

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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GURUS AND GURUS

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INDIAN PEOPLE cherish the institution of the Guru, though the status and function of the teacher have undergone a change for the worse. Today in the orthodox Hindu home the family priest is honoured as Guru. But people seek the aid of a guru for purposes other than the performance of religious ceremonies.

Men and women are continuously impressed by living in an atmosphere of tradition centuries old. It awakens in them a desire for spiritual instruction and guidance. They readily go to some one, almost to any one, of the thousands of faquirs, sadhus and sanyasis. They come to grief in one or another way, for most of these mendicants are not proficient, even when they are mentally pure, while many among them are men of evil habits. Those who possess knowledge and are pure in character are very few and rare to contact.

The views, beliefs and psychic practices of most faquirs, sadhus and sanyasis bar their way to the Real. They are well meaning and earnest, often sincere, but inherit wrong views, accept false beliefs, and undertake questionable and dangerous practices. The psychic atmosphere of India is most complex; the Astral Light tempts people, unconsciously to themselves, to magic rites which are impure and degrading; such a current is weak, even when it shadows other continents.

On the other hand, in India the pure divine Astral Light or Akasha is as strong as it is magnificent; it is more powerful in its beauty and lofty in its influence than anywhere else. It is difficult to contact, and only rare individuals succeed in putting themselves under its influence. Of them, Mahatma K.H. wrote:

If it be permissible to symbolize things subjective by phenomena objective, I should say that to the psychic sight India seems covered with a stifling grey fog—a moral meteor—the odic emanation from her vicious social state. Here and there twinkles a point of light which marks a nature still somewhat spiritual, a person who aspires and struggles after the higher knowledge. If the beacon of Aryan occultism shall ever be kindled again, these scattered sparks must be combined to make its flame.

One of the missions of Theosophy is to rescue and re-elevate the chair of the Guru to its noble height. It is most likely that immediately after her arrival in India, H.P.B. publicly spoke of the existence of the Great Gurus for the purpose of drawing a distinction between the Teachers of Universal Divine Wisdom pointing to the Path of Real Renunciation and those many others who taught numberless ways to personal emancipation or *mukti*. The ordinary sanyasi of today calls himself a renouncer, for he has an aversion—call it a noble aversion if you like!—for the sense-life and has renounced the world with a view to winning for himself *mukti* or liberation. But he is not a real renouncer, for in truth he is desiring to possess something—*Nirvana*.

The bond between Chela and Guru of the true *Gupta Vidya*, the Secret Science, is a purely spiritual one. Neither in the Hall of Ignorance, this earth, the pleasure-ground of senses; nor in the psychic realm, where a thousand sweet-tongued voices allure the mind, can the Guru be found. In the psychic world hundreds of practitioners are caught up by the glamorous working of the Astral Light, just as millions are caught up in the web of sensuous fascinations of physical life. Beyond the physical and the psychic worlds is the spiritual world, the Hall of Wisdom, and there only the Guru of soul-life awaits the aspiring Chela.

In the ordinary world the credulous and the gullible fall prey to false gurus who are not only ignorant men but often even frauds and charlatans. On the other hand the sceptical, laughing at the folly of false claims, etc., reject the very idea of a Guru and laugh at the teachings of the Sacred and Secret Science. Similarly, among students of Theosophy there are those who desire to meet Masters on earth—face to face; while there are others, who, awed by the grandeur of the Ideal, cannot bring themselves seriously to attempt realizing that ideal as fact. Both err; but they can free themselves from their misconceptions without much difficulty. The student, however, who is psychically afflicted, is in a more critical, almost perilous, state; though even he

can by tact and patience repair the mischief done to his constitution.

We must learn to seek the Guru in the Hall of Wisdom, "wherein all shadows are unknown, and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory."

In every sincere, earnest and devoted student of Theosophy the seed of Chelaship exists. By making the skandhaic deposit suitable manure with which to feed the soil of mind in which the seed resides, by watering it with the Esoteric Philosophy, and by nourishing it with the sunshine of right application, we bring the fructification of the seed. This seed is the "uncreate" which abides in us — the impersonal Ray of the Master-Spirit. That "uncreate" also abides in the Hall of Wisdom — but not as seed. The blending referred to in *The Voice of the Silence* is the process of Chelaship.

Chelaship may be described as a process of the training of the soul which, freeing itself from the earthly impress-deposits of many past lives, is born again, like a butterfly from a chrysalis.

This Theosophical teaching is identical with the ancient and now forgotten doctrine of Hindu faith about Gurus. In old texts we come upon some clear-cut instruction, numerous hints, and numberless tales and allegories which clearly show what a different status the Gurus of old occupied, and how differently Their Nature was understood. The first link of Guruparampara, the chain of Gurus, is in the World of Spirit, and its last here on earth — mortal educators of religious and mystical lore. We use the terms, Guru and Chela, in a specific sense: the Chela is the Esotericist and learner of *Gupta Vidya*, the Secret Science, who has undertaken to be tested by life and Karma. The Guru is the invisible Spiritual Teacher who can be really contacted in the Hall of Wisdom.

In the *Bhagavata* occur several important statements of practical value to the neophyte. Uddhava, the friend of Krishna, utters as his ambassador two teachings which bear on the subject we are considering. Uddhava was deputed by Krishna to visit the village of his boyhood life and to convey his greetings and affection to his foster-parents and his playmates — cowherds and milkmaids.

To Nanda and Yasoda, almost despairing at the continued absence of Krishna, Uddhava says:

Do not feel pained. You shall see Krishna by your side.
Like fire within the wood, He is within the heart of all beings.

Krishna is in each human being as fire is in the wood, but unless that wood is dry even the heavenly lightning will not draw out the fire. So many are eager to see the Master physically or psychically, and that is why they fail. Here is a prescription—make yourself dry of the moisture of personal and human feelings and then the wood will catch fire. Within the heart the Guru is to be found.

Another point: the lifting and sending of the thinking mind to the Image of Krishna, whose memory is burnt into the very consciousness of man. When the Gopis lament that besides Krishna's parents there is nothing to remind them of the Lord, Uddhava quotes some words of the Great Guru:

By making your mind completely absorbed in Me, you shall reach Me soon.

Not by crossing the mountain pass into Tibet can the Masters be found; nor by erudition in learning and preaching; nor by repeating "Master, Master"; nor by acts of service here and words of kindness there. By freeing the mind from personal feelings, by raising it to the plane of the impersonal with the aid of Wisdom, by creating in that liberated and elevated consciousness the Image of the Guru and becoming absorbed therein, can the aspiring Chela feel the Presence of the ever-watching Guru.

FROM earliest times, among all but the modern western people, the teacher was given great reverence by the pupil, and the latter was taught from youth to look upon his preceptor as only second to his father and mother in dignity. It was among these people a great sin, a thing that did one actual harm in his moral being, to be disrespectful to his teacher even in thought. The reason for this lay then, and no less today does also lie, in the fact that a long chain of influence extends from the highest spiritual guide who may belong to any man, down through vast numbers of spiritual chiefs, ending at last even in the mere teacher of our youth....

This chain of influence is called the *Guruparampara chain*.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY

[Reprinted from *The Path* for June, July and December 1886.

—EPS.]

FRAGMENTS of the Ancient Wisdom Religion have come down to us from the remotest past, through many channels, and in various forms.

The study of philology alone will be inadequate to discover the true meaning of ancient sacred writings, though it may very greatly assist the labours of those who have already gained a clue to the Secret Doctrine. The Theosophist and the Antiquarian differ very widely, and though the former has sometimes been accused of searching out obsolete doctrines and magnifying the achievements of the past, but little observation will be required to reveal the fact that that for which they search may be very old because it is valuable, but never valuable merely because it is old. In short, that of which they are in search may truly be said to never fade, and ne'er grow old, though it is often lost sight of. Occultism is not a new craze as some suppose, it is not simply a line of the marvellous, it is rather the profoundest of all sciences, conforming in its methods of research and the character of its results to those of all sciences. The naturalist does not hesitate to construct from a single tooth or a few fragments of bone the entire animal and assign to it its proper place, declare its habits, modes of life, size, etc., etc., even though he fixed its era centuries ago, and no one nowadays questions the general correctness of the result; the study of comparative anatomy and the science of biology testifies all this. In like manner and by similar methods may one familiar with the science of occultism, which deals with the operation of uniform laws in the higher realms of nature, arrive at exact data from very small beginnings, and with this advantage, *viz.*, that he has the means at hand to verify his conclusions, which the naturalist has not, for in this realm there are no extinct species; the elements of human nature, and the laws which underlie their unfoldment and manifestation are the same now, as thousands of years ago.

