the actual search for true knowledge, such knowledge by degrees springs up from within, and the light of higher Manas begins to shine through.

In addition to the power of faith, the searcher for truth needs to activate other latent powers, and one such power may be termed the power of resignation, or the recognition that law rules in everything and every circumstance. Recognition of Karma as the law or power which moves to good gives us the capacity to accept it in all circumstances and under all conditions, for we realize its unerring equity, wisdom and intelligence. When we begin to recognize the rule of law in all things, we by degrees change the attitude of indifference to this law — a characteristic of lower Manas — into the attitude of attentive resignation. This attentiveness precedes the receptivity to true ideas by which is achieved an understanding of the Law and the capacity to work with it.

Receptivity to true ideas emanating both from within and from without is a further power that must be made active by the individual who wishes to tread the Path towards Enlightenment. Receptivity is a positive state of mind in contradistinction to passivity, which leads in time to mediumship. From one point of view, receptivity may be considered as the activation of the Buddhi principle within us, for it leads to the development of right discrimination. By the proper use of this power of receptivity the candidate for true wisdom becomes an impersonal channel for the harmonious working of the Karmic law in nature and in man.

Enthusiasm as “the dauntless energy that fights its way to the supernal Truth, out of the mire of lies terrestrial,” is another of the latent powers in man which must be made patent. The contrast between this type of enthusiasm and the various degrees of proselytizing fanaticism that exist in our world is shown by the understanding tolerance of the one, and the very often dogmatic, destructive intolerance of the other. The force or energy of *Virya* is constant, consistent, persists from life to life, and is that which makes one pursue his line of life's meditation — that upon which the heart is set — throughout a life cycle. The sporadic impulses of fanaticism which have their base in lower Manas change according to the desires of individuals, but the enthusiasm engendered by Higher Manas embraces within its scope an ever increasing force or power which tends towards the good of others.

The power to do good carries with it the implication that one must become good, and so the knowledge of good and evil must be fully assimilated by the conversion of all the evil tendencies within our lower nature into their opposite counterparts which work for good. This conversion comes about by the gradual embodiment of all the virtues and the elimination of all evil tendencies. For this task, we need to know that duality exists within our own nature, and that evil arises because our desires set in motion the will to follow the lines of endeavour formulated by our lower mind in order to bring about their fulfilment. Only aspirations to benefit others will enable us to be free of the lower selfish type of desires, and this requires the resolution to take the first step on the Path of Discipleship, which has been declared to be "to live to benefit mankind." The second step — its natural corollary — is "to practise the six glorious virtues."

Freedom from the personal desires of the lower nature becomes the next latent power which must be activated from within the mind of man. Attachment to desires, their gratification and fulfilment, leads in time to licence, which is subjection of the will by the power of desires. To aspire to serve humanity with knowledge and understanding is equivalent to learning to free the will from the domain of desires in which the majority of men live. The more the personal will of man becomes at one with the Will of Nature, the greater becomes our power to serve all beings. This power to serve all prepares the candidate to enter the Path of Renunciation as against the Path of Liberation. This power becomes energized by the power of enthusiasm and the power of discrimination, which helps us to know which type of service it is necessary to render. The power of resignation makes us work with the Law, and an impersonal channel for the Law's working is made available. The power of enlightened faith ensures the harmonious fulfilment of *Dharma* or Duty — that which is due to others.

From what has been said it may be perceived that latent powers may be made patent by right usage and by the conversion of the lower Manasic tendencies into their higher Manasic counterparts. This conversion must be accomplished by the candidate for enlightenment by self-induced and self-devised efforts, and by willingness "to do, to dare and remain silent." "There are the powers of all Nature before you: take what you can."

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## SEEDS OF RESOLVE

THE IMAGERY OF A FIELD, of sowing and reaping, is an old, old one. When we consider the cycles of birth, growth, maturity, fructification and death in the vegetable kingdom, we are struck by the fact that without exception every great spiritual teacher of humanity has used, in one form or another, this simile connected with vegetable life and the laws governing it.

