

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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WHERE SHALL WE GO FOR HELP ?

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These who, entering the womb of a Guru, and becoming a foetus, practise the Service of the Eternal, become even in this world Recorders of Holy Writ, and they repair to the highest truth after casting off the body. They subjugate desires here in this world; practise forbearance in pursuit of the Brahmic state; and, with courage, they even here remove the self out of the body, like the soft fibres from the Munga. Father and mother, O descendant of Bharata! only form the body. But the birth obtained from the Guru, that verily is true, and likewise immortal. He perfects one; gives one immortality. Recognizing what he has done, one should not injure him. The disciple should always make obeisance to the preceptor; and, free from heedlessness, should always desire sacred instruction.—*Sanatsujatiya*

THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY teaches that the human kingdom and the Earth on which it evolves, and the Solar System of which that kingdom is an epitome, are intimately and indissolubly connected. The birth and evolution of the Earth correspond to those of the human body.

Man's two poles, spiritual and material, which constitute his dual nature, are rooted in the duality of the Cosmos — made up of Spirit and Matter. The link of Fohat between Spirit and Matter in the Cosmos is represented in man by the mind-soul. The microcosmic triad is the miniature copy of the macrocosmic.

The Matter, Spirit and Soul of the Earth correspond to the body, spirit and soul of man. Geological changes underground, and atmospheric changes above the surface of the Earth produce changes in flora, fauna and human shapes. Spirit working from above, Matter from below, effect the link — Fohat in Cosmos; the mind-soul in Man.

A study of the evolutionary process given in *The Secret Doctrine*

establishes a proposition which so far has been unacceptable to materialistic science, *viz.*, that "Nature unaided fails." At every crucial turn on the long, long road of evolution, living and vibrant matter-forms need the light of Spirit; and living and vibrant spirit-intelligences need the limits which Matter provides. The grand unity of the Grecian Pleroma is seen by the intellectual student who notes how the Kingdom of Spirit is linked to that of Matter by forces and forms which make up the middle kingdom.

A consideration of the important proposition that Nature unaided fails will not only help us in our mental comprehension of evolution as taught by the Esoteric Philosophy. Such a study will also reveal some highly important verities of practical value to the sincere aspirant who is earnestly trying to walk the Path of the Neophyte.

NATURE UNAIDED FAILS: See, for example, how in this our Fourth Round, on Globe D, our Earth, Nature failed in her attempt to create man, even his form, after the correct pattern. Says *The Secret Doctrine*:

"The water-men terrible and bad," who were the production of physical nature alone, a result of the "evolutionary impulse" and the first attempt to create *man* the "crown," and the aim and goal of all animal life on Earth — are shown to be failures in our Stanzas. (II. 53)

"The water-men terrible and bad" were created by Earth from the mineral, vegetable and animal remains of the three earlier rounds. These "men" could not carry forward the evolutionary process, and so the impulse of the latter destroyed them — and "Mother-earth remained bare" (*S.D.*, II. 65). Therefore it is said that — "Thus physical nature, when left to herself in the creation of animal and man, is shown to have failed." (*S.D.*, II. 56)

Aid comes to Mother-Earth from a class of non-Earth beings suited to her requirements. Be it noted that those who came to the aid of the Earth themselves needed the opportunity for their own further advancement. These beings are named the Lunar Pitris — ancestors from the Moon chain; or the Barhishad Pitris, those possessed of creative power but devoid of the higher Manasic element. It is written:

Being on a level with the lower principles — those which precede gross objective matter — they could only give birth to the outer man, or rather to the model of the physical, the astral man. (*S.D.*, II. 79)

These Lunar Beings threw off their "shadows," "*chhayas*," "astral

bodies"; or breathed out or emanated them. Thus "the first human stock was projected by higher and semi-divine Beings out of their own essences" (*S.D.*, II. 87). Thus aided, Nature succeeded in her evolutionary task. These shadows which formed the first stock or race became the second and the third in the course of evolution. The first two and a half races were the result of the evolution of Nature aided by the Lunar Pitris.

Once again Nature came to a halt in the middle of the Third Race, named the Lemurian. If material progression had failed before, spiritual progression failed at this stage. The Atma-Buddhi Monads within the shadows carried forward evolution for a period which extends to the growth of two and a half races. The Lunar Fathers are spoken of as "inferior Lha"; they possessed a dual body — an astral within an ethereal form; and they fashioned and created our body of illusion. In the *chhaya*-forms projected by the Lunar Pitris the Atma-Buddhi Monads took their place. "But they are like a roof with no walls, nor pillars to rest upon" (*S.D.*, II. 57). The Monad

has no hold upon the mere form. It is like the breeze where there is no tree or branch to receive and harbour it. It cannot affect the form where there is no agent of transmission (Manas, "Mind") and the form knows it not. (*S.D.*, II. 57)

If Nature unaided fails on the matter and form side, she fails also on the Spirit and Consciousness side. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 80):

The Monads which incarnated in those *empty* SHELLS, remained as unconscious as when separated from their previous incomplete forms and vehicles. There is no potentiality for creation, or self-Consciousness, in a *pure* Spirit on this our plane, unless its too homogeneous, perfect, because divine, nature is, so to say, mixed with, and strengthened by, an essence already differentiated.

So, just as at the earlier stage the Lunar Pitris came to the aid of Earth-evolution, now another class of Beings became the Fathers of the Earth-Humanity. The names of these are many — Agnishwattas, Solar Fathers, Kumaras, Mind-born Sons of Prajapati, etc. They emanated the Manas-Light and made the race of mindless men mind-full; where there was no self-consciousness before, They brought about the presence of self-consciousness, which has speech as its vehicle. Without Their work the Earth-Humanity would have remained mindless and this planet would not have become a man-bearing globe. The Lunar

Fathers gave to Earth-Man the basis of his form; the Solar Fathers bestowed upon the men of Earth the power to think self-consciously.

Thus the Earth-Man became heir to a dual possession: (1) a personal-form man without merit and (2) an individual conscious thinker with self-acquired powers. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 78-9 fn.):

... as the allegory shows, the Gods who had no personal merit of their own, dreading the sanctity of those self-striving incarnated Beings who had become *ascetics* and Yogis and thus threatened to upset the power of the former by their *self-acquired* powers — denounced them. All this has a deep philosophical meaning and refers to the evolution and acquirement of divine powers through *self-exertion*. Some Rishi-Yogis are shown in the Puranas to be far more powerful than the gods. Secondary gods or temporary powers in Nature (the Forces) are doomed to disappear; it is only the spiritual potentiality in man which can lead him to become one with the INFINITE and the ABSOLUTE.

Not only does this principle that “Nature unaided fails” work out in rounds and races but also in the single human life, *e.g.*, in the birth of the body and the unfolding of the Personal Man. The aid which mother and father render to facilitate the incarnation of an Ego corresponds to the aid given by the Lunar Pitris and the Solar Lords. Conception itself involves the dual process — the mother doing the work of the Lunar beings, the father, of the Solar. Again, the embryo starting his separate existence on earth corresponds to the Shadows of the Lunar Pitris starting off as the first race of men, men in body but not in mind; while the coming into incarnation of the Inner God, round about the body’s age of seven, corresponds to the benign work of the Solar Lords.

These several analogies are given with a view to indicating that there are other ways by and in which this fundamental that Nature unaided fails is at work. Here we want to say something about its function in the life of the striving Neophyte and Chela. A footnote in *The Voice of the Silence* says that “the Initiate, who leads the disciple, through the Knowledge given to him, to his spiritual, or second birth, is called the Father, Guru or Master” (p. 8). The quotation from *Sanatsujatiya* at the beginning of this article bears on the subject.