It is the custom of many who are entirely ignorant of this higher science to deny its existence and ridicule its cultivators, just as an uneducated and conceited boor would ridicule an Agassiz for attempting to reconstruct an animal from its thigh bone. When, therefore, one entirely ignorant not only of the principles but of the existence of such a thing as occult science examines the ancient records in which it is concealed, he will arise from his task possibly better satisfied with his own posses-

sions as contrasted with the "ignorance" of past ages, but seldom wiser for his endeavour. Few persons nowadays are ignorant of the form of most ancient hierarchic writings, as consisting of, or containing, a double meaning under the garb of allegory or parable. It is, moreover, becoming quite generally known that many of these ancient records are of vital importance to us of the present day, as containing the very knowledge of which we stand most in need, and the amount of attention they are receiving may be determined by observing the interest in, and almost unprecedented sales of, such works as Arnold's *Light of Asia*, while the labours of men like Max Müller in rendering the ancient scriptures into English have made it possible for everyone to gain some familiarity with the religious casts of antiquity. Bearing in mind these general observations, let us briefly examine one of the most ancient, most famous, and yet least comprehended sources of ancient wisdom.

As to the questions: Who was Hermes? Which Hermes? When did he write? — we have these points for the philologists and historians, quoting here the remark of Iamblichus in his treatise on the Mysteries: "Hermes, the God who presides over language, was formerly very properly considered as common to all priests; and the power who presides over the true science concerning the Gods is one and the same in the whole of things. Hence our ancestors dedicated the inventions of their wisdom to this deity, inscribing all their own writings with the name of Hermes." And "the late learned Divine Doctor Everard" in the preface to his translation of the Divine Pymander, 1650, contends that Hermes Trismegistus lived a long time before Moses, that he had "perfect and exact knowledge of all things contained in the world . . . that he was the first that invented the art of communicating knowledge to the world by writing, that he was King of Egypt, that he styled himself the son of Saturn, and that he was believed to have come from heaven, and not to have been born on earth."¹

The above writer goes on to say that Hermes did excel in the right understanding of, because he attained to, the knowledge of the quintessence of the whole universe, otherwise called the *Elixir* of the philosophers, which secret many ignorantly deny, many have sought after, and some have found. A description of this great Treasure is said to have been found engraved upon a Smaragdine Tablet in the valley of Hebron after the flood.²

¹ See Introduction to *The Divine Pymander*, p. vi et seq., 1650 edition.

² *Ibid.*

To the modern reader, all this sounds very queer, a bundle of contradictions and vagaries, taxing reason and even credulity. But suppose we are told that it was designed for exactly that purpose, that only they who were *determined* to find the truth, and who therefore had faith that it existed somewhere, were expected to walk around or dig under this stumbling-block. If we turn now to *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 507, we shall find the inscription said to have been found on the tablet.

The inscription is further explained by the author of *Isis*, where it is also said: "It is for the Hermetic student to watch its motions, to catch its subtile currents, to guide and direct them with the help of the *athanor*, the Archimedean lever of the Alchemist."³ It is further stated in plain words that this mysterious agent "is the universal magical agent, the astral light, which in the correlation of its forces furnishes the alkahest, the philosopher's stone, and the elixir of life."⁴ Now one great advantage to the student who follows carefully these hints is that he soon discovers certain basic principles which reach far and wide, and in Hermetic language enable him to ascend from Earth to Heaven, and descend from Heaven to Earth, not in a vague, fanciful way, but as applicable to physical phenomena as to philosophical synthesis. These basic principles are not hypotheses, they are the *first principles of Nature*, as manifested in the phenomenal universe, a thread or clue to the labyrinth of phenomena.

There is a vast difference between modern and ancient science in regard to the Ether: The former hypothecates it to bridge a gap in phenomena and at once, as if ashamed of its weakness, turns its back upon it. Not so our ancient Hermetic brethren. Modern speculation regarding a fourth dimension of space apprehends the necessity for something beyond the old conception, as does physical science. And yet the latter reaches no solid ground, though the problem lies in the rubbish derived from analytical science, and the necessity which has compelled it to pay tribute. There is a logical, uniform, invariable antithesis in all manifested nature, which at once suggests the unmanifested. Sometimes the change of a letter or an accent in a word or its division into syllables produces wonderful results, *e.g.*, atonement, at-one-ment. So here in the phenomenal universe, nothing and no-thing are not synonymous. To say that the ether fills all space, penetrates the densest matter, and gives rise by emanation to the whole phenomenal universe, and yet that it is *nothing* is nonsense, but that it is no-thing is perfectly

³ *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 506.

⁴ *Ibid.*

true. The ether is to the phenomenal universe what the 0 is to the mathematician, nothing in itself and yet from association, implication or involution, it enters into every form and quantity. Oken has shown⁵ that there are really two zeros, or that zero exists as $0+$ and $0-$, and even here begins the science of symbolism in the ancient *Mathesis*. It is in this shoreless ocean of ether that suns and solar systems are suspended. It is the alkahest or universal solvent from which all forms and qualities of matter and life proceed, and into which they return. It is luminous, and yet the abode of darkness, the Unmoved Mover of Plato.

Take now the three dimensions of space, and we find the *idea* of length, breadth and thickness is associated with objects. Where there is no object upon which the eye can rest, we have then no length, no breadth, no thickness, *i.e.*, Ether, the antithesis of objective forms in which occur all phenomena. This ether is called the Mirror of Isis, because in it are impressed or mirrored all forms. When these forms are clothed upon then occurs, first, a *positing*; second, motion; third, the "picture" in the ether is involved and the outer material shape evolved. Nay, there is no first, second, third about it, for all occurs coincidentally. The last analysis of physics is matter, force and motion; and these three, inseparable on the physical visual plane, resolve back into the ocean of ether, which contains them all *potentially*, and which sends them out as an indissoluble trinity. Compared with matter then, the ether is transcendental, and yet we cannot say it is nothing, as has already been pointed out. Now all life, all matter, all forms, are in their essence cyclic. This is readily seen in the colloidal forms incident to organic life, but even in crystalline forms, though often overlooked, it is none the less apparent.

In relation to objective manifestation, preserving the idea of cyclic form, the ether is spoken of as the centre which is everywhere, and the circumference which is nowhere.

Proceeding now with the idea of centre and circumference (as yet only an idea) let us imagine a globule of protoplasm to spring instantly into visual existence. The act of *positing* was geometrical, *i.e.*, "position without extension." Let this positing represent *force*, and extension represent matter, typically (in all directions), but this tension and extension begets motion, all together; creation, from the hitherto "*without form and void*," *i.e.*, the ether.

⁵ *Physio-Philosophy*.

• What was the immediate coefficient of the positing? A picture, a Divine idea, an essential form, projected in the ether. This idea is now being clothed upon, or involved in matter, and coincidentally the outer material shape and structure is being evolved. Here is an equation being solved, and from this on, it is easy to trace what occurs even under a good microscope. We are, however, interested in principles rather than in processes; therefore we will preserve our typical sphere with its centre and circumference.

We shall presently come back to the Smaragdine inscription, and then be able to see what a revelation it contains, and what a magical key it affords to unlock the doors of knowledge.

“The music of the spheres” is not a mere figure of speech, but an actuality.

The Soul of the World has its central Sun whose life throbs pulsate throughout immensity. If we study the phenomena and conditions of either crystallization or organization we shall find that every atom in the vast universe is set to music. There is the paeon of life, and the dirge of death, the major and the minor key. The rhythm is the same whether in the ebb or flow of life, but the serried columns march in opposite directions. The Unity lies back of all phenomena in the infinite ocean, the universal solvent, as the crystal lies latent, potential, unmanifested, in the solution of salt. So all things exist potentially in the ether. The real form of everything is perfect, essential, divine. Only the effigy appears with ebb and flow; with swell and cadence like martial music. Only in the Garden of the Gods can the perfect flower and fruit appear. There is but one approximation to perfect form to be apprehended by mortals — the Sphere — and even this is ideal or geometrical, not actual. The dimensions of space pertain to objects: objects exist in time, and the essence of time is motion.⁶ Imagine the intelligence of man posited in an ocean of Ether, a thinking principle, without form or extension, and the fallacy of space as generally conceived becomes manifest, and disappears. Matter, space, time, and motion, these pertain to outwardly manifested existence. Read backward the genesis of crystal, plant, animal or man, and one plan, one basis is discovered in all.

“*Out from the shore of the great unknown*” come trooping these effigies of diviner being, these shapes of diviner forms. In the beginning was the Word, the Fiat has gone forth. Listen, O man, to the music of Bath Col, the voice of thine own soul. Adonai speaks. If thou art

⁶ “We take no notice of time save by its loss,” *i.e.*, its passage or motion.

conscious, His voice is *conscience*. It is the memory of the voice of God in fields elysian, thy former divine abode. Thou mayest involve in thy life on earth thine Augoeides, "being of light," a "gleaming brightness." This is thy holy mission, the meaning of thy human shape, thy manly powers, thy subtle intellect, thy holy intuitions. These are but the seed of larger life, the bird of promise. The unfolded flower shall be thy highest aspiration, thy holiest wish, and its ripened fruit shall bear thee to the garden of the gods, with knowledge and power as thy servants. Ask but thine own soul, counsel with thy better self, and if thou findest not within the silence the answering voice, then return to thy wallowing in the mire, and the husks which the swine do eat, rather than to thy *father's house* which thou hast made, and will henceforth continue to make, a den of thieves, at best, a whited sepulchre.