The Thirteenth Discourse of the *Gita* calls the body, in which every one of us lives, the *Kshetra*, the field, and it refers to the Soul dwelling in the body as the *Kshetrajna* or the Knower of that field. In the *Vendidad* the same illustration is used, and we are asked to till the land with the right hand and with the left, that is, on this side and also on the other, leaving no speck of earth unturned. If we come to the Sermons of the Buddha, we find that he makes use of this simile again and again. We know how he preached in the open air to labourers and to peasants in the many villages of India, and as he went along preaching, he naturally took as examples the familiar processes in reference to plants and fields. In the *Sutta Nipata* there is a sermon where he compares himself to a farmer. Again, in the scriptures of Christianity, the Gospels, we find the same metaphor used, that of sowing and reaping, to explain to human beings that they are only sowers and planters and that what they have sown they must also reap.

The first important point is to ask ourselves: Did all the Great Instructors use the simile of the labourer in the field merely because it came handy, or is there a fundamental, scientific reason back of all these similes and metaphors? And the answer is that there is an actual foundation of philosophy and of spiritual science, for we find that that which takes place in the vegetable kingdom is but a reflection of the actual process which takes place in the great universe, the macrocosm, and therefore also in the miniature copy of that great cosmos — man. The vegetable kingdom, therefore, is intimately related from that point of view to the psychological process taking place in human beings; thus, every one of us can really benefit by an observation and study of the laws which govern the processes in great Mother Nature.

Needless to say, the actual metaphors and images borrowed from that which takes place in the vegetable kingdom are not always used by the Great Teachers to present the same lessons; they are used in

a variety of ways, all real in terms of the actual verities they contain. We will consider here only one particular application. Let us think of a seed and ask ourselves what we would describe as the most important thing in that seed. Would we not say that the predominant aspect of life which manifests in a seed is the creative aspect? Life is everywhere present, it is true, and Theosophy enables us to see the pulsating life in every form, even in the form which is known as dead, even in a corpse; but the activity of life is different in a seed from the activity of life in a corpse. In the seed the aspect of life which is manifesting is the creative potency. In a corpse also there is life, but it is showing forth a different aspect, the aspect of destruction. A corpse disintegrates into its constituent atoms, but the seed has within it the possibility of integrating itself into an organized living form, which will in turn give new creative seeds for further plants with fruits and flowers.

Both seed and corpse are buried underground. We bury the corpse, but what do we obtain? The life is there, for there is change, and change represents life; the very process of disintegration of the buried corpse proves one aspect of life's activity. But in the seed it is the reverse aspect that manifests itself; it is the aspect of creation, integration.

What other predominant feature can we note in our examination of the seed? Not only does the seed represent the most positive form of life energy, but also we find that within the seed is already contained the plan of the future integrated, organized form that will spring and sprout from that seed. The acorn already contains in miniature the plan of the oak tree that it will become in the process of time; so, too, the lotus seed contains within itself the image, the model, of the lotus itself. Now think of a botanist; on examining a seed he is able to tell us that it is the seed of such-and-such a plant, so that we know that that seed will give birth to a particular kind of plant and no other. But the seed will not begin to sprout forth into activity and fructify unless it is planted in proper soil, for it is necessary to choose the soil that will be most congenial to the seed and that will provide the best possible nourishment for the preservation of the potent life that is there in the seed.

We have to take into account the creative energy and the plan which is going to serve as the channel for that creative energy to express itself. All the four elements of Nature are necessary for the seed to complete its cycle of life-evolution and to give us a new seed for the future plant. The earth is the very foundation of the whole

process; the seed must be put into the earth. But at once it will need water and air and light. It is necessary to give it water and it is necessary for the seed to breathe. Seeds need air, and if we were to make the space around seeds airless, it would be impossible for them to grow. Finally, they require heat; the radiance and the warmth of the sun is the fourth element which is absolutely indispensable to the process of growth, evolution and maturity of every form of life in the vegetable kingdom.

What else can we think of about the seed? Let us think of that cycle to which we referred — from seed to seed again. When a plant has reached the highest point in its own evolution, what is the result? The result is a fruit, but the fruit already contains within itself the seed; that is the main purpose of evolution. So there is a complete cycle in the life of the seed — from the seed that is planted to the fruit which once again will yield the same seed.

That gives us another important aspect. There may be a change in the quality in the process of manifestation. It may be for good or for evil. That is, the quality may be improved upon or it may, alas, be deteriorated for want of knowledge, from failure to give care and attention to the plant; but in any case it will be the same seed and no other. It is possible to improve the quality of a plant by taking care from the very starting of the seed and by trying to attend to the process intelligently, obeying the laws of Nature; but it is also possible to neglect the seed altogether, and if all that is needed is not there, if conditions are not favourable, we may have very poor results. The lotus may not be a very radiant or beautiful lotus, but if the seed was a lotus seed it will produce a lotus.