The instructions of the Esoteric Philosophy indicate that the Wisdom-Religion is comparable to the Lunar Pitris, while the Sage-Seers are comparable to the Solar Lords. And, proceeding inwards in the realm of reality, Divine Discipline and the Masters take their places. Without

the reiteration of the Eternal Wisdom, human progress would go from failure to failure. But how could Wisdom manifest in the midst of the unwise — mostly fools, as Carlyle said — if the Sages did not move in accordance with the Wheel of Cycles? The very fact that Krishna has to incarnate from age to age points to the truth that he does so because Human Nature unaided would surely fail.

What is the institution of chelaship, what does the Hall of Probationary Learning imply, if not that Chelaship stands for the projected *chhayas* of the Barhishad Pitris, while the Masters, the Elder Brothers, stand for the Blessed Gift of the Agnishwattas?

Theosophy asserts that Man's nature, unaided by Theosophical Discipline which the Masters formulate, is bound to fail. Theosophy provides the moulds of thought. By discipline men reshape their own mould of thought and, seeking the Masters, light their own mind-hearts. The Eye Doctrine provides material moulds, but the Heart Doctrine lights up the Tathagata-Light in the Heart. The Solar Lords lit up the human mind and the power imparted by them to self-conscious humanity is silently and potently working. But who is to light up the human Heart? In ages to come, Those of the Sacred Heart will do that; but there are Compassionate Pioneers who are engaged in the *Yagna* — Sacrificial Rite — of lighting up the Buddha-Power in such men as aspire to undertake the great, hard task for and in themselves.

The Eye Doctrine brings knowledge to man; the Heart Doctrine helps man to become. To know is one thing; to be is another. Chelaship is becoming. Gurus do not pour knowledge into the minds of the chelas. They adjust the chela's Heart, helping him to become. To become what? A power for Good. An altruist, a philanthropist, not on the plane of the personal but on that of the universal.

The Master aids the Disciple to rise to the Silent Place of his real abode. Unaided, the chela cannot succeed; aided by the Guru through the process of adjustment, his nature will become the fit channel for the Mahatmic Shakti — the Power of the Guru.

Theosophy is in the world so that all who so desire may obtain its grace. The primary absorption of Eternal Verities by the human mind leads it to seek the Discipline in order to Become. Discipline implies the Vow, the spring whence rises the river of rules. Drinking the waters of Discipline we pass on from the land of the dead into the Kingdom of the Living. Unaided we are bound to fail, aided we can attain success.

YOGA VIDYA

[This is the first portion of an article by "An F.T.S. .:", originally published in three parts beginning with the first issue of *The Theosophist*, that for October 1879, continued in November, and concluded in January 1880. The present reprint divides the article into two. The concluding portion will appear in our next issue.—Eds.]

I

LOOK where we will around us, in every direction the sources of pure spiritual life appear to be either altogether stagnant, or else trickling feebly in shrunken and turbid streams. In religion, in politics, in the arts, in philosophy, in poetry even — wherever the grandest issues of Humanity are at stake, man's spiritual attitude towards them is one either of hopeless fatigue and disgust, or fierce anarchical impatience. And this is the more deplorable, because it is accompanied by a feverish materialistic activity. Yes, this age of ours is materialistic; and perhaps the saddest and dreariest thing in the ever-increasing materialism of the age is *the ghostly squeaking and gibbering of helpless lamentation made over it by the theologians, who croak about their old dry wells wherein no spiritual life is left*. Meanwhile society appears to be everywhere busily organizing animalism.

—LORD LYTTON in *Fortnightly Review* for 1871

HIS LORDSHIP paints the spiritual darkness of Kali Yug with realistic fidelity. The reading of this paragraph has suggested the making of an effort to bring back to India, to some extent at least, the ancient light of Aryavarta. With his lordship's sympathetic co-operation, much would be possible. Let us begin with an attempt at explaining what is the almost forgotten science of Yogism.

No man can understand the meaning of Patanjali's aphorisms of the Yoga Philosophy who does not perfectly comprehend what the soul and body are and their respective powers. The lucubrations of commentators, for the most part, show that when their author is thinking of one, they fancy he means the other. When he describes how the latent psychical senses and capabilities may be brought out of the bodily prison and given free scope, he appears to them to be using metaphorical terms to express an autopsy of physical perceptions and powers. The "organized animalism" of the nineteenth century, which Lord Lytton stigmatizes, in the paragraph from the *Fortnightly Review* above quoted — would have totally obliterated, perhaps, our capacity to grasp the

sublime idea of Yoga, were it not for the glimpses that the discoveries of Mesmer and Reichenbach and the phenomena of mediumship have afforded of the nature of the Inner World and the Inner Man. With these helps most of what would be obscure is made plain. These give us definite appreciation of the sure and great results that the Yogi ascetic strives for, and obtains by his self-discipline and privations. For this reason, the Theosophical Society insists that its Fellows who would comprehend alike the hidden meaning of ancient philosophies, and the mysteries of our own days, shall first study magnetism, and then enter the "circle-room" of the spiritualists.

May we not compare the unveiling of the soul's senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, and the awakening of its will-power, which result from Yoga training, with that change which comes to the bodily senses and will, when the child emerges from its foetal home into the outer world? All the physical faculties it will ever exercise were potentially in the babe before birth, but latent. Given scope and exercise, they became developed in proportion to their innate energies — more in some people than in others. How vastly different they are *in posse* and *in esse*! And yet this contrast affords but a very meagre idea of that between the dormant powers of the soul in the man of matter, and the transcendent reach of these same powers in the full-trained Yogi. Rather compare the shining star with a yellow taper. The eye of the body can at best see only a few miles, and its ear hear but what is spoken near by; its feet can carry it but ploddingly along the surface of the ground, a step at a time; and its hands grasp nothing that is more than a yard off. If securely locked in a closet, the body is powerless to effect its deliverance, and can neither see, hear, touch, taste, nor smell what is outside its prison wall. But the unbound soul of the Yogi is limited by neither time nor space; nor obstructed by obstacles; nor prevented from seeing, hearing, feeling or knowing anything it likes, on the instant; no matter how distant or hidden the thing the Yogi would see, feel, hear or know. The soul has potentially, in short, the qualities of omniscience and omnipotence, and the object of Yoga Vidya is to develop them fully.

We have a great desire that the Yoga philosophy should be familiarized to students of psychology. It is particularly important that Spiritualists should know of it; for their numbers are so large that they could, by united action, counteract in large degree the "organized animalism" that Lord Lytton complains of. Give the century a worthy ideal to aspire to, and it would be less animal; teach it what the soul

is, and it will worship the body less. As a commencement in this direction, we begin in this number of *The Theosophist* a translation of part of the 15th chapter of the eleventh *Skandha* of the *Shrimad Bhagavata*. The authorship of this important Sanskrit work is so disputed as by some to be ascribed to Bopadeva, the celebrated grammarian of Bengal, thus giving it an age of only eight centuries, by others to Vyasa, author of the other Puranas, and so making it of archaic origin. But either will do; our object being only to show modern psychologists that the science of soul was better understood, ages ago, in India than it is today by ourselves. Sanskrit literature teems with proofs of this fact, and it will be our pleasure to lay the evidence supplied to us by our Indian brothers before the public. Foremost among such writings stand, of course, Patanjali's own philosophical teachings, and these will come later on.

The student of Yoga will observe a great difference in the *Siddhis*¹ that are said to be attainable by Yoga. There is one group which exacts a high training of the spiritual powers; and another group which concerns the lower and coarse psychic and mental energies. In the *Shrimad Bhagavata*, Krishna says: "He who is engaged in the performance of *Yoga*, who has subdued his senses and who has concentrated his mind in me (Krishna), such Yogis [all] the *Siddhis* stand ready to serve."