Now let us read the Tablet of Hermes, bearing in mind the fact that man is an epitome of the universe, thus actually or potentially containing all that is, and if he knows how to read and to unfold his own nature, powers and possibilities, he may read thereby the universe, unfold its laws, comprehend its plan, and if he be master of himself, thus revealed to his understanding, his powers shall be co-extensive with knowledge. He shall possess the MASTER'S WORD.

This tablet is printed in full in the September *Path* at p. 167.⁷

The reader is referred to *Isis Unveiled* for explanation of the Azoth to which, on the physical plane, the tablet refers,⁸ and I might say in passing that those who complain that the Brothers closely guard occult secrets will do well, even at this late day, to read *Isis Unveiled*. There are several matters contained in those two volumes which the careless reader and complaining "theosophist" has possibly overlooked. In fact there is less concealment in all occult matters than the ignorant and time-serving suppose. There can be no better safeguards to Royal Secrets than ignorance and defective vision, for which defects there is no surgery or remedy outside ourselves.

God saith, Let the man endued with a *mind*, mark, consider, and *know himself well*. . . . And before they give up their bodies to the death of them, they hate their senses, knowing their works and operations.

⁷ Reprinted in this issue on pp. 53-54.—EDS., THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

⁸ *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 507 et seq.

Rather I, that am the mind itself, will not suffer the operations or works, which belong to the body, to be finished and brought to perfection in them, but being the *Porter* and *Door-keeper* I will shut up the entrances of evil, and cut off the thoughtful desires of filthy works.

But to the foolish, and evil, and wicked, and envious, and covetous, and profane, I am far off, giving place to the revenging demon. . . .

For the sleep of the body is the sober watchfulness of the mind, and the shutting of my eyes, the true sight, and my *silence* great with child; and full of good, and the pronouncing of my words the blossoms and fruits of good things.⁹

Wherefore we must be bold to say that *an earthly man is a mortal god, and that the heavenly God is an immortal Man.*¹⁰

Compare with this the following from the writings of Plato:

He who has not even a knowledge of common things, is a brute among men; he who has an accurate knowledge of human concerns alone, is a man among brutes; but he who knows all that can be known by intelligent inquiry is a god among men.

In these brief and imperfect outlines enough has been given to show the thoughtful student the agreement of the Hermetic doctrines with the teachings of Theosophy; indeed, any real progress in the comprehension of the one may be taken as a key to the other. These, together with the teachings of the Kabala, are but different forms of the *Secret Doctrine*; none of them are to be fully apprehended by the intellect alone, but only when the mind is *illuminated* by the light of understanding; and the process by which this illumination is to be achieved, through diligent inquiry, unselfish work, and repression of the senses, appetites and passion, has been often pointed out, and is found repeated and reiterated in all these writings. If any, therefore, are disposed to complain that they are left to grope in darkness, they have no one to blame but themselves. To the conscientious student, the constant wonder is at the richness of the feast spread out on every hand.

Like a beautiful landscape to the blind, or music to the deaf, are the pages of wisdom to the ignorant and selfish. Eyes have they but they see not, ears have they but they hear not, and so long as they are joined to their idols they may as well be let alone. But to the earnest

⁹ *Pymander*, p. 33 et seq., edition of 1650.

¹⁰ Book IV, p. 60.

disciple, to the true seeker of the Path, these are the everlasting verities: let them run and not be weary; walk and not faint; seek, and they shall *surely find*; desire, and they shall attain; knock, and the door of knowledge shall open; obey, and they shall in turn command; labour, and they shall obtain rest.

Rest is not quitting
 The busy career,
 Rest is the fitting
 Of self to one's sphere.
 'Tis the brook's motion,
 Clear, without strife,
 Fleeting to ocean
 After this life.
 'Tis living and serving
 The highest and best,
 'Tis *onward unswerving*,
 And this is true rest.

—B.

SUPPOSE an Occultist were to claim that the first grand organ of a cathedral had come originally into being in the following manner. First, there was a progressive and gradual elaboration in Space of an organizable material, which resulted in the production of a state of matter named *organic* PROTEIN. Then, under the influence of incident forces, those states having been thrown into a phase of unstable equilibrium, they slowly and majestically evolved into and resulted in new combinations of carved and polished wood, of brass pins and staples, of leather and ivory, windpipes and bellows. After which, having adapted all its parts into one harmonious and symmetrical machine, the organ suddenly pealed forth Mozart's *Requiem*. This was followed by a Sonata of Beethoven, etc., *ad infinitum*; its keys playing of themselves and the wind blowing into the pipes by its own inherent force and fancy. . . . What would Science say to such a theory? Yet, it is precisely in such wise that the materialistic *savants* tell us that the Universe was formed, with its millions of beings, and man, its spiritual crown.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 348

HERMES TRISMEGISTUS

THE FOURTH STATE OF MATTER DESCRIBED IN THE SMARAGDINE TABLET

[A translation of the Tablet of Hermes, referred to in the preceding article (p. 50), is reprinted here from *The Path* for September 1886. Of this Tablet *The Theosophical Glossary* states:

“As expressed by Eliphas Levi, ‘this Tablet of Emerald is the whole of magic in a single page.’... This is a tablet... alleged to have been found by Sarai, Abraham’s wife (!) on *the dead body of Hermes*. So say the Masons and Christian Kabbalists. But in Theosophy we call it an allegory. May it not mean that *Sarai-swati*, the wife of *Brahma*, or the goddess of secret wisdom and learning, finding still much of the ancient wisdom latent in the dead body of Humanity, revived that wisdom? This led to the rebirth of the Occult Sciences, so long forgotten and neglected, the world over.”

—EDS.]

THAT A TABLET, now called the SMARAGDINE, was found there is no doubt. Its discovery is attributed by tradition to an *isarin* or initiate who, it is said, took it from the dead body of Hermes — this could not have been the Egyptian god Thoth — which was buried at Hebron, in an obscure ditch. The tablet was held between the hands of the corpse. Some authors say that it was of emerald, which I do not believe; it probably was of green strass or paste, an imitation of emerald, in the manufacture of which the Egyptians excelled. Be it as it may, the contents evidently refer to that subtle body, called by the great scientist, Sir William Thompson, “the luminiferous æther” — to that mysterious, invisible to us, some-thing, in which the matter-atoms float, the *azoth* of the Hermetic philosophers, the *astral light* of the occultists, the *akasa* of the Hindus; which physical science attempts to grasp, comprehend and sometimes use, under the name of electricity, magnetism, heat, light, etc.; which is experimentally made visible, in one of its forms, by means of Professor Crookes’ “radiant matter” and which he terms the fourth state of matter. It permeates all things, going through flesh and blood, and steel and glass, the diamond and sapphire, with the facility of water through a net. A translation of this tablet is:

“It is true without falsehood, certain and very veritable, that that which is below, is as that which is above, and that that which is on

high, is as that which is below, so as to perpetuate the miracles of all things.

And as all things have been and come from One, by the mental desire of One, so all things have been produced from that One only by adaptation.

The Sun (Osiris) is thence the father, and the Moon (Isis) the mother. The Air, its womb, carries it thence, and the Earth is its nurse.

Here is the producer of all, the talisman of all the world.

Its force (or potentiality) is entire, if it is changed into the Earth, you separate the Earth from the Fire, the subtile from the gross. Sweetly, but with great energy, it mounts from the Earth to the Heaven, and again descends to the Earth with powerful energy, and receives the potentiality of the superior and inferior things.

You have, by this means, the light (or fire) of the whole universe. And upon account of this, all obscurity itself, with that, will fly entirely thence.

In this is the energy the strongest of all energy, for it vanquishes all subtile things and penetrates all the solid things.

Thus the world was created. From this will be and will go out admirable adaptations, of which the medium is here.

And because of these reasons I am called Hermes Trismegistus, possessing the three divisions of the philosophy of the universe.

It is complete, this that I have said of the operation of the Sun.”

The reader must take note that the fire referred to here is not the perceptible fire, but the hidden occult fire, which is concealed in all things and only becomes evident through a tearing asunder of the atoms. The fire which we see is the black fire; the other, the unseen, is the white fire. So the ancient Hebrew philosophy says, the Tablets of the Law given to Moses were written by the Deity with black fire on white fire. It is referred to but concealed in the Maasey B'reshith, the great occult book of which is the Book of Genesis.

—ISAAC MYER

AREAS OF INFLUENCE

I have told you the Secret Knowledge. Austerity, self-control, performance of duty without attachment — these are the body of that knowledge. The Vedas are its limbs. Truth is its very Soul. ... He who attains to the knowledge of Brahman, being freed from all evil, finds the eternal, the Supreme.

—*Kena Upanishad*, iv. 7-9

IN THE EARLY YEARS of the Theosophical Movement, a document of valuable instruction was passed on to some of the principal workers of that day. It embodied important ideas indicating principles of action. It is known as the letter of the Maha Chohan — he who was referred to by Madame Blavatsky as “the *Paraguru* — my Master’s MASTER.” In that letter, the following significant passage occurs:

It is not the individual and determined purpose of attaining Nirvana — the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom, which is after all only an exalted and glorious selfishness — but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause to benefit by it as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can, which constitutes the true Theosophist.