And now let us go to the other word in our title which also needs understanding — “resolve.” What does “resolve” indicate? Resolve is the chief characteristic of man’s free will. The first thing to note, therefore, in reference to all resolves is that they are possible only for human beings, for man and for man alone. The human Soul is capable of energizing itself and of directing itself in terms of that very self-determination; therefore man can resolve. He does not always resolve wisely, he does not always resolve upon a basis of knowledge, but, foolishly or wisely, man does direct himself. All human beings are endowed with the power of free will, and such self-determination plays the most important part in human evolution.

Let us compare the evolution of human beings with the evolution in

the lower kingdoms. There is a vital difference between evolution in the forms of life below the human kingdom and the growth and progression of the human being. There is one single process of evolution for the lower kingdoms; we call it evolution by natural impulse. In the human kingdom there is a twofold process; there are two modes which bring about growth and evolution: First, natural impulse which does exist to a certain extent in human beings, and, secondly, the free will of the individual, the self-conscious thinker, the human Soul; the free will which can determine and choose for itself. There is not that possibility of choice nor its accompanying moral responsibility in the kingdoms below our own.

In our kingdom, self-induced and self-devised ways and means play the most important part. Any system of philosophy, any school of thought that does not present to humanity the necessity to energize itself and to work for its own salvation does not serve humanity; on the contrary, it harms and injures humanity. Theosophically, that which is stressed the most is the imperative necessity for each human being to awaken himself through his own effort; there is no other road to acquire knowledge. There are so many different systems nowadays that tend to make man non-responsible, that hamper man by presenting to him the false concept that his destiny is not in his own control, that he can do nothing so far as the shaping of his own character and the modelling of his own moral perception are concerned. Theosophy, on the contrary, like every system of true philosophy and spiritual religion, emphasizes the necessity for the individual to put forth his whole effort, his best effort, and to move in terms of his own energization. And to do that, it is necessary for the individual to resolve. What do we mean by resolving, if not asserting the power of our own choice, the power of our own responsibility, and energizing ourselves, choosing for ourselves that which we want to achieve? We said that was not possible in the kingdoms below man. Not only is it not possible in the vegetable kingdom for a seed of a lotus to transform itself into an acorn that will give birth to an oak tree; not only is it impossible for a dog to decide to be a cat — to be more specific in our illustration, it is not possible for a dog to choose to show forth this or that characteristic of this or that particular species in the dog family.

But what about man? It is possible for man to choose what type of human being he will be. Any man or woman can decide for himself or for herself the type of characteristics he wants to develop; any man can choose for himself the type of man he determines to be,

and can grow like the ideal which he has chosen and has decided to realize. Although this is possible, when we come to the practical application we find that often we do not succeed in carrying out our resolve. Naturally, we must understand the science of resolves correctly and we must know how to preserve our seed, and to give to it the necessary elements for sustenance and nourishment. No wonder people fail in their resolves! They resolve without any understanding as to what it is that they carry within themselves which should blossom forth in full glory, and so they choose wrongly and are frustrated; but they could see in that frustration the compassionate aspect of great Mother Nature. For it is through frustration that man will try again and look around, and especially within himself, and then he will have some further basis to understand the type of resolves he should make.

Now, what is it in us that we are going to compare to the seed? Since we studied the seed we must find the practical correspondence in our own human constitution. Almost all Spiritual Teachers have compared the human Soul to the seed. So let us see if we cannot apply to the human Soul the very same features in an analogical manner. By means of correspondence and analogy, let us see if we cannot derive some practical guidance in the understanding of ourselves as human Souls. Life, creative life, was the predominant feature in the seed. The human Soul has within itself the creative potentiality of immortality. The aspect of life which is present and inherent in the human Soul is the creative and integrating energy of life itself. That is why we say that each one of us has within himself the potentiality of becoming an immortal being.

The plan of our future growth is also carried by each one of us as the plan of the future plant is carried within the seed. This is important in terms of practical application. The very plan of our future, of this very incarnation, is there within ourselves. The ultimate plan in main outline is naturally the same for all human Souls; all human Souls as they grow come near and nearer to the divine pattern realized by the Perfected Soul; but in order to fulfil the complete plan of human perfection it is necessary to begin by fulfilling the actual plan of each one of our lives. That is why Theosophy stresses that education should bring forth that which is there within each child.