Then Uddhava asks: "Oh Achyuta (Infallible One), since thou art the bestower of [all] the *Siddhis* on the Yogis, pray tell me by what *dharana*,² and how, is a *Siddhi* attained, and how many *Siddhis* there are." Bhagavan replies: "Those who have transcended the *dharana* and *yoga* say that there are eighteen *Siddhis*, eight of which contemplate *me* as the chief object of attainment (or are attainable through me), and the [remaining] ten are derivable from the *gunas*"; the commentator explains, from the preponderance of *sattwa guna*. These eight superior *Siddhis* are: *Anima*, *Mahima*, *Laghima* [of the body], *Prapti* (attainment by the senses), *Prakashyama*, *Ishita*, *Vashita*, and an eighth which enables one to attain his every wish. "These," said Krishna, "are my *Siddhis*."

The *Siddhis* of Krishna may be thus defined:

1. *Anima*—the power to atomize "the body"; to make it become smallest of the smallest.

¹ "Superhuman faculties," this is rendered; but not correctly, unless we agree that "human" shall only mean that which pertains to physical man. "Psychic faculties" would convey the idea much better: man can do nothing *superhuman*.

² *Dharana*—the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from things of the external world.

2. *Mahima*—the power to magnify one's body to any dimensions.
3. *Laghima*—the power to become lightest of the lightest.

These three, the commentator says, relate to "the body"; but he does not enlighten us as to whether the outer or inner — the physical or astral — body is meant. Turning to Bhoja Raja's commentary on Patanjali (Govinda Deva Sastri's translation, in *Pandit*, Vol. V. p. 206), we find *Anima* explained as "Minuteness — attainment of an atomic form, or the power of becoming as minute as an atom [by this power the ascetic can enter into a diamond, etc.]"

Garima — is the obtaining of control over the attraction of gravitation, so that one's body may attain such great heaviness as to weigh tons if one chooses; or acquire such levity as to be like a flake of cotton in lightness.

Let the reader observe that here are two Siddhis (*anima* and *mahima*) which can only refer to conditions of the astral body, and a third which may be applicable to either the astral or physical body of the ascetic. Whenever we have such instances coming under notice, our first thought must be that *there is no such thing possible as a miracle; whatever happens does so in strict compliance with natural law*. For instance, knowing what we do of the composition and structure of a man's body — a mass of bioplastic matter — it is unthinkable that he should make it small enough to enter into an atom or a diamond-grain. So, also, that he should illimitably swell it out and stretch it so as to "occupy as much space as he likes." A living adult man cannot be compressed into a speck. But as to the inner body, or soul, the case is different. By "soul" we mean, in this instance, the plastic, ethereal inner-self, that which corresponds to the western idea of a "double,"³ and in the ancient Indian philosophy is known as the *Mayavi-rupa* (illusionary form), and as *Kama-rupa* (WILL-form). These are identical, for the *double* exists in its latent state in every living being, as it is the exact ethereal counterpart of the outer body. The difference in name but indicates the different circumstances under which it is at times made to become objective — that is, visible. In the case of mediums, or when, as a result and the unconscious effect of an intense desire which attracts a person's thoughts to a certain place, or prompts him to a certain action, it oozes out of its envelope of flesh, it then is called *Mayavi-rupa* (illusionary form). It made itself visible because compelled to it by the law of

³ The *double*, which appears under two aspects—at times as a dull, non-intelligent form or animate statue, at other times as an intelligent entity. More than anyone else, the Spiritualists ought to be aware of the difference.

inter-magnetic action, which, when left to itself, acts blindly. But when it is projected by the trained will of an adept, a Yogi, who directs it at his own convenience, then it is designated as *Kama-rupa* — WILL-form, or Desire-form; *i.e.*, so to say, created, or called forth into objective shape, by the will, and at the desire of its possessor.

This “dual-soul” must not be confounded with either *Jivatma* (the vital principle resident in inert matter) or the *Linga-Sarira*. This last named is the subtile, ethereal element of the ego of an organism; inseparably united to the coarser elements of the latter, it never leaves it but at death, while its functionary principle — the *Linga-Deha* — is the executive agent through which it works, the objective formation of *Kama-rupa* being performed by the power of *Yoga-bala*.

This “dual-soul” possesses properties peculiar to itself, and as distinctly its own as those of the physical body are peculiar to it. Among these properties are compressibility, the power of passing through the most solid substances, infinite expansibility, and many more that might be enumerated. These are not idle words, but facts derived from the experiences of many yogis, adepts, ascetics, mystics, mediums, etc., of many different classes, times and countries. We may think, therefore, of the capacity of the *Kama-rupa* to become a mere speck or enlarge itself to enormous dimensions; entering a grain of diamond-dust, and the next moment filling every pore of the entire globe: for thought is unparticled and illimitably elastic. And, we could apprehend how, when once in the grain or in the globe, our trained *thought* can act there as if it were our own whole self. So, too, we may conceive of the astral body — or *Kama-rupa*, which, although material as compared with pure Spirit, is yet immaterial in comparison with the dense physical body — having like properties, and thus come to an understanding of the esoteric (secret) meaning of *Anima* and *Mahima*.

Whole libraries have been written to define what soul is, and yet for our practical purpose it will suffice to sum up the definition in a word: man’s soul is the aggregate of all the above given subdivisions. This “self,” through the *Linga-Deha*, is ever conscious during the sleep of the body, and transfers the sense of this inner consciousness into the waking brain; so that the Yogi may, at will, be informed of what is transpiring in the outer world, through his physical organs, or in the inner world, through his soul perceptions. While average mortals maintain their perceptions only during the day, the initiated Yogi has an equally real, undimmed, and perfect appreciation of his individual existence at night, even while his body sleeps. He can go even further: he

can voluntarily paralyse his vital functions so that his body shall lie like a corpse, the heart still, the lungs collapsed, animal heat transferred to the interior surfaces; the vital machine stopped, as it were, like a clock which waits only the key that re-winds it, to resume its beating. What nature does for the scores of hybernating quadrupeds, reptiles and insects under the spontaneous action of her established laws, the Yogi effects for his physical body by long practice and the intense concentration of an undaunted will.

The records of a thousand such cases, occurring in every part of the world, combine to show: (a) that the soul has the capacity of a conscious existence separate from the body; (b) that it is limited by neither time nor space, it being able to visit and return in an instant from the farthest localities, and to reach such — the tops of mountains, for instance, or the centres of deserts, or the bottoms of rivers or lakes — as the waking man could either not exist in or could only visit with the most tedious exertions and the greatest precautions; (c) that it can penetrate closed rooms, rocky walls, iron chests, or glass cases, and see and handle what is within. All these, if it were particled and unyielding like the physical body, would be impossibilities; and so, seeing what our modern experience has taught us, we can readily comprehend Patanjali's meaning and avoid the absurd conclusions which some of his materialistic and inexperienced commentators have reached. "Hundreds of times," says Professor Denton, "have I had the evidence that the spirit (meaning 'soul' — the two words are most unhappily, and we fear inextricably, confounded) can smell, hear, and see, and has powers of locomotion." Cicero calls the soul *spiritus* (a breathing), as also does Virgil, and both regard it as a subtile matter which might be termed either *aura* (a breeze), or *ignis* (fire), or *æther*. So that here again we are assisted to the conception that *Anima* applies only to a certain portion of the soul (*psuche*) and not to the body. And, we thus find that this Siddhi is entirely possible for one who has learnt the manifold faculties of the inner man, and knows how to apply and utilize the manifold functions of *Jivatma*, *linga-sarira*, and the *mayavi-* and *kama-rupa*. Plutarch makes pretty nearly the same division of the functions of the "Soul." The *linga-sarira* he calls *psuche* (physical entity), and teaches that it never leaves the body but at death; *mayavi-* and *kama-rupa* answer to his daemon, or spiritual-double, one-half of which is *irrational* and called by him *eidolon*, and the other *rational* and usually termed "blessed god."

(To be concluded)

DROP BY DROP

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

—*Matthew*, v. 16

THE CUP OF LIFE is being filled momentarily. The mind in its ceaseless gyrations distils the drop from each event and experience though that be the most subtle and the most subjective. The rudimentary mind that is not swayed by desires does it in one way, the mind of the animal in another. In man, the scheming, depredating mind seeks its fulness and satisfaction by distilling the dross and dregs of nature. The wise mind through divine alchemy extracts the essence from those regions which because of their nature are unapproachable by the ordinary senses and by the unrefined, uncouth senses of the animal man. And so, the drop of nectar or of hemlock is extracted, wittingly or unwittingly, and drops into the man's cup, shifting his fortunes up or down, high or low.