It will thus be seen that the Great Master’s advice is: (1) To lead our neighbour on to the right path; (2) to make him benefit by the exercise; (3) to seek the best means for achieving this; and (4) to make our efforts self-sacrificing both in total and in part. No student can ignore this instruction and hope to advance along the Path. If, notwithstanding the pains attendant on self-sacrifice, this instruction is to be followed, how does one prepare? How should one act? Which of our neighbours should be the first to be approached? More important still, is the right Path clear to us — easily recognized, constantly trod? Before one undertakes a task, it is usual that one makes the preparations. Even an ordinary teacher of an elementary classroom prepares the same lessons as do his pupils. How much more so should the aspirant whose preparedness or the lack of it may affect each human soul as it comes within the orbit of his influence! The work for Theosophy demands a constant and keen awareness of the best interests of others.

As beings, we share the same atmosphere with animals and men. Through the lungs and the pores, we are compelled to take into our system the air which has passed through the breathing systems of incal-

culable beings and which in the process may have become a carrier of not only physical but moral contagion. Thus, hourly and momentarily we come under the pressure of various external influences which could at any time force a lodgement within our make-up and use us as carriers — unconscious may be — of good or evil.

Each man thus modifies the atmosphere of another, and that not only through the medium of the breathing apparatus. One can, for instance, pour out love or anger through the eyes, solace or suffering through the mouth, and have a clean or a defiling touch. There are persons who exude fear or its opposite and make or mar the fortunes of war. From all this it follows that even though a man pours forth words of wisdom, it profits neither him nor his listeners if the atmosphere which he exudes is opposed to his lip professions. To outward appearances and from the tenor of his speech, he may appear to be holy. Inside, worms may be eating away at his vitals. We thus all too often have the peculiar phenomenon of persons who desire to do good but who produce only evil. It was on the same principle that, to save the congregation from harm, St. Paul in his epistle to Titus laid down the Rule: "A heretic should be warned once, and once again; after that, have done with him, recognizing that a man of that sort has a distorted mind and stands self-condemned in his sin."

Long before a man can venture forth as a missionary of the Highest, he has to learn to make himself impervious to forces and powers which militate against virtue. Patanjali deals with these as also with the antidotes to wickedness. The "thrice-great" Hermes explains the occult aspects thus:

Every star has its genii, good and evil by nature, or rather by their operation, for operation is the essence of the genii. . . . All these genii preside over mundane affairs, they shake and overthrow the constitution of States and of individuals; they imprint their likeness on our Souls; they are present in our nerves, our marrow, our veins, our arteries, and our very brain substance. . . . At the moment when each of us receives life and being, he is taken in charge by the genii (Elementals). . . . They permeate by the body two parts of the Soul, that it may receive from each the impress of his own energy. But the reasonable part of the Soul is not subject to the genii, it is designed for the reception of (the) God, who enlightens it with a sunny ray. Those who are thus illumined are few in number, and from them the genii abstain: for neither genii nor Gods have any power in the presence of a single ray

of God. But all other men, both soul and body, are directed by genii, to whom they cleave, and whose operations they affect. . . . The genii have then the control of mundane things and our bodies serve them as instruments. . . . (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 294-95)

The path of the missionary has always been a difficult one. But it does not necessarily follow that the student must bide his time to start the effort till he has obtained complete control over himself as also over the lower forces of Nature. At any time the ideal needs must remain several steps ahead of the then obtaining reality. The reason why the importance of environment on oneself and others is stressed is that the student may, if forewarned, take adequate steps to insulate himself from adverse influences. Without the necessary safeguards, there always remains the chance that he himself may become an unconscious agent of destruction for the very souls he desires to save. The pressure of the objectionable on our actions has therefore to be neutralized by an inner and an irresistible force. It is also to be remembered that since the work has to be carried on in the company of others, those others may themselves be carriers of a contagion. The student is in constant danger of exposure to undesirable entities of the air who may attach themselves to him; and, before he knows it, he and not the neighbour may find himself in the thick of the fight.

Granted all the willingness in the world to sacrifice, how does one lead the neighbour on to the right path when all too often the other is more than willing to surrender himself to the seduction of the senses? To the angry man a sermon on serenity, truth and non-violence is as out of place as is the reading aloud of the *Gita* between two warring armies. The angry man cannot hear or heed the words of wisdom. His ears are closed to it. He is on a different wave-length where no ethical concept can become available. Can such an one be made to tune in, however infrequently in the beginning, to vibrations which proceed from the True? No man is wholly lost, not even the vilest among us, because each has the potency to arouse the spiritual and the higher psychic aspects of himself and blend them with their respective counterparts in Mother Nature. It is the missionary's task to demonstrate the possibility and the desirability of this. The higher desires are as demanding, as attractive and encompassing as the lower. Can the taste and the hunger of these be induced and sustained over a period sufficient to make the man see the hollow mockery of the transient and the sensuous?

The missionary of the True dare not proselytize. He has to put the knowledge of good and evil squarely to his neighbour and yet not interfere with nor dictate his choice. Like the business man, the strategist and the academician, he has to think and to plan. To chalk out the programme and the curriculum of activities requires the facility of a spiritual expertise. This seeking of the best means to enable the neighbour to work for his own transformation becomes a valuable exercise in sacrifice. Time, care, awareness, rapidity of adjustments, ceaseless vigil in moments of crisis are some of the requirements for the chela's profession and practice. All these are required and are being used daily in hospitals the world over by doctors and nurses devoted to the care and cure of the sick. Why, then, should not the spiritual and psychic counterparts of the selfsame aids be recognized, experimented with and applied with certitude when their handling has been mastered through arduous practice and usage? This practice necessitates a diagnosis of the neighbour's ills. This has to be done impersonally. The doctor does not take time to ridicule the moral lapse which precipitates a physical disease. He helps the patient with a corrective for the ailment and an advice as to how best the lapse can be avoided in future. So, too, for the spiritual and psychic deficiencies of others. They are to be diagnosed as any other bodily ailment, have to be gathered and tabulated as any other item of worldly research. The statistician in health, economics, wealth or industry remains detached from his studies and is not personally affected. So must the aspirant to Masters' service remain unaffected by the information which he must gather to make his service effective.

The doctor and the nurse must serve their apprenticeship so as to acquire the minimum qualification required before they can be safely trusted to practise on their own. They have to discipline themselves not to be shaken by the sight of blood nor disturbed by the anguished cries of their patients. So, too, for the saviour of men's souls. He dare not be frightened by the ailment nor be revolted and kept away by the stench of filth and decay. Anguish must leave him undisturbed, pain must find him unmoved, detached and in full possession of the power which his knowledge confers upon him. But, whereas the doctor and the nurse do their ministering work for gain or for acknowledgement by men, the chela and the companion can have no ambition along those lines. Anonymity is their surest armour. The inspired worker works for an unnamed hierarchy, and his successes and failures are the appurtenances of that hierarchy. They belong to the pure soul only and are shared by all pure souls equally.

In order that the neighbour's entry upon the Path is assured, the student has to submerge his own interests, his progression and even his high aspirations in the self-imposed work for the larger Cause. It is not for him to work for a reward. His discipleship forbids it. He cannot any longer allow himself to react like ordinary mortals. His discipline prohibits it. He dare not allow himself to be frightened by the fires of distant conflagrations and seek his own comfort and safety in a total abandonment of quest and effort. No longer can he permit himself to place his own wants, his life and his position above those of his neighbour, be he enemy or friend. His own effacement, his self-sacrifice, has to be total and complete. In fact, he is expected at each level of consciousness to emulate the giving up of *Nirvana*, which is possible only in the highest state of the man's consciousness. The *Mahatma* returns again and yet again to the earth which he can abandon at any time if he chooses to retire into his rest. The companion who dedicates himself to the *Mahatma* whom he may not yet have seen, makes his own little renunciation by desiring to incarnate again and again to serve his Master's bidding. The *chela* when he so resolves in the silence which he has acquired forms an imperishable link between himself and his unseen *Guru*. May each noble aspirant hasten the day when he shall be accepted and recognized as an integral force in the great effort!

The path of knowledge, peace and power has to be kept open, swept clean, made into a highway, and its boulder-strewn surface rendered less hazardous for the pilgrims by the loving care, the irksome toil and the sore and bleeding feet of those who choose to become its caretakers. We have in our Theosophical literature the ideal example which it becomes our duty to reflect as in a mirror at our levels and according to our lights. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

Self-doomed to live through future Kalpas, unthanked and unperceived by men; wedged as a stone with countless other stones which form the "Guardian Wall," such is thy future if the Seventh Gate thou passest. Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow.

THE PLANE OF MENTALITY

INSTINCT, REASON, INTUITION

ALTHOUGH it is not apparent at first sight, the subject of instinct, reason and intuition is connected very closely with that of who, where and what God is. Study of these three faculties may indeed help us to answer the question currently being asked: "Is God dead?" Certainly the idea of God as a personal being, the creator of all, the arbiter of man's destiny, "loving" yet "despotic," has to a great extent died out. But, for many, no other idea has filled the gap thus left in their thinking and in their knowledge of the purpose of life.