Next, all the great elements of nature are needed to unfold the plan carried within the human Soul and to bring it to fruition. The

body is made up of the four elements and Theosophy explains to us the real nature of the human body. Thus, it enables us to perceive it not only as chemists and physicists would, but to perceive the invisible Presence and the bond that exists between the Soul and the body. The body is the field for realizing the plan that is within us. In and through the body the elemental lives improve their status because of the presence of the Soul.

Then there is a complete circle represented by the cycle of the full evolution of a seed — from seed to seed again; so too with human beings — from birth to birth again. At birth the incarnated Soul possesses within itself the plan to be carried out in this particular life. Who made that plan? Just as the previous tree and the fruit of the tree yield the seed, so too the plan of each one of us in incarnated existence is the seed yielded from the previous life, including the after-death states where the new seed is actually formed. We make our own plan of future life now and here.

Now man can never be anything else but man, but human beings can deteriorate like plants; they can become worse and worse; they can actually hamper and frustrate the plan of their own growth; but no matter how evil they turn — and in their case it is their own choice and their own responsibility — they cannot be anything else but human beings. Once a man, always a man; that is, once a human Soul has appeared in the field of human evolution, incarnated in a human personality, that Soul continues to incarnate in human bodies. It is not true that the Soul of a wicked man or of an evil woman will find itself reborn in an animal form. The human Soul will remain a human Soul, but it can degrade or elevate itself. It is within the power of every one of us to determine whether we are going to work with Nature, trying to fulfil the plan of the human Soul, or whether we are going to go against Nature and therefore become worse, more useless and more dangerous in reference to our fellow beings.

How can any one of us begin to understand the plan which is in the seed, the result of our past actions, of our past karma? We must make the first resolve to consult the Soul within ourselves. People make resolves, but not always after due consultation with the Soul. What is it in them that enables them to make resolves without consulting the very creative power of the Soul? Natural impulse.

There are two ways in which resolves can be made. That resolve which is false originates in that which we like or dislike; and the

other type of resolve, which is the true resolve, is made through the energization of the Soul within. When resolves are made in terms of likes and dislikes they are bound to fail. It is only when the resolve is made in consultation with the Soul that it is possible for that seed to unfold harmoniously and successfully.

Theosophy gives us impersonal laws which must be understood in order that each one of us may energize himself to apply them in the building of his own structure. The individual plan will differ with every one of us, but laws are the same for all human Souls. Theosophy is that Wisdom which is impersonal and universal, which can, therefore, be applied by every Soul without exception. And that is the task we should undertake, the consideration of the great fundamentals in reference to the living of our lives as Souls. When these fundamentals have been grasped, each one of us will have the necessary strength and discrimination to apply that science to the solving of his own problems, to the overcoming of his own difficulties, to the strengthening of his own good qualities, the eradicating of his own blemishes.

And ultimately, though the pattern for each one is different, the final pattern to which every one of us as a human Soul can aspire is the same for all of us. The seed containing that pattern is within ourselves. Not only can we perceive that pattern and that ideal by going within to contact the true centre of our own consciousness, but also we have the full expression and the manifestation of the plan already fulfilled, already evolved completely and absolutely in the Great Human Banyan Trees, the living Immortal Ones, who have achieved the complete cycle of human evolution from the incipient beginning of self-consciousness to the enlarging of it to universal Self-consciousness. Man is growing into the stature of God; but what is God if not Atma that has become Mahatma! And those great Banyan Trees, having fulfilled the purpose of Their own evolution and climbed the heights of Wisdom and of Compassion, decided, of Their own volition, in terms of Their own compassionate sacrifice, to throw down the shoots of Life into this mortal world. We can think of Them as one great, one gigantic, Living Banyan Tree, represented by the many sacrifices of the many Masters of Renunciation. And that Living Banyan Tree forms bowers for shade; its beautiful foliage protects humanity; and when men choose to take refuge in that shade they gain protection and, also, they learn how to sacrifice for the sake of humanity.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Time was when the great intellectual achievements of the people of India brought to this country a host of interested seekers of knowledge from distant lands. Study of the vast literature of ancient India reveals that our forefathers were proficient, among other things, in various sciences. An article by K. R. Srikantamurthy on "Ancient Indian Sciences" (*Bhavan's Journal*, October 20) deals with this aspect of Indian scholarship.