Poets have called the child's mind a little white unwritten book. But there is more of poetic licence than of truth in this. The cup of the child's life already contains either the life-saving or the lethal drops extracted by him in previous lives, and those have been having their effect for a considerable time before birth. The selection of the Karma which would be permitted to precipitate from out of the vast collection gathered over countless incarnations, the marshalling of elementals and lives that would mould and form the body and the environment of the Ego; the choosing of the race, the circumstance as also of the future parents to be, has all to be done before birth. So, too, for the degree of health, the coarse or refined brain structure and the strength or weakness of the intellect and the will. These are heirlooms carried over from other lives and help to mould the sheaths through which the Ego will have to work — sheaths for which nobody but himself was responsible. True, not all of the past heritage earmarked for the particular incarnation is poured in at birth *in toto* and the input then sealed. Much is held back to await the man and the hour so that it is only at the appropriate season and on the exact cue that there troop in lives which were awaiting their entry, biding their time in the side-wings of the stage of life. Thus have tendencies and vicissitudes their entries and exits in the great human drama. Sudden changes of fortune affecting the man and through him his family; a switch from dullness to a fully awakened responsibility; the falling off or burgeoning of urges, desires and aspirations may be but

the result of the continuously inflowing stream that transfers the *Sanchita* (stored-up) to the *Prarabdha* (manifesting) Karma.

The man who would change the tenor of his life, yet would not disencumber himself of possessions that are antagonistic to the desired change invites to himself long periods of agony and frustration. It were futile for a man to wish to become a great painter if he exerts not to get the paraphernalia for painting before starting to acquire his expertise. It is foolish for any man to say that he will search for the Path if at the same time he knowingly turns a blind eye to the dirt that chokes and smothers the dark corners of his mind. Effluvia from this dirt darken the surrounding area and make it opaque and insensitive to the light. Purity, until it achieves its ultimate power of burning up impurity, is despoiled and its garments besmirched by even a flitting touch of the impure. It is in this wise that the pure can be made unclean and the light turned to darkness.

When you cease from evil, you do not by that mere fact start to do good. It is not as if the bad man has evil superimposed upon the good so that when the evil is erased, the good shines forth. If the place previously occupied by the "not-good" is left unattended and unfilled, unwelcome squatters may seize possession because that place which was formerly touched and soiled by evil has affinities for evil and is congenial to its presence. The implanting of good is a positive step and requires the virile dauntlessness of the warrior-sentinel. Says the *Book of the Golden Precepts*:

Mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions.

The message which these lines convey is important. The dust that gathers on the mirror is formed of the illusions of the man. These illusions can be brushed away by Soul-Wisdom and that can be the property of him only who knows how to blend his Mind and Soul. Some of these illusions are singled out in the book and their remedies hinted at:

Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satiated.

Let not thy mind mistake the fires of lust . . . for the sunlight of life.

Seek not for thy Guru in the mayavic regions.

If thou art told that to become Arhan thou hast to cease to love all beings — tell them they lie.

If thou art taught that sin is born of action and bliss of absolute inaction, then tell them that they err.

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites thee to thy "silent Self."

Think not that when the sins of thy gross form are conquered ... thy duty is accomplished by nature and by man.

These illusions distil their own hell-brew. They can be dispersed only by the "gentle breezes" of Soul-Wisdom. But these breezes have to be fanned into action, must be raised to such a pitch that the dust of illusions is swept clean away. The process precedes the distillation of the True.

The doing of good or rather the adoption of a line of effort that moves towards the good cannot be lightly undertaken. A bankrupt can hardly become a philanthropist overnight. The strength to do good, the tenacity to weather storms, must become in-built long before feeble legs can dare the mountain path. Sin and evil as also all things else which are the antithesis of the good create areas of weakness — a flabbiness of muscle, a corrosion of the inner psychic stamina. It is these weak spots with their quivering hypersensitivity that must be taken in hand and brought back to psychic health and vigour. They are the weakest links in the aspirant's armour, and if not adequately protected would have the frightening tendency to collapse when attacks do come from the cohorts of evil. If the bad creeps into a man's life drop by drop, the good has to be injected into the life-stream in a similar manner. An overdose produces its own catastrophes in the same manner as an overdose of medicine or an overstrain in physical exercise. A calculated, planned approach is as necessary in attaining spirituality as in any other field of human endeavour. He who thinks that the graph of his life will show a straight line upwards refuses to face the realities of his own weaknesses, and has therefore an additional lesson to learn.

The taking stock of situations is an exercise in prudence. The wise general provides for his lines of communication and supplies, calmly assesses the strength which he can himself muster against the opposing forces and then plans for both success and failure. He does this daily. The aspirant has to learn this prudence and go through the same exercise till it becomes a part of his life, an automatic process that starts its wheels a-moving at the set time in the day's cycle. The setting apart of a fixed hour, the forming of a habit to go into introspection at a set time is vital to the inner growth. There can be no running away from

this, no deceiving of oneself by saying that the gap of a day would not matter. That gap if not filled by the spiritual cannot stay a void. It gets filled by something less spiritual and so the first slide down-hill is made possible.

There is, however, this difference between the army general and the aspiring pupil: The former can rely on his training and experience only. The latter steps aside after invoking his impartial, impersonal self within. Instructions for the coming battle come to the aspirant from an entity to which defeat is unknown. But the inner guidance has to be earned and its channel of communication not allowed to be clogged by neglect or delay, or be contaminated by the personal and the selfish. It is this ability to fall back into the impersonal part of oneself, this building of the safe refuge to which the man can retire, that is to be achieved. This exercise is preliminary and cannot be overpassed.

When this is accomplished over the months and the years, the disciple is in a position to withstand illusions and the lure of earthly rewards. The method of distilling the first drop of nectar comes thus to be gradually imbibed. Yet, all too often there creeps over the student the desire to ease the strain, the longing for a relaxed posture. This is his hour of danger, for discipline and austerity demand an exclusive and all-encompassing devotion. If the drop of elixir is not distilled, the distillation process is not stopped. It goes on relentlessly and perchance the wavering mind, the weakening desire, may falter and the drop emerge with properties lethal to the Soul of man.

Does the student desire to help his brother in the great experiment? Does he carry the words of cheer — “Theosophy! Help and hope for thee”? Then may he aspire to be of the doughty band of warriors — *Kshatriyas* of the Perennial Philosophy. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

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

RELATION OF OCCULT SCIENCE TO MODERN SCIENCE

WHAT do we mean by the word science? According to the dictionary, it is “knowledge ascertained by observation and experiment, critically tested, systematized and brought under general principles.” Theosophy is, therefore, a Science, and scientific methods are the tools of the Theosophic student.

There must be, and are, many branches of science, for knowledge has to be gained of the whole universe, including ourselves; and since the universe, nature and man are threefold and sevenfold in their constitution, there must be the science of matter, of the metaphysical aspects of nature, and pertaining to the mind or intelligence of all grades. That study will divide itself still further, for matter is not only dense as we know it, but fine enough to be the first “clothing” of Spirit. And Intelligence extends from the smallest form to the highest Archangel and the Logos itself.

The point of similarity between all these sciences is that certain steps of procedure are necessary, *i.e.*, observation, experiment, deduction and arrangement of the facts ascertained. Then all the knowledge gained must be seen in relationship to all other knowledge and with the whole.