The idea of God that Theosophy advances is that of an impersonal, all-pervading Deity lying at the root of all manifestation and extending also beyond it. If we try to seek Deity in the known things of life we shall get some grasp of it, but we have to bear in mind that our idea of Deity will grow as our understanding of life grows, until we arrive at the stage when we realize what is expressed in the following extracts:

The ever-unknowable and incognizable *Karana* alone, the *Causeless* Cause of all causes, should have its shrine and altar on the holy and ever untrodden ground of our heart — invisible, intangible, unmentioned, save through "the still small voice" of our spiritual consciousness. Those who worship before it, ought to do so in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls; making their spirit the sole mediator between them and the *Universal Spirit*, their good actions the only priests, and their sinful intentions the only visible and objective sacrificial victims to the *Presence*. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 280)

The "Parent Space" is the eternal, ever present cause of all — the incomprehensible DEITY, whose "invisible robes" are the mystic root of all matter, and of the Universe. (*Ibid.*, I. 35)

What is DEITY but Consciousness, Life, Universal Mind, and all else in manifestation? We are told that Universal Mind is omniscient; Matter is universal; Spirit is all-pervasive.

It seems to complicate matters when we read that

there is no plane in the whole universe with a wider margin, or a wider field of action in its almost endless gradations of perceptive and apperceptive qualities, than this plane [of mentality], which has in its turn an appropriate smaller plane for every "form," from the "mineral" monad up to the time when that

monad blossoms forth by evolution into the DIVINE MONAD. But all the time it is still one and the same Monad, differing only in its incarnations, throughout its ever succeeding cycles of partial or total obscuration of spirit, or the partial or total obscuration of matter — two polar antitheses — as it ascends into the realms of mental spirituality, or descends into the depths of materiality. (S.D., I. 175)

There are stages of instinctual, mental, and purely abstract, or spiritual consciousness. ("Psychic and Noetic Action": *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*)

We have therefore to note that there are at least two lines of evolution proceeding simultaneously — one the evolution of physical form with organs, and the other the evolution of consciousness or mentality, or the power to react to life. From the cohesive power of the mineral comes the flexible plant with the power of sensation. From the plant life comes the animal which develops the further power of instinct. And, when we come to man, we find in him the additional power of reason, and later of intuition.

To help us to see the relationship between evolving life and the organism through which it expresses itself, careful reflection on what is said in *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 425, is required. The whole passage is important, but here we shall quote certain sentences which deal with instinct.

Instinct is the universal endowment of nature by the Spirit of Deity itself. . . . Instinct, as a divine spark, lurks in the unconscious nerve-centre of the ascidian mollusk, and manifests itself at the first stage of action of its nervous system as what the physiologist terms the reflex action. It exists in the lowest classes of the acephalous animals as well as in those that have distinct heads; it grows and develops according to the law of the double evolution, physically and spiritually; and entering upon its conscious stage of development and progress in the cephalous species already endowed with a sensorium and symmetrically-arranged ganglia, this reflex action, whether men of science term it *automatic*, as in the lowest species, or *instinctive*, as in the more complex organisms which act under the guidance of the sensorium and the stimulus originating in distinct sensation, is still one and the same thing. It is the *divine instinct* in its ceaseless progress of development.

We have therefore to see animal instinct as a development from cohesion and sensation to the condition where a suitable physical organ

has been evolved to respond to the profounder aspects of the Universal Mind, however unconscious it may as yet be. But we must remember that behind all this there must be an intelligence of some sort working.

This instinct of the animals, which act from the moment of their birth each in the confines prescribed to them by nature, and which know how, save in accident proceeding from a higher instinct than their own, to take care of themselves unerringly — this instinct may, for the sake of exact definition, be termed automatic; but it must have either within the animal, which possesses it or *without*, something's or someone's *intelligence* to guide it. (*Ibid.*)

The transition from the animal to the animal-man and then to man himself, and finally to the super-man is gradual. In the transition from unself-conscious choice and automatic action to self-conscious decisions and will-inspired action we lose something of the power of instinct and depend on reason. "Reason," says H.P.B. (*Isis*, I. 433), "the outgrowth of the physical brain, develops at the expense of instinct . . . reason avails only for the consideration of material things; it is incapable of helping its possessor to a knowledge of spirit." Again, reason is "the product of the reflective faculties — denoting judiciousness and human intellectuality" (*Ibid.*, I. 432). It is the faculty of understanding gained by analysing and building on premises to reach conclusions. Hence it can never be infallible, for the premises may not be accurate. Reason is "the slow development of our physical constitution, an evolution of our adult material brain" (p. 425). In the tentative progress of the finite reason, "the god-like nature of man is often utterly engulfed, whenever he shuts out from himself the divine light of intuition." (p. 434)

Reason alone, even if care is taken to see that our premises are accurate, brings us to a point where we can go no further. We find our conclusions at a dead-end; they differ from the conclusions of others and do not make a united whole. Reason starts with isolated facts. But there are in reality no isolated facts. All is one UNITY.

As one writer put it: "It is the higher synthetic mind only which can have the understanding of the universals. Even that higher mind does not succeed in its task if it is unaided by the apperception of the intuition, which is the energy of the Heart." And apperception, according to the dictionary, is the mind's perception of itself as a conscious agent; an act of voluntary consciousness, accompanied with self-consciousness; the assimilation of a new sense-experience to a mass already

in the mind.

Great Nature once more steps in and the brain becomes an instrument of a higher power than reason. This is spiritual intuition, "intimately connected with the 'third eye,' which mythological tradition ascribes to certain races of men" (*S.D.*, I. 46 fn.). Man is now able to sense the Universal Mind which is omniscient; he understands things as they are; he sees clearly. Now he can reason from these premises and his conclusions will fit in with other conclusions until he sees the Universe as one Whole, every part mathematically arranged and geometrically perfect. When this condition becomes permanent, he reaches the stage of super-man. He is no longer a creature through whom the Universal Mind unconsciously functions, but he is an instrument, not of reason, or instinct, or sensation, but of the DEITY in Nature, the Omniscient Mind. Various verses from *The Voice of the Silence* will arise in the mind and help to give us a glimpse of what this means.

We shall end with a quotation from Plotinus. He taught that

human knowledge had three ascending steps: opinion, science, and *illumination*. He explained it by saying that "the means or instrument of opinion is sense, or perception; of science, dialectics; of illumination, *intuition* (or divine instinct). To the last, *reason is subordinate*; it is absolute knowledge founded on the identification of the mind with the object known. (*Isis*, I. 434)

WE HAVE to recall, in the first instance, that Gandhiji held an integrated view of human life. According to him economic, political or social institutions could not be treated separately, as if they belonged to separate and unrelated pigeon-holes. Change in any one sphere was bound to have its repercussion upon the rest, and all aspects of life, again, had ultimately to be informed by the highest morality to which a person subscribed. This consisted, in his own case, in the belief that all humankind was one single family; and any action or institution which militated against this, was immoral. Exploitation or inequality in any shape or form was a denial of this unity; and a truly moral man had, therefore, to resist injustice wherever it existed, and re-establish the oneness and the brotherhood of all men, by means which were also equally without blemish.

—NIRMAL KUMAR BOSE

THE SPIRIT OF THEOSOPHY

[Under the title "A Christian Minister on Theosophy," H.P.B. published in *The Theosophist* for November 1883 a letter from the Rev. C. H. A. Dall to the *Indian Mirror*. In an editorial comment following the letter and reprinted here in part, H.P.B. corrected "a few erroneous impressions he seems to be labouring under." The above title is our own.—EDS.]

YES; Theosophy *is* the science of all that is divine in man and nature. It is the study and the analysis, within the known and the knowable, of the unknown, and the otherwise UNKNOWABLE.

In its practical application it certainly means — freedom (of thought), self-trust and self-control, courage and independence." And if all this, how can our revd. well-wisher "fear its narrowness, as a plan of life"? . . .

"Radical" Christianity is as welcome in its [Theosophy's] ranks as radical Buddhism, Judaism, or Hinduism. For, all religions divested of their man-made theologies and superlatively human ecclesiasticism rest on one and the same foundation, converge towards one focus: an ineradicable, congenital belief in an *inner* Nature reflected in the *inner* man, its microcosm; on this our earth, we can *know* of but one Light — the one *we see*. The Divine Principle, the WHOLE, can be manifested to our consciousness but through Nature and its highest tabernacle — man, in the words of Jesus, the only "temple of God." Hence, the true theosophist, of whatever religion, rejecting acceptance of, and belief in, an extra-cosmic God, yet accepts this actual existence of a *Logos*, whether in the Buddhist, Adwaiter, Christian Gnostic or New Platonic esoteric sense, but will bow to no ecclesiastical, orthodox and dogmatic interpretation. Theosophy fights every anthropomorphic conception of the great UNKNOWABLE, and would impress upon the growing world that its days of babyhood and even adolescence are over and gone by to return no more. Theosophy would teach its adherents that *animal* man, the finite, having been studied for ages and found wanting in everything but animalism — he being the mortal as well as physical synthesis of all the forms and beings through which he has evolved, hence beyond correction and something that must be left to time and the work of evolution — it is more profitable to turn our attention to the spiritual or inner man, the infinite and the immortal.