The Vedas, which are the fountainhead of Hindu *Dharma*, do not confine themselves merely to sacrificial or moral discipline, says the writer, but are "a veritable storehouse of many subjects which we call today 'Sciences.'" The Vedic *mantras* or hymns yield more than one meaning, and hidden behind each of them is the description of one or another natural phenomenon. The Rishis who composed these mantras were scientists and philosophers combined in one, and had acquired knowledge of all things around them, from the sun and stars down to the minutest bacteria. In the words of Dr. Srikantamurthy:

Vedic literature has a great deal to tell about astronomy, meteorology, agriculture, veterinary and dairy sciences, medicine and military science. The *Atharva Veda* is a veritable storehouse of many other sciences such as entomology, parasitology, bacteriology, agriculture, human and veterinary medicine, instruments and methods of warfare, eradication of evils, political science, astrophysics, aeronautics, etc. . . .

Coming on to Upanishadic literature and the various *Darshanas* or systems of philosophy arising from them, we find a still greater elaboration of scientific subjects. The *Nyaya*, *Vaishika* and the *Sankhya Darshanas* are landmarks in the realms of atomic and molecular physics, chemistry and biology, while the *Yoga Darshana* has much to speak of human physiology. . . .

The second phase of scientific progress in India commences with the period of the Puranas. . . . The doctrines were actually put to test and knowledge obtained therefrom incorporated into the texts. Technological development was the chief feature of this period. Apart from the scientific subjects that Vedic literature deals with, Puranic literature contains many more subjects such as engineering, town planning, mining and metallurgy, geology and gemmology, chemistry and alchemy, psychology and minor subjects like the preparation of scents, beverages, culinary science, interpretation of omens and dreams, etc. Astronomy, medicine and

alchemy were probably the chief subjects which received great attention during this period of technological development.

The third phase of scientific activity in India began by about the 10th century A.D. This is the "stage of decadence" which started as an inevitable consequence of foreign invasions and other political vicissitudes. . . . The progress of none of the sciences was possible and in course of time some of them even became extinct. A good number of others are available today only in the form of books without their technology in practice, while only a few of them have survived both in their theoretical and practical aspects, Ayurveda and Jyotisha being the two important ones under this group. . . .

Ancient Indian sciences have much to contribute to the progress of many modern sciences, and if a thorough study is made of their doctrines and technology many a profound invention is likely to come about.

Towards the close of the first volume of *Isis Unveiled* (pp. 618-20), H.P.B. has tabulated some of the achievements of the ancient Indians, not only in philosophy and the arts, but also in the sciences. She adds:

What have we to offer for comparison? Beside such majestic achievements of the past, what can we place that will seem so grandiose and sublime as to warrant our boast of superiority over an ignorant ancestry? Beside the discoverers of geometry and algebra, the constructors of human speech, the parents of philosophy, the primal expounders of religion, the adepts in psychological and physical science, how even the greatest of our biologists and theologians seem dwarfed! Name to us any modern discovery, and we venture to say, that Indian history need not long be searched before the prototype will be found of record.

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It is generally believed that the rich are more prone to mental illness than the poor. The latter are considered to lead less complicated, less competitive, less demanding lives, and therefore to have more fun and less worry. Recent studies reveal that it is not necessarily so. Psychiatrists today maintain that while "poverty in itself does not cause mental illness, it does provide a milieu of frustration and despair that may be the spur."

Flora Rheta Schreiber and Melvin Herman, in their article "Poverty and Mental Illness" (*Science Digest*, September 1968), give case his-

ories to show that the poor who succumb, like the rich and the middle class, "have been beaten down by the hammer blows of life."

Even though the hammer blows of life fall equally on all social and economic groups, the already "defeated" poor are less resilient and therefore more susceptible. There is more poor physical health in the lowest economic class. The poor are more lonely, more insecure, less educated.

According to two Yale professors, sociologist Arthur B. Hollingshead, and psychiatrist Frederick C. Redlich, M.D., once human relationships have triggered emotional and mental illness, the latter is conditioned by many class factors.

In the lowest economic group these investigators found a powerful anti-psychiatry feeling that hindered therapy; a distrust of people in authority; a sense of being exploited; a resentment towards the way they had been treated by employers, clergymen, teachers, doctors, police and other representatives of organized society. The conclusion was that children born in such an environment naturally resent the hostility around them and in turn become hostile themselves. . . .