From observation and experiment we can deduce facts, for “deduction is the drawing of a particular truth from a general truth, antecedently known.” Unfortunately, modern physical science, and in fact all known sciences today, follow mainly the Aristotelian method of induction rather than Plato’s method of deduction. Induction is the process of inferring or aiming at a general truth from a particular truth. Both aspects of the study are necessary, but it is best to begin with deduction, for “as above, so below” is not necessarily true in the reverse. Since the whole is but UNITY unfolded, so to say, nothing exists on the lower planes but as a reflection of the universal prototype on the higher planes. Therefore, to understand the atom we have first to understand the universe .

H.P.B. wrote in *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 663):

The province of exact, real Science, materialistic though it be, is to carefully avoid anything like guess-work, speculation which *cannot* be verified. . . . The business of the man of exact science is to observe, each in his chosen department, the phenomena of

nature; to record, tabulate, compare and classify the facts, down to the smallest minutiae which are presented to the observation of the senses with the help of all the exquisite mechanism that modern invention supplies, not by the aid of metaphysical flights of fancy.

Further, she wrote in the same work (I. 588):

To make of Science an integral *whole* necessitates, indeed, the study of spiritual and psychic, as well as physical Nature. Otherwise it will ever be like the anatomy of man, discussed of old by the profane from the point of view of his shell-side and in ignorance of the interior work.

This is where occult science comes in, for H.P.B. says that “the duty of the Occultist lies with the *Soul and Spirit* of Cosmic Space, not merely with its illusive appearance and behaviour.” (*S.D.*, I. 589)

Science cannot, owing to the very nature of things, unveil the mystery of the universe around us. Science can, it is true, collect, classify, and generalize upon phenomena; but the occultist, arguing from admitted metaphysical data, declares that the daring explorer, who would probe the inmost secrets of Nature, must transcend the narrow limitations of sense, and transfer his consciousness into the region of noumena and the sphere of primal causes. To effect this, he must develop faculties which are absolutely dormant — save in a few rare and exceptional cases — in the constitution of the offshoots of our present Fifth Root-race in Europe and America. (*S.D.*, I. 477-78)

Nevertheless we must try to understand occult science.

The Theosophical Glossary says that occult science is “the science of the secrets of nature — physical and psychic, mental and spiritual.” And “it but needs the right perception of things objective” to understand these secrets and “to finally discover that the only world of reality is the subjective.”

As with all subjects, therefore, we must start from where we are, *i.e.*, the objective world. How shall we study it?

One important fact should be acknowledged and remembered. That is, it is only the conceit of our age that makes us think that there was no civilization of any note before ours — no scientists, no philosophers, no “knowers” of wisdom. Yet, history unmistakably shows us that we err in thinking so. While civilizations were flourishing in the East, the Western world was going through a very barren period; but it had, before that,

its Plato and Pythagoras who showed depths of wisdom lacking in our philosophers today. Great scientists flourished also, and we can keep on adding to the list of great names as we pass backwards. All of these left their teachings behind them, or they were perpetuated by their disciples, and their records are available to us all. Therefore the second point to remember is that we have before us the example of the Wise Men who received the records of knowledge from the Wise Men of preceding civilizations and races, and they studied it, experimented with it and tested it with all their powers, physical, psychic and spiritual, until they had proved its correctness. What a lot of precious time they saved by doing this instead of just experimenting with no basis and asking again the same questions that had been asked and answered of old!

There is one further point: we must at least take for granted for the time being the first three of the Ten Propositions of Psychology (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 587 *et seq.*): There is no miracle, all is law; nature and man are threefold. Hence there is the invisible side of nature to be taken into consideration. "To be able to appreciate and accept the occult views on," let us say, "the nebular theory, one has to study the whole esoteric cosmogonical system," said H.P.B. (*S.D.*, I. 590). That is to say, we must take into account the outer and inner environment in order to prove to ourselves that the whole manifestation is one connected whole.

We could benefit by taking these Ten Items in that last chapter of *Isis Unveiled* as our guide — as a kind of formula. They deal not only with what we can see, but with what is hidden. We learn, as we study, that pervading the outer and the inner in nature and in man there is the one common vital principle of Spirit or Life.

How can we with our objective senses study the inner side of Nature? It is possible for us to develop other senses in that second part of the threefold nature, the astral, as also our spiritual senses. We can learn to read the inner history of Nature because everything that happens is recorded on that invisible plane of Nature. Because of the presence in us of Spirit, omniscient and omnipotent, we can learn to control and master Nature's forces, for the one common vital principle is in all. This has to be done while we are living in a physical body through which alone we can wield those forces.

Starting again from the known, the objective, we learn that "the corner-stone of MAGIC is an intimate practical knowledge of magnetism and electricity, their qualities, correlations, and potencies. Especially

necessary is a familiarity with their effects in and upon the animal kingdom and man."

The task before us is stupendous. But it can be pursued by perfecting the human will.

Is it worth while? Only if our motive is correct, for powers wrongly used are dangerous, and wisdom and sorcery are opposite poles. We can, right away, by our motive put ourselves in line with the races of men who follow White Magic, or with those who for generations are addicted to sorcery. There is no God or Devil to help or hinder us. But we do have the long, long line of those great ones who have followed this right Path and become the benefactors of humanity.

Observation, experiment and deduction of the testimony of the ancients as well as of the moderns will change our blind faith into knowledge, for faith must *follow* and not precede conviction.

WE are now in a transition period, and in the approaching twentieth century there will be a revival of genuine philosophy, and the Secret Doctrine will be the basis of the "New Philosophy." Science today, in the persons of such advanced students as Keely, Crookes, Lodge, Richardson, and many others, already treads so close to the borders of occult philosophy that it will not be possible to prevent the new age from entering the occult realm. H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine* is a storehouse of scientific facts, but this is not its chief value. These facts are placed, approximately at least, in such relation to the synthesis or philosophy of occultism as to render comparatively easy the task of the student who is in search of real knowledge, and to further his progress beyond all preconception, provided he is teachable, in earnest, and intelligent.

—W. Q. JUDGE

FEEDING THE MIND

[Who has not heard of *Alice in Wonderland*? Though many may have read Lewis Carroll's other imaginative stories as well, comparatively few know the existence of the gem reprinted here. It was a lecture delivered in 1884, which remained unknown till 1907. On its first appearance it charmed many.

Lewis Carroll was in real (or shall we say, unreal?) life Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, mathematical lecturer at Christ Church, Oxford. Besides his fanciful works, he wrote a number of mathematical and other books.

The subject-matter of "Feeding the Mind" is of vital importance to every man, and in his own delightful way Lewis Carroll delivers a message which will arouse and awaken the reader to seek further afield the truth about that constituent of his being which makes him superior to the animal.—EDS.]

BREAKFAST, dinner, tea; in extreme cases, breakfast, luncheon, dinner, tea, supper, and a glass of something hot at bedtime. What care we take about feeding the lucky body! Which of us does as much for his mind? And what causes the difference? Is the body so much the more important of the two?

By no means; but life depends on the body being fed, whereas we can continue to exist as animals (scarcely as men) though the mind be utterly starved and neglected. Therefore Nature provides that, in case of serious neglect of the body, such terrible consequences of discomfort and pain shall ensue as will soon bring us back to a sense of our duty; and some of the functions necessary to life she does for us altogether, leaving us no choice in the matter. It would fare but ill with many of us if we were left to superintend our own digestion and circulation. "Bless me!" one would cry, "I forgot to wind up my heart this morning! To think that it has been standing still for the last three hours!" "I can't walk with you this afternoon," a friend would say, "as I have no less than eleven dinners to digest. I had to let them stand over from last week, being so busy, and my doctor says he will not answer for the consequences if I wait any longer!"

Well it is, I say, for us that the consequences of neglecting the body can be clearly seen and felt; and it might be well for some if the mind were equally visible and tangible—if we could take it, say, to the doctor, and have its pulse felt.

"Why, what have you been doing with this mind lately? How have you fed it? It looks pale, and the pulse is very slow."

“Well, doctor, it has not had much regular food lately. I gave it a lot of sugar-plums yesterday.”

“Sugar-plums! What kind?”