In its higher aspect, Theosophy pities and would help every living sentient creature, not man alone. He is a "good Theosophist" and, so

far as exotericism goes, a *grand* Theosophist who said, and says, to "all nations" and to "all religions," "I was hungry and you fed me, I was naked and you clothed me," meaning by "I," the human Logos — spiritual mankind collectively, the spiritual whole manifested in its parts and atoms or — if so preferred, "God manifested in Humanity." He is a better one who realizing deeply the profound esoteric meaning of this exoteric parable, feeds and clothes *all* nations and *all* religions unconditionally: one ever ready to trace back the personified pronoun "I" not to Jesus only, or even to any of the respective Christs and Gods manifested at different ages and to various nations, but to the universal *Logos* or divine Ego; one, in fine, who feeds the hungry and clothes the naked irrespective of their creed or nationality — as even the good king Asoka did.

A "personal God," says the *true* Theosophist, is the creation of the ephemeral and animal, though intellectual man. Therefore, the Rev. gentleman is wrong in querying whether David could be a Theosophist. A man who murders another to deprive him of his wife and thus satisfy his lust may be the "friend" of an anthropomorphic God; he cannot be a Theosophist. He [the Rev.] is right, when asking whether Jesus was a Theosophist, for "the Son of Man" and the "Man of Sorrow" was one in the full acceptation of the term, and this, perchance, is the very reason why so few have understood and appreciated him and why he was crucified. He was a lover of Truth Divine. No Theosophist, whether Heathen or Christian, Jew or Gentile, would ever think of rejecting the ideal Jesus, or refusing reverence to one who during life was one of the noblest and grandest of men, only to suffer the *post-mortem* degradation of being niched with the pettiest and smallest of gods in the world's pantheon of deities. The Theosophist only refuses to accept the Jesus Christ of the misinterpreted and grossly disfigured ecclesiastical gospels. True to the colours of Universal Brotherhood, the Theosophist is always ready to accept undisguised truth; to bow before the man of whatever race or creed, who, *being but mortal*, has struggled onward, and achieving purification *through his own exertions*, risen to the eminence of the imaginary personal God. But he will ever refuse worship or even recognition to the virtue and righteousness of that extra-cosmic deity. For, if he is all that the Theist and Christian maintain him to be, he has no personal merit whatever. *If he is* the "God" from, and in, eternity, the culmination of every perfection in heaven and on earth, perfection therefore is his inherent attribute: and what personal merit can there be in a Being that can neither be tempted

nor commit sin? Instead of offering to such god worship, the true Theosophist, who rejects supernaturalism and miracle, would feel inclined on the contrary to take such a deity to task and ask him why — Essence of Bliss and Perfection as he is, he yet made man, “nominally” in his own “image,” yet so helpless and so miserable, so sinful and so imperfect. As Buchanan says:

“Almighty Fiend! who will judge *Thee* on *Thy* judgement day?”

This, of course, will be set down as “blasphemy.” But it seems to us that there can be no more blasphemy in analysing a personal God, which we maintain to be the creation of man’s mind alone, than in dissecting morally and physically the creature of God — MAN, made by him in his own *physical* image — for we trust that the likeness can apply still less to the *spiritual* “image” when one thinks of the average sinful man of this, our humanity.

Thus, a Theosophist will always respect and admire, if not follow, a true “servant of Christ.” And he will always openly despise a professing Christian, with not one of the Christ-like virtues. . . .

THE MEMBERS would have plenty to do were they to pursue reality with half the fervour they do a *mirage*. I am sorry to find you comparing Theosophy to a painted house on the stage whereas in the hands of true philanthropists and theosophists it might become as strong as an impregnable fort. The situation is this: men who join the Society with the one selfish object of reaching power making occult science their only or even chief aim may as well not join it — they are doomed to disappointment as much as those who commit the mistake of letting them believe that the Society is nothing else. It is just because they preach too much “the Brothers” and too little if at all *Brotherhood* that they fail. . . . I say again then: it is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to the possession of our secrets. He alone, such a man, will never misuse his powers, as there will be no fear that he should turn them to selfish ends. A man who places not the good of mankind above his own good is not worthy of becoming our *chela* — he is not worthy of becoming higher in knowledge than his neighbour.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

THE FIRST BEATITUDE

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

THIS MAY SOUND puzzling to the modern ear, for the adjective "poor-spirited" is commonly used as a term of contempt. Deservedly, if its connotation is understood to be not only patient acquiescence in or endurance of what Karma brings to oneself which does not admit of overcoming without neglect of duty or injury to others, and extends to lack of courage to live up to one's principles, or to defend victims of injustice or of slander.

In what sense could being "poor in spirit" merit praise from a great Teacher? Certainly not in that of the loathsome, ostentatious and ambition-cloaking 'umbleness of a Uriah Heep! Mock modesty that tacitly begs for contradiction is poles apart from true humility. The latter calls for not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think and abstaining from drawing attention to ourselves or our achievements. Impersonality is a natural expression of such humility.

This calls for honesty in self-examination, for recognizing our weaknesses and also our strong points, neither grovelling in self-abasement over the former nor resting satisfied with our redeeming qualities, which also can almost certainly be strengthened by present effort.

Paul, the wise Apostle, wrote to the Galatians: "...if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." May we not be inviting that judgment on ourselves when we flatter ourselves prematurely on being free of a weakness which we see in a brother? Surely the honest recognition of how far short we fall of our ideal of character and of the fitness for self-forgetting service which is our goal should save us from sitting in judgment on our fellows who, however patent may seem to us their shortcomings, alone can know how hard they may be trying and what difficulties they may be encountering in attempting to bring their lower nature into harmony with their aspirations.

The proud and the ambitious are far indeed from being "poor in spirit," and, in the first note on the rules with which *Light on the Path* opens, ambition, which we are enjoined to kill out, is called "the first curse: the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows," continually leading men of intelligence and power away from their higher possibilities. Closely related as ambition is to personal pride, the ambitious man who is also an aspirant to chelaship will do well to remind

himself again and again that "praise leads to self-delusion," as *The Voice of the Silence* warns.

Thy body is not Self, thy SELF is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not.

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

Its corrective is dwelling in thought upon the truly great, upon the Masters, and on H.P.B. who so far excelled us in wisdom and compassion as well as in humility, as when she, in concluding her second message to the American Theosophists at their Convention in April 1889, signed herself "most sincerely the devoted sister *and servant* of every true follower of the Masters of Theosophy."

We have also positive warnings against slipping into a "holier than thou" attitude. Among the conditions named in "Practical Occultism" as indispensable to the safe pursuit of the study of Divine Wisdom is the following:

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

Again, in "Musings on the True Theosophist's Path" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*), we are warned that "giving thought to self will most truly prevent and overthrow our aims and objects, particularly when directed toward the occult."

Again there arises the thought, "I am a student, a holder of a portion of the mystic lore." Insidiously there steals in the thought "Behold I am a little more than other men, who have not penetrated so far." Know then, oh man, that you are not as great even as they. He who thinks he is wise is the most ignorant of men, and he who begins to *believe* he is wise is in greater danger than any other man who lives.

Is not such an individual in grave peril of joining the ranks of the false prophets of bewildered soul who, in misleading others, even un-

wittingly, assume an unenviable Karmic responsibility for the future course of those who put their faith in them?

Are there none today to whom Verses 15 and 17 of the third chapter of the *Book of Revelation* could apply no less than to the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, to whom they were addressed? Could they perhaps apply to you, to me?

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot....

...thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

MONKS, do you see that great log of wood being carried along by the stream of the river Ganges? Now, if the log does not ground on this bank or on the farther bank, does not sink down in mid-stream, does not founder on a shoal, does not become captured by human or non-human beings, is not caught in a whirlpool, does not become rotten within, that log will float down to the sea, will slide down to the sea, will gravitate towards the sea. And why? Because the stream of the river Ganges flows down to the sea, slides down to the sea, gravitates towards the sea.

Even so, monks, if you do not ground on the hither shore or on the farther shore, if you do not sink down in mid-stream, if you do not founder on a shoal, if you do not become captured by human or non-human beings, if you are not caught in a whirlpool, if you do not become rotten within, so will you, monks, float down to Nirvana, slide down to Nirvana, gravitate towards Nirvana. And why? Because right view floats, slides, and gravitates towards Nirvana.

—*Samyutta Nikaya*

THE LESSON OF THE POLISHED DIAMOND

As a polished diamond shows the work which gives it value and brilliancy, so the man who has gone through probation and teaching. . . .

—W. Q. JUDGE¹

DILIP had always known that some day — in the far future probably, though his old teacher never failed to remind him that it could equally be “tomorrow” — he would be summoned to go on pilgrimage to a certain shrine where dwelt a great sage. And when he did so, he must take a gift with him, whatever seemed to him most precious, fair and worthy.

Dilip gave much thought to this gift, for he deemed it well to be prepared in advance, even though he was only a boy when his old teacher first spoke of it to him and had a boy's confidence that there was plenty of time ahead of him. Still, if it was to be a fit offering to a great sage, it might, as the phrase is, “take some finding,” and it struck him that the sooner he kept his eyes open for it, the better, especially as the summons might come without warning.