The causes of mental illness are never fully revealed. Hollingshead and Redlich have suggested that mental illness and social class alike can be compared to an iceberg with 90 per cent concealed below the surface. The submerged portion — the unlisted mental illness and the unseen factors of the class structure — are the dangerous parts. The unseen is what happens or does not happen to each of us because of economic position. But since we live in a mobile society in which these positions are forever changing, poverty can be the spur to getting ahead even more than it is the occasion of mental illness. It is the spur, of course, only when the personality, strongly in the ascendancy, has not been crushed.

The poor who want to rise but are prevented from doing so, are hopelessly trapped. This is the frustration that triggers mental illness. Only the hope of moving from a childhood of poverty to an adulthood of comfort keeps a deprived childhood from becoming the take-off point for mental illness. . . .

Our self-image is determined by what others think of us. If they think of us as inferior, we also consider ourselves inferior. Those who suffer from low self-esteem are the ones most likely to be flattened by Life's hammer blows. Here certainly the image of rich and poor is not equal.

Mental illness is in the last analysis defined socially. Those deep in the grip of poverty have different views of life and society than those who have hope; the very differences conditioning the illness that the psychiatrist must treat.

The student of Theosophy may feel that undue importance is being attached to economic conditions in determining the cause of mental illness. Whatever one's station in life, whether one be poor or rich, intense selfishness in some form would seem to be the prime cause. The essence of selfishness is the constant direction of thought and feeling to the lower desires or fears and to the lower principles as active with these. Through the strength of the desires and the attention given them, or through some great shock to them, a loosening or an actual disconnection occurs between one or more of the principles and the rest. Anger or terror, for example, may cause a partial displacement without destroying the mental balance; but a further degree of disconnection creates that complete unbalance known as insanity. Sometimes a suffering individual can help himself, through moral changes; especially if he succeeds in lessening his selfishness by giving kindly attention to other men. In that way he may bring about his own cure.

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An excerpt from *Daybreak*, the journal of Joan Baez, printed in the August *Atlantic* under the title "My Life Is a Crystal Teardrop," contains this hypothetical conversation between a pacifist and a non-pacifist:

"... There's a consensus out that it's OK to kill when your government decides who to kill. If you kill inside the country you get in trouble. If you kill outside the country, right time, right season, latest enemy, you get a medal. There are about one hundred and thirty nation-states, and each of them thinks it's a swell idea to bump off all the rest because he is more important. The pacifist thinks there is only one tribe. Three billion members. They come first. We think killing any member of the family is a dumb idea. We think there are more decent and intelligent ways of settling differences. And man had better start investigating these other possibilities because if he doesn't, then by mistake or by design, he will probably kill off the whole damn race."

"It's human nature to kill."

"Is it?"

"It's natural. Something you can't change."

"If it's natural to kill why do men have to go into training to learn how? There's violence in human nature, but there's also decency, love, kindness. Man organizes, buys, sells, pushes violence. The non-violenter wants to organize the opposite side. That's all non-violence is — organized love..."

"Don't you believe in self-defence?"

"No, that's how the Mafia got started. A little band of people who got together to protect peasants. I'll take Gandhi's non-violent resistance."

"I still don't get the point of non-violence."

"The point of non-violence is to build a floor, a strong new floor, beneath which we can no longer sink. A platform which stands a few feet above napalm, torture, exploitation, poison gas, A and H bombs, the works. Give man a decent place to stand. He's been wallowing around in human blood and vomit and burnt flesh screaming how it's going to bring peace to the world. He sticks his head out of the hole for a minute and sees an odd bunch of people gathering material and attempting to build a structure above ground in the fresh air. 'Nice idea but not very practical,' he shouts, and slides back into the hole. It was the same kind of thing when man found out the world was round. He fought for years to have it remain flat, with every proof on hand that it was not flat at all. It had no edge to drop off or sea monsters to swallow up his little ship in their gaping jaws."

"How are you going to build this practical structure?"

"From the ground up. By studying, learning about, experimenting with every possible alternative to violence on every level. By learning how to say No to the nation-state, No to war taxes, No to the draft, No to killing in general, Yes to the brotherhood of man; by starting new institutions which are based on the assumption that murder in any form is ruled out; by making and keeping in touch with non-violent contacts all over the world; by engaging ourselves at every possible chance in dialogue with people, groups, to try to begin to change the consensus that it's OK to kill."

"It sounds real nice, but I just don't think it can work."

"You are probably right. We probably don't have enough time. So far we've been a glorious flop. The only thing that's been a worse flop than the organization of non-violence has been the organization of violence."

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