“Well, they were a parcel of conundrums, sir.”

“Ah, I thought so. Now just mind this: if you go on playing tricks like that, you’ll spoil all its teeth, and get laid up with mental indigestion. You must have nothing but the plainest reading for the next few days. Take care now! No novels on any account!”

Considering the amount of painful experience many of us have had in feeding and dosing the body, it would, I think, be quite worth our while to try and translate some of the rules into corresponding ones for the mind.

First, then, we should set ourselves to provide for our mind its *proper kind* of food. We very soon learn what will, and what will not, agree with the body, and find little difficulty in refusing a piece of the tempting pudding or pie which is associated in our memory with that terrible attack of indigestion, and whose very name irresistibly recalls rhubarb and magnesia; but it takes a great many lessons to convince us how indigestible some of our favourite lines of reading are, and again and again we make a meal of the unwholesome novel, sure to be followed by its usual train of low spirits, unwillingness to work, weariness of existence — in fact, by mental nightmare.

Then we should be careful to provide this wholesome food in *proper amount*. Mental gluttony, or over-reading, is a dangerous propensity, tending to weakness of digestive power, and in some cases to loss of appetite: we know that bread is a good and wholesome food, but who would like to try the experiment of eating two or three loaves at a sitting?

I have heard a physician telling his patient — whose complaint was merely gluttony and want of exercise — that “the earliest symptom of hyper-nutrition is a deposition of adipose tissue,” and no doubt the fine long words greatly consoled the poor man under his increasing load of fat.

I wonder if there is such a thing in nature as a FAT MIND? I really think I have met with one or two: minds which could not keep up with the slowest trot in conversation; could not jump over a logical fence, to save their lives; always got stuck fast in a narrow argument; and in short, were fit for nothing but to waddle helplessly through the world.

Then, again, though the food be wholesome and in proper amount,

we know that we must not consume *too many kinds at once*. Take the thirsty a quart of beer, or a quart of cider, or even a quart of cold tea, and he will probably thank you (though not so heartily in the last case!). But what think you his feelings would be if you offered him a tray containing a little mug of beer, a little mug of cider, another of cold tea, one of hot tea, one of coffee, one of cocoa, and corresponding vessels of milk, water, brandy-and-water, and buttermilk? The sum total might be a quart, but would it be the same thing to the haymaker?

Having settled the proper kind, amount, and variety of our mental food, it remains that we should be careful to allow *proper intervals* between meal and meal, and not swallow the food hastily without mastication, so that it may be thoroughly digested; both of which rules, for the body, are also applicable at once to the mind.

First, as to the intervals: these are as really necessary as they are for the body, with this difference only, that while the body requires three or four hours' rest before it is ready for another meal, the mind will in many cases do with three or four minutes'. I believe that the interval required is much shorter than is generally supposed, and, from personal experience, I would recommend anyone who has to devote several hours together to one subject of thought to try the effect of such a break, say once an hour, leaving off for five minutes only each time, but taking care to throw the mind absolutely "out of gear" for those five minutes, and to turn it entirely to other subjects. It is astonishing what an amount of impetus and elasticity the mind recovers during those short periods of rest.

And then, as to the mastication of the food, the mental process answering to this is simply *thinking over* what we read. This is a very much greater exertion of mind than the mere passive taking in the contents of our author. So much greater an exertion is it that, as Coleridge says, the mind often "angrily refuses" to put itself to such trouble — so much greater, that we are far too apt to neglect it altogether, and go on pouring in fresh food on the top of the undigested masses already lying there, till the unfortunate mind is fairly swamped under the flood. But the greater the exertion the more valuable, we may be sure, is the effect. One hour of steady thinking over a subject (a solitary walk is as good an opportunity for the process as any other) is worth two or three of reading only. And just consider another effect of this thorough digestion of the books we read; I mean the arranging and "ticketing," so to speak, of the subjects in our minds, so that we can readily refer to them when we want them. Sam Slick tells us that he has learnt

several languages in his life, but somehow "couldn't keep the parcels sorted" in his mind. And many a mind that hurries through book after book, without waiting to digest or arrange anything, gets into that sort of condition, and the unfortunate owner finds himself far from fit really to support the character all his friends give him.

"A thoroughly well-read man. Just you try him in any subject, now. You can't puzzle him."

You turn to the thoroughly well-read man. You ask him a question, say, in English history (he is understood to have just finished reading Macaulay). He smiles good-naturedly, tries to look as if he knew all about it, and proceeds to dive into his mind for the answer. Up comes a handful of very promising facts, but on examination they turn out to belong to the wrong century, and are pitched in again. A second haul brings up a fact much more like the real thing, but, unfortunately, along with it comes a tangle of other things — a fact in political economy, a rule in arithmetic, the ages of his brother's children, and a stanza of Gray's "Elegy," and among all these, the fact he wants has got hopelessly twisted up and entangled. Meanwhile, everyone is waiting for his reply, and, as the silence is getting more and more awkward, our well-read friend has to stammer out some half-answer at last, not nearly so clear or so satisfactory as an ordinary schoolboy would have given. And all this for want of making up his knowledge into proper bundles and ticketing them.

Do you know the unfortunate victim of ill-judged mental feeding when you see him? Can you doubt him? Look at him drearily wandering round a reading-room, tasting dish after dish — we beg his pardon, book after book — keeping to none. First a mouthful of novel; but no, faugh! he has had nothing but that to eat for the last week, and is quite tired of the taste. Then a slice of science; but you know at once what the result of that will be — ah, of course, much too tough for *his* teeth. And so on through the whole weary round, which he tried (and failed in) yesterday, and will probably try and fail in tomorrow.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, in his very amusing book, *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*, gives the following rule for knowing whether a human being is young or old: "The crucial experiment is this — offer a bulky bun to the suspected individual just ten minutes before dinner. If this is easily accepted and devoured, the fact of youth is established." He tells us that a human being, "if young, will eat anything at any hour of the day or night."

To ascertain the healthiness of the *mental* appetite of a human animal, place in its hands a short, well-written, but not exciting treatise on some popular subject — a mental *bun*, in fact. If it is read with eager interest and perfect attention, *and if the reader can answer questions on the subject afterwards*, the mind is in first-rate working order. If it be politely laid down again, or perhaps lounged over for a few minutes, and then, “I can’t read this stupid book! Would you hand me the second volume of *The Mysterious Murder?*” you may be equally sure that there is something wrong in the mental digestion.

If this paper has given you any useful hints on the important subject of reading, and made you see that it is one’s duty no less than one’s interest to “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” the good books that fall in your way, its purpose will be fulfilled.

THAT MIND by which the energetic and the discerning perform their tasks in sacrifice and intellectual enterprise, that amazing being which deep inside men abides, may that mind of mine be of exquisite resolve.

—*Sukla Yajurveda*

FOR EVER FRESH, THOSE VERNAL BLOOMS!

LETTER 2

DEAR VIJAY,

I am delighted that you found my previous letter helpful. Of course it was not *I* who helped you — it was Mr. Judge. I simply transmitted his wise words to you until such time as you can read them for yourself. When you have leisure, perhaps on holiday, don't fail to procure his books, of which I will gladly send the names when you desire it, believing that you, like me, will respond instinctively to his teaching.

Meanwhile, to take up the question you put a trifle shamefacedly: is self-improvement practicable? You say the extracts in my last gave you a valuable impression of Theosophy, its doctrines, ethics, general aim, etc., but that at the moment you want something really personal, something that will affect *you* in your own immediate daily life; adding that, as your sole object is to be a better fellow-traveller on the world's crowded, dusty ways, you hope I will not think you egotistic.