Many things suggested themselves, but Dilip never felt quite satisfied with any, and he was actually approaching his eighteenth year when at last he had a happy idea. He was the proud possessor of an uncut diamond which had come to him in some mysterious way in his infancy. He was never clear as to who had given it to him, therefore had indulged a childish fancy that it had come into the world along with him, from whatever strange sphere had once been home to them both. But it was certainly his greatest treasure and as such seemed the right choice for his gift. “I will learn,” he said to himself, “how to cut and polish it, so that, although at present it looks a mere lump of dull crystal, it will be a flashing jewel when I lay it at the feet of the great Sage.”

This task he began immediately and soon realized that it was going to be a long one, for he was unskilled and clumsy, and was endeavouring to practise a fine art. He made mistakes and lost patience — even hope sometimes — and was more than once misled through listening to wrong advice or following some theory he chanced to read of in some book that professed to be written by an expert. But he persevered, for he had set his heart on taking the diamond, and the diamond only, as his gift

¹ *Echoes from the Orient*, p. 30.

to the Sage. Besides, he knew it *was* a jewel. Its native lustre must shine forth eventually.

Time passed, and Dilip wrought ever at his diamond, never neglecting it amid the business and pleasures of his life. It was his constant preoccupation, but a secret one. He did not choose to speak of it to any. In due course his venerable teacher, then his parents in their turn, cast off the body and departed, and Dilip himself was a boy no longer but a middle-aged man when the sudden summons came to make his pilgrimage. Fortunately, the diamond was ready. It was a pure, perfect gem, its facets reflecting all the colours of the spectrum. Yet Dilip would fain have done more to it. "It is never quite," he said, "the diamond of my dreams." But he had to obey the call and seek the shrine. He could only hope his gift would find acceptance.

The Sage received him with gentle courtesy. As he knelt, humbly offering his treasure, Dilip had the curious impression that the same light shone steadily in those deep eyes as sometimes flickered fitfully in the diamond. The Sage gazed long at the radiant jewel and Dilip wondered what feature of it pleased him most — its purity, its brilliance, or simply its beauty. He wondered also if any traces of his past mishandling of it were still visible. He felt remorse for them even yet.

"You wonder what I see," the Sage said quietly, apparently reading Dilip's thoughts. "I see long years of patient work, done with devotion and carefulness. Done, too, in privacy, in all modesty, drawing no man's attention to it. Brilliance and value, Dilip, are assuredly before me. But I tell you what I *see*."

Dilip's heart leapt up gladly. "Then my gift," he said in a low voice, "is acceptable. I scarce dared hope. . . . But what else could I bring, sir? This only was most precious to me."

"And to me. You chose well," replied the Sage. "Would that every soul might be 'as firm and pure as flaming diamond.' Have you the will to help them to become so? Shall I lay a further task upon you, Dilip?"

"Let that be my reward!" cried Dilip eagerly.

"So be it!" quoth the Sage, smiling gravely. "I entrust you with a message, then, to carry along the world's trodden ways to all who are too ignorant, too careless or too blind to recognize a jewel when it lies hid in mire or clay. One such —" his eyes rested upon the diamond — "you yourself have saved, so that now it shines in beauty. Help those others to do likewise, Dilip. Use your insight and experience

in their service. But above all give this message — not from me, a mere humble fellow-worker, but from those great Alchemists of the Spirit who would have every atom, yea, every grain of dust, attain its purest state.”

With uplifted hand the Sage delivered his injunction, and Dilip stored up the words in his heart that he might pass them on faithfully.

“‘Make hard thy Soul against the snares of *self*; deserve for it the name of Diamond-Soul.’”²

TRUE KNOWLEDGE has to be gained through an increasing perception of the universality of all law and the universal line of progress for every being of whatever grade. 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. The thought and the motive must be that which makes for the good of all beings. What has been given to us in the philosophy of Theosophy is for the purpose of arousing the attention of that Centre within us which can see, which can know and which can do, when it resumes its own nature and status. For there is a deep knowledge of all these things in the soul of every human being and the soul knows what it needs; it can understand when the brain cannot understand; it can feel when the senses are not capable of transmitting feeling. This knowledge is open to every human being; but only when the mind that we now possess is in exact accord with the nature of the indwelling Spirit, shall we begin to see, from within outwards, all the lines of correspondence and relation that exist between us and all other beings. Only when we realize that we are a part of the Great Chain of being, that no one of us is unnecessary and no one can drop out, that the development is one for all, that we are all from the same Source and going towards the same goal; only when we shall think and act from that basis, will we move onward with the great force proceeding from the Centre in that true direction which leads to enlightenment and power.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

² *The Voice of the Silence.*

LOVERS OF THE EAST

SIR WILLIAM JONES

1746 – 1794

[Reprinted from the *Oriental Department Paper* for May 1895.—EDS.]

WE HAVE SEEN how Anquetil Duperron, a Lover of the East, brought to Europe the first seed of Indian Wisdom after years of toil and painful sacrifice and privation; how, through obscurity and poverty, he laboured to give to the modern world “the key to the Indian Sanctuary.”

No greater contrast to his whole life and work could be found than the life and work of Sir William Jones. If Anquetil’s mission was to gather precious things through years of toil and hardships, then the mission of Sir William Jones was to touch Oriental studies with prestige; to gain for them public recognition and acclamation; to make them tastefully acceptable to the world of the elegant and learned; and, one fears it must be added, to overlook altogether their real and lasting value.

For this mission of his, this opening up of the East for the amusement and instruction of the polite, his early life and education had admirably prepared him. On leaving Harrow, he was well grounded not only in Greek and Latin, but also in Hebrew and Arabic, the only Oriental tongues then seriously studied in Europe. When at Oxford, he learned one other Oriental language — Persian — as well as Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. Then, becoming tutor to Lord Althorpe, he spent his leisure in composing a Persian grammar and dictionary; and, a few years later, translated a Persian life of Nadir Shah, for the King of Denmark.

Taking up the profession of Law, he was called to the bar in 1774; and eight years later published an Arabic treatise on the Mohammedan law of succession, with an English translation. This book seems to have determined his destiny; for, in 1783, in recognition of his double knowledge of law and oriental languages, he was appointed one of the supreme judges in Calcutta, and at the same time was knighted. In the words of his biographer: “In December 1783, he entered upon his judicial functions, and, at the opening of the sessions, delivered his first charge to the grand jury. The public had formed a high estimate of his oratorical powers; nor were they disappointed. His address was elegant, concise, and appropriate; the exposition of his sentiments and principles was

equally manly and conciliatory, and calculated to inspire general satisfaction, as the known sincerity of his character was a test of his adherence to his professions."

Sir William Jones seems himself to have been conscious of his destiny as the polite popularizer of the East; for, during his voyage, he drew up a list of what he meant to achieve in the field of Oriental research. In this list we find as subjects for study: the laws of the Hindus and Mohamedans; the history of the Ancient World; proofs and illustrations of scripture; traditions concerning the deluge; modern politics and geography of Hindustan; best mode of governing Bengal; arithmetic and geometry and mixed sciences of the Asiatics; medicine, chemistry, surgery, and anatomy of the Indians; natural products of India; poetry, rhetoric, and morality of Asia; music of the eastern nations; the three hundred Chinese Odes; the best accounts of Tibet and Kashmir; the trade, manufactures, agriculture, and commerce of India; the constitution of the Moguls and Mahrattas — the two powers from whom the English actually wrested India.

And, as though this were not enough, Sir William Jones further proposed to himself to translate the third gospel into Arabic; the Psalms into Persian; to compose essays, histories, epics, orations, philosophic dialogues, and letters, on the model of Aristotle, Thucydides, Homer, Demosthenes, and Plato. Had he added dramas on the model of Shakespeare, his plan would have been complete; and we might have had "imitations of all the greatest works in the world: by Sir William Jones, Knight"!

One is struck by the fact that, in all this wonderful series of projected studies, one thing is wanting; and this one lack is more important than all the rest that was projected and fulfilled. It is the ideal of Eastern wisdom, to which Anquetil Duperron so entirely devoted his life.

After arriving at Calcutta, Sir William Jones in due course founded the "*Asiatic Society*, for the purpose of enquiring into the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of *Asia*." This was in January, 1782; and, in his opening discourse, Sir William Jones, as President-Founder, said:

When I was at sea last August, on my voyage to this country, which I had long desired to visit, I found, one evening, on inspecting the observations of the day, that *India* lay before us, and *Persia* on our left, whilst a breeze from *Arabia* blew nearly on our stern. A situation so pleasing in itself, and to me so new,

could not fail to awaken a train of reflections in a mind which had early been accustomed to contemplate with delight the eventful histories and agreeable fictions of this Eastern world. It gave me an inexpressible pleasure to find myself in the midst of so noble an amphitheatre, almost encircled by the vast regions of *Asia*, which had ever been esteemed the nurse of sciences, the inventress of delightful and useful arts, the scene of glorious actions, fertile in the productions of human genius, abounding in natural wonders, and infinitely diversified in the forms of religion and government, in the laws, manners, customs, and languages, as well as in the features and complexions of men. I could not help remarking how important and extensive a field was yet unexplored, and how many solid advantages unimproved: and when I considered with pain that, in this fluctuating, imperfect, and limited condition of life, such inquiries and improvements could only be made by the united efforts of many who are not easily brought, without some pressing inducement or strong impulse, to converge in a common point, I consoled myself with a hope, founded on opinions which it might have the appearance of flattery to mention, that if in any country or community such a union could be effected, it was among my countrymen in *Bengal*; with some of whom I had already, and with most was desirous of having, the pleasure of being intimately acquainted.