Of course I don't! But why balk at truer words? Why not say frankly that you want to try to live more spiritually? For that is what you are, you know — a spiritual being — and were, my friend, *were*, long before you became a prosperous industrialist. You are right to entertain such a wish. And right too to bring me down to first essentials. Don't ever let me get away with vague generalizations in my letters. Not that I am likely to if I continue to quote from Mr. Judge! His feet were planted firmly on those dusty ways you speak of, since there alone the "small old Path" must still be found by every pilgrim. "It is in and through the incidents of daily life, in work well done, in duties thoroughly performed, that we today can most readily make progress in the higher life — slow progress, it may be, but at any rate sure. These are stepping stones to better things." That, Vijay, is the first lesson he presses home to us.

'Tis a magic word, progress! Spiritual progress is what you have come to long for, isn't it? You had the urge to it long ago in student days, so get going with it now, friend! At the very outset Mr. Judge sees "true progress" as "always dependent upon purity of motive and conquest of known or ascertainable defects," and on these points I think you measure up to his requirements — unless the years have changed you a great deal more than I deem possible! But after that, what? How are you using that fine brain of yours, Vijay? Not, I hope,

submerging it wholly in the concerns of office hours. "People are responsible for the use they make of their brains, for the brain can be used for the noblest purposes and can evolve the most refined quality of energy, and to occupy it continually with matters not only trivial but often antagonistic to Theosophical principles is to be untrue to a grave trust."

Add that brain is but an instrument. It is there to subserve *mind*. And how poorly it can do so the above quotation indicates by its solemn mention of the betrayal of a trust. We are called to make far, far better use of it, because, even while dealing with mundane affairs, "such attitude of mind must be attained," says Mr. Judge, "as will enable one to look into the realities of things. The mind must escape from the mere formalities and conventions of life, even though outwardly one seems to obey all of them." He goes on to tell us why. It is because mind's ultimate function is "perception of truth." And further, he tells us *how*. We must purify our minds from *sense*-perception. "The truest way to do this is by combining philosophy with the highest outward and inward virtue."

A counsel of perfection, truly! One requiring years — it might be, *lives* — of patient discipline. Mr. Judge does not minimize the difficulties. He knows them too well. "Mind is restless and wandering in its nature, and must be controlled. Its wandering disposition is necessary or stagnation would result. But it can be controlled and fixed upon an object or idea." One of his favourite illustrations in this connection is from archery, "a practice that symbolizes concentration," which is what we are aiming at. "In archery among men a firm position must be assumed, and in the pursuit of truth this firm position must be taken up and not relaxed, if the object in view is to be ever attained. The eye must not wander from the target, for, if it does, the arrow will fly wide or fall short of its goal." He seems to speak directly and personally to us when he says, "Let us hit the mark, O friend!"

Education alone cannot help us in this matter. Nor can intellectualism (so-called). "The power to know does not come from book-study nor from mere philosophy, but mostly from the actual practice of altruism in deed, word, and thought; for that practice purifies the covers of the soul and permits the light to shine down into the brain-mind." But you and I, Vijay, *must* have our books for all that. Isn't it the case with both of us that a day devoid of reading would be equivalent to, perhaps worse than, a day without food? And Mr. Judge would have us read. Indeed two sections of *Vernal Blooms* are devoted to

this subject, the one entitled "What Should Theosophists Read?", the other, "Much Reading, Little Thought." He is rightly down upon those who "read for the sake of reading," merely to pass the time, to enjoy sensationalism, or even "to deaden the personal consciousness," instead of "reading that they may learn how to live." Such misuse of the printed word results in "filling the sphere of the mind with a mass of half-dead images. It is a hindrance to service and a barrier to individual development." In fact, he compares it to indulgence in drinking! Equally does he deplore superficial reading, with no thought to follow it, which is so far from your own practice that I scarce need mention it, only you may bear it in mind if you are dealing with any young folk who have yet to learn to share Mr. Judge's view that "a few books well read, well analysed, and thoroughly digested are better than many books read over once." Impress on them that what is "not so clear, or quite obscure, is the portion they are to study, so that it also, if found true, may become an integral part of their constant thought." *If found true* is a vital clause, for immature minds can be easily beguiled by strange philosophies. Mr. Judge says roundly, "If I had a youth to train in that department, I should confine him to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Upanishads*, and the *Secret Doctrine* for a very long time, until he was able to make books for himself out of those, *and to apply the principles found in them to every circumstance and to his own life and thought.* I underline that last injunction, Vijay, for ourselves. May we act upon it as we ought to!

What else affects the self? Conversation — wouldn't you agree? Neither of us are tongue-waggers, are we? But we enjoy the stimulus and release of good talk. That is what I miss badly in my present circumstances, and Theosophic talk in particular is almost totally denied me, save on the rare occasions when a friend is kind enough to make the long journey and spare a couple of days to break my solitude. It must be very different in your case. I should imagine you hear a great deal of good intelligent conversation. Not that that in itself provides what I privately call "soul-food," but it offers opportunities which you may learn to make use of. Try, gradually, as your Theosophic purpose strengthens, to give a leading towards topics that accord with it. "To make that a rule would not only insure much positive good; it would insure against much positive harm." And if ever you are able to form a small group of fellow-students, remember that "they at least should never part without conversing on some ennobling and uplifting subject that will help them in their work and study."

Well, apart from books and study and conversation, which are outward things at best, we ourselves, within us, have a wondrous aid to self-improvement. "There is scarcely anyone," says W.Q.J., "who has not got an internal voice — a silent monitor — who, so to say, strikes within us the bell that corresponds to truth, just as a piano's wires each report the vibrations peculiar to it, but not due to striking the wire itself. It is just as if we had within us a series of wires whose vibrations are all true, but which will not be vibrated except by those words and propositions which are in themselves true. . . . By constantly referring mentally all propositions to it and thus giving it an opportunity for growth, it will grow and speak soon with no uncertain tones. This is what is meant in old Hindu books by the expression, 'a knowledge of the real meaning of sacred books.' It ought to be cultivated because it is one of the first steps in knowing ourselves and understanding others."

Note that last injunction, Vijay. "*It ought to be cultivated.*" And W.Q.J., as ever, gives advice as to how. "Intuition must be developed and the matter" — *i.e.*, any matter — "judged from the true philosophical basis, for if it is contrary to true general rules it is wrong. It has to be known from a deep and profound analysis by which we find out what is from egotism alone and what is not; if it is due to egotism, then it is not from the Spirit and is untrue." He reminds us also that "many persons are inclined to doubt the existence in themselves of this intuition, *who in fact possess it*. It is a common heritage of man, and only needs unselfish effort to develop it."

But do I hear you saying in your modesty that *you* at least have no such gift, that you are a very ordinary sort of fellow with only the normal range of faculties and used to exercising these only on ordinary everyday matters? Mr. Judge would not let you get away with this! He dismisses the term "spiritual gifts" as "a rather loose-jointed expression." "There are," he continues, "and can be no gifts for man to receive. Whatever the student of the higher life is, he is as the result of his past labours. Whatever he may become in the future will be due to his own efforts. He may develop his latent faculties and in time become an Adept, or he may drift along the currents of life without aim or effort, till he finally sinks into oblivion. His destiny is in his own hands, and is in no way dependent upon 'gifts.'"

So, you see, your desired self-improvement, like your mental progress at college, depends entirely upon your own efforts, and just as an absence of noise was necessary to you then for study, so now you need a little *inner* quiet. Do make a point, friend — this is vital — of

stilling your mind for a certain period each day. Shut out everything and withdraw to what Mr. Judge calls "the sanctuary of man's own nature, to the place whence his life-power comes, and where he is priest of the shrine of life." You find such phraseology a bit above you? Well, he has an alternative way of saying the same thing: "How can a bar of iron be permeated with the earth's magnetism if it is placed across instead of in line with the magnetic meridian? How can a man expect spiritual gifts or powers if he persists in ignoring spiritual conditions, in violating spiritual laws? To obtain the good, we must think good thoughts; we must be filled with good desires; in short we must *be good*." So beware of hurry, noise and restlessness, which (to change the metaphor) are like the wrong sort of gardening. To bring forth fruitfully the soil needs peace. Vernal blooms, you know, open in silence!