You have realized that hope, gentlemen, and even anticipated a declaration of my wishes, by your alacrity in laying the foundation of a Society for enquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Natural Productions, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of *Asia*.

Thus, amid wreaths of eulogy, and garlands of eloquence, the Asiatic Society of Bengal was founded; the methodical study of Oriental subjects was formally inaugurated. And the President-Founder helped to carry out these objects by publishing a translation of *Manu's Laws*, full of instruction to the learned, and a version of the drama *Shakuntala*, destined to gratify the taste of the polite.

Yet Sir William Jones and his colleagues had hardly a dawning presentiment of their true work. They talked, rather at random, of useful knowledge, of natural products, of researches into chirurgery, anatomy, astronomy; of arts, literatures, and sciences; but said not a word of philosophy, not a word of the high idealism, with its broad sanity and perfect lucidity, which is the East's most perfect gift to the West.

Like the nomads of Gobi, they roamed hither and thither, dream-

ing of buried treasures, and of finding them, but utterly uncertain where their search should begin, and not less uncertain of the true nature of the treasures they might be destined to find.

Their spiritual and moral attitude was anything but calculated to call forth the deep and high message of ancient India; was anything but tuned to the iron chords of intuition and divinity that are beginning to resound through the heart of the modern world.

THE PAST! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as now you exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge." Regret is productive only of error. I care not what I *was*, or what any one *was*. I only look for what I am each moment. For as each moment is and at once is not, it must follow that if we think of the past we forget the present, and while we forget, the moments fly by us, making more past. Then regret nothing, not even the greatest follies of your life, for they are gone, and you are to work in the present which is both past and future at once. . . .

The future then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment so we shift the future up or down for good or ill; for the future being only a word for the present — not yet come — we have to see to the present more than all. If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future.

—W. Q. JUDGE

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In some countries today the latest fad is for joining groups of "witches" and "wizards." (See "In the Light of Theosophy" for January 1967.) Thousands of young men and women are involved in what is called "an attempt to revive ancient black magic." In the United States, a national television network and *The Wall Street Journal* have considered the phenomenon worth reporting.

The Sunday Standard (Bombay) describes a scene as instanced in *The Wall Street Journal*, when a 34-year-old woman performed a rite in a New York apartment to invoke the aid of the "spirits" to win the affections of her latest admirer. Some witch groups go further and indulge in "orgies" and their rites reportedly include what the devout would regard as "sacrilege."

There is said to be big money in all this. Several publishing houses are trying to cash in on the craze while some shops sell witches' and wizards' potions and other things they need to practise their craft. Some universities, like those of New York and South Carolina, have undertaken a serious study of witchcraft, and the courses are well attended.

Whatever sceptics may say, witchcraft, conscious and unconscious, has always existed. There are psychic powers, still latent in most men, developed in a few, and those powers can be turned to either good or evil uses. Many of the "witches" burned at the stake by the Church were simple psychics, mediums, who knew not the "why" and "how" of the powers they possessed.

Students of Theosophy should watch the signs of our cycle, and one of these is the pour of psychism now rapidly increasing to flood proportions. Cycles repeat themselves, and the 19th-century wave of psychism which reached a height at the time of the launching of the Theosophical Movement in 1875 was bound to have a recurrence in the present century. Dabblings in the psychic realm are on the increase and need to be taken note of by the student of Theosophy who is presently preparing himself for the coming cycle of Theosophic endeavour.

The number of child prodigies who make their appearance on the world scene is on the increase. The periodicity of their appearance as

shown by the various publications and announcements is becoming quite regular, although the expression of intelligence differs in nature and quality as well as in quantity.

The Bharat Jyoti of November 9 reports the arrival in Bombay from Ujjain of young Hiralal Ramchandra Karnawat, a nine-year-old studying in the sixth standard and having a remarkable retentive memory and proficiency in Sanskrit literature. He has been astounding large audiences with his recitation from Sanskrit scriptures and the sacred books of the Jains. The boy is said to have first revealed his gift at the age of five when he suddenly started imbibing Sanskrit learning. Since then, he has studied over a hundred books, from Sanskrit grammar to Swami Vivekananda's teachings. At short notice, he can quote any *shloka* from the *Bhagavad-Gita* and expound on it "with a spell-binding commentary."

Hiralal's father said that the boy has been standing first in his class in all subjects since his fifth year. For the past 15 months he has been giving discourses on the scriptures for 45 minutes to an hour at a stretch. Hiralal's ambition is to be an Acharya in Sanskrit and spread Sanskrit lore in the country and abroad.

There is no indication in the report as to physical heredity which might account for the remarkable intellectual powers exhibited by this boy. But in general it could be said that physical heredity of the family and the mental heredity of the reincarnating ego who takes on the new body combine to make possible precocious co-ordination of the soul and its instrument. This possibility is illustrated by Mr. Judge, who remarked that

if the inner man has been, say, a speller of English, and the mass of atoms composing the body has been also used by those who have been good spellers, then it will be possible for the person to pick up old knowledge. But this goes to show that it is in any case the remembering of what we once learned, and that always depending on the physical instrument we are using at the time.

An instance of how man can alter the delicate ecological balance of nature has been reported from the Kolaba district of Maharashtra. A deputation of farmers from there recently informed the Chief Minister that the indiscriminate killing of frogs in a particular *taluka* had resulted

in a sharp rise in the number of insects. The frogs, which are caught and exported as a "delicacy," normally breed during the rains, and when the crops in the area are ready for harvest they act as a natural check on the insect menace. With the decline in the number of frogs this natural check has been done away with. The result is that as much as 75 per cent of the kharif crop this year has been destroyed by pests. (*The Times of India*, November 4)

The lesson is clear. Wherever nature is being exploited and the ecological balance is not maintained, there are disastrous side effects. No organism can live wholly independent of its natural environment. The feeding habits of various organisms are in fact closely interrelated and every care needs to be taken to see that the food chain is not broken. This ecological principle is being applied today in a wide range of experiments with nature, like stocking a lake with fish or reforestation.

The Canadian Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, asserting that "our environment is now widely contaminated with DDT residues," has announced a ban on the pesticide which will reduce its use in Canada by 90 per cent (*International Herald Tribune*, Paris edition, November 5). Mr. Trudeau announced in the House of Commons recently that DDT would be banned from non-agricultural uses and permitted for only a few agricultural crops. "After January 1, 1970," he said, "DDT will not be registered for insect and biting-fly control in forests, parks and other outdoor areas except under emergency conditions." The accepted tolerance levels of DDT in food also were sharply reduced.

It is reported that the United States is planning similar restrictions on DDT shortly. Meanwhile, some agricultural products from the United States and other countries would be banned in Canada because of the more strict DDT levels permitted under the new regulations.

British experts, too, are studying curbs on DDT and other pesticides similar to the ban announced by Canada. A committee of specialists from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Science has prepared a report for the government covering ten pesticides including DDT.

It is hoped that other countries, including India, will follow the example set by Canada and take adequate measures to prevent the con-

tamination of our food and our environment with residues from DDT and other insecticides.

It is interesting to note that trees, like people, seem to have a higher temperature when they are sick. The U. S. Forest Service is putting this fact to good use. A forester with a helicopter flies over fir forests in Washington and Oregon with a heat-sensing device that can pick up the infra-red rays emitted by sick trees. A picture of the tree and its temperature both appear on a TV monitor, where they are recorded for further study. (*Science Digest*, September 1969)

What makes a sick tree hot? It is surmised that its deteriorated root structure has a reduced capacity to absorb moisture for use throughout the tree. One peculiarity of sick trees is that their temperature is highest in the morning.

As "In the Light of Theosophy" for September 1969 pointed out, "plants are sensitive to practically every stimulus to which animals are sensitive, they become excited and fatigued, and when they die they do so with a spasm and with the emission of a measurable electric voltage at the instant of death. There is no life reaction in the highest animal... that has not been foreshadowed in the life of the plant."

The Sunday Standard for October 19 reports Dr. Salvador Luria, the Nobel prize winning scientist, as stating:

We should not ignore the possibility that genetic means of controlling human heredity will be put to massive uses of human degradation. Huxley's nightmarish society might be achieved by genetic surgery....

At least in principle his made-to-order human being has become feasible much sooner than we anticipated. When does a "repaired" or "manufactured" man stop being a man and become a robot, an object, an industrial product?

The shape of man to come is indeed something that would cause concern to the thoughtful. Mankind must face up to the terrifying implications inherent in the genetic tampering that is now being experimented with.