I don't think I need say more. Indeed I should resist the temptation to detain you overlong, which comes so easily to me, writing here in this old summer-house, while you, friend, may be scanning these pages hastily with a pile of work awaiting you on your desk. Yet somehow I don't think you will quite do that. In this matter I know you are very much in earnest, and even if you skip my own jogtrot words, I am pretty sure you'll concentrate on the wisdom of W.Q.J., which glows like rubies among ashes, making me wish I had used a red ribbon in my typewriter to give effect to the passages I've quoted!

I have found another sentence or two to add. They should rid you finally of any fear of seeming "egotistic" in longing for self-betterment on the spiritual level, for they tell you plainly what you are. "The mind . . . should be firmly established on the truth that Man is a copy of the Universe and has in himself a portion of the Supreme Being. To the extent this is realized will be the clearness of perception of truth. A realization of this leads inevitably to the conclusion that all other men and beings are united with us, *and this removes the egotism which is the result of the notion of separateness.*" The ultimate effect, concludes our teacher, is to leave the mind "more pure and free to act."

Now, if this is so, wouldn't it be the worst form of egotism to let your lower self hold lifelong sway unchecked and the divine "portion" be stultified?

All good wishes for your progress.

Your friend and fellow-student,

NARAHARI

A NEW-YEAR MESSAGE

BEFORE the next issue of THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT is out, 1971 will have been ushered in. But does a new year necessarily mean a new life for mankind? The wars and strifes to which the world is so used by now will go on, unbrotherliness will continue to prevail, men's ambitions and labours, egotism and altruism, and all the human passions and virtues will run their course in the usual proportion. Hour by hour changes take place, and yet there is for most human minds a changeless monotony. Going to sleep and waking up, breakfasting and working, recreation interspersed and friends seen, and then come night and sleep. Fifty-two weeks in the year men and women experience numerous small joys and petty pains; a few major events such as births and weddings, diseases and deaths, come their way and thus the year passes. How many feel, even once a month, the deep peace of the heart which alone spells happiness? If sages are full of peace and bliss all the days of their embodied existence and radiate these hour by hour and incarnation after incarnation, cannot men and women who belong to the human kingdom to which the sages belong stream forth a similar blessing once a week, once a month, once a year? But to give peace we must possess peace within; to sacrifice we must have something worthwhile to offer; and ordinary people are without peace and without precious spiritual possessions. Most of them, therefore, look to others to receive the benefits of sacrifice and the blessings of peace.

The monotony of days lengthening into months, of weeks stretching into years, can be relieved only when we feel that inner peace which illumines the whole field of our existence and touches those who come in contact with us. That it is possible for ordinary men and women to feel heart-happiness is proven to them when through some act of genuine self-sacrifice they have pleased others — even if only their kin or their friends. But acts of “genuine” self-sacrifice are not common, and many deeds which are called sacrificial are not real offerings of the Spirit but only kindly acts which hide within them the desire for an adequate response. How many men love only with a view to being loved in return! How many acts of charity are performed with a desire to gain recognition! How many times have we not heard people say, “I sacrificed for nothing!” Even so-called pious people resolve to offer to God and Gods, if He or They will fulfil their desire. The bargaining spirit deprives any action of its aspect of sacrifice. That is why men and women do not feel the peace which comes with real sacrifice. The spirit

of giving streams forth in one direction; the spirit of getting moves in the opposite direction. If men and women would distinguish between their own acts of real sacrifice and those of pseudo-sacrifice they would take the first step towards the kingdom of peace.

If we aspire to feel at least for an hour the peace which the sages feel always, we not only have to learn the art of giving without troubling ourselves about getting something in return, but further we need to possess some knowledge about the nature and the power of the sages whose peace abideth for ever. Many are the useless sacrifices which fail to produce beneficent results, and among such there are sacrifices which produce positive evil effects. The art of doing good, the art of making sacrifices is difficult; that art has its principles and its technique without which one cannot create beauty in actions, any more than a person having bought canvas, paints and a brush can begin to use them without knowledge of the principles and the technique of painting.

Now, is not living very much like painting a picture? We can paint our days in colours which radiate light, beauty and peace. But the art of thus painting successfully the days and the years of life cannot be mastered unless we study the rules of that painting. Knowledge is necessary.

The peace which the sages feel results from their great knowledge. They understand the Universe; they understand the human kingdom, the ways of men and of women, the pains which they suffer, the pleasures which beguile them; and because the sages are compassionate they are ever ready to teach mortals the art of painting life in hues of the peace of the heart, the prosperity of the mind, the sacrifices made with hands of power. People say they want peace, they want knowledge, they want truth; but only a few are willing and prepared to work for securing heart-peace, for obtaining wisdom, for seeking truth. The faith which brings peace and knowledge comes not from temples but from good thoughts, not from rituals but from good words, not from clannishness but from good deeds.

He who finds peace, also finds happiness. The problem of human suffering persists, as it has been demanding solution for millennia past. And if happiness, order, peace and good will are desired, men and women themselves will have to seek and to secure them, inasmuch as happiness comes from within our own consciousness; order in our environment is created by the orderly mind within us; peace belongs to our hidden heart and if it is not there it cannot be obtained anywhere else; good will is a feeling of the Soul which has to stream forth towards

all, but if it does not rise in the Soul within, it cannot stream forth to others who are without. How then shall we, each one of us, set about acquiring the inner power and thus aid our fellow men?

What will 1971 bring to us? What we ourselves have desired. And as hours lengthen into days, weeks and months, our desire of today will fulfil itself tomorrow, or the next week or the following month. But have we always desired wisely? People desire money, but what will they do when money flows into their coffers? If they do not know what money can do, nor what they can do with money, they are sure to drive out happiness and to invite to their hearts pain and anguish. We get not only what we deserve; we get what we desire. We reap as we sow and we deserve as we desire. How to deserve happiness? How to desire it? These are questions which each should ask himself.

Man can become rich as high heaven shows forth its richness. The sun, the moon, the stars, to which we raise our eyes in curiosity, awe or wonder ever give us one message: shed light for humanity on earth — the light that would reveal that the world is one, that humanity is a family, that through Justice only is Mercy obtainable, and that Wisdom alone is the mother of Peace. Without calm there is no happiness possible.

Let us learn to desire righteously and soon the joy and peace of life will be ours!

OUR MIND shall not waver. No evil speech will we utter. Tender and compassionate will we abide, loving, void of malice. And with rays of love shall we suffuse all that is, even with love grown great and measureless.

—TEACHING OF THE BUDDHA

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

How big is the Universe? How does our Earth stand in relation to it? The recently published *Atlas of the Universe*, edited by Patrick Moore — covering Earth as seen from space, the Moon, the solar system, the stars, and the entire Universe as known today — makes us look ridiculously small. *The Daily Telegraph Magazine* for September 18 and 25 publishes extracts and a few illustrations from this vast work. We can get some idea of the vastness of the universe from the following:

Mere adjectives cannot accurately suggest the size and time-scales of the Universe. Phrases like “boundless vastness” and “immeasurable eons” give an unsatisfactory picture because the Universe, although very large, has finite boundaries. The latest estimate of the distance to those boundaries — the answer to the question, “How high is the sky?” — is 58,000 million million million miles. For a light ray or a radio message to reach the edge of the known Universe would take 10 thousand million years, and the speed of light is 186,000 miles per second.

Our Milky Way galaxy, which contains about 100,000 million suns, is but part of a cosmos of some 15,000 million other galaxies. The number of suns in the Universe, therefore, is the product of these figures, which is 1,500 million million million stars, or, as professional astronomers would write it, 15×10^{20} stars, (which is simply 15 followed by 20 zeroes). The best way to appreciate the distances of this Universe of 3×10^{69} cubic miles is the “scale down” method, in which the Sun is progressively reduced in size, and distances become shorter in proportion. . . .

The time-scales of the Universe, like its distances, require just as radical a compression before they become easy to consider.

All this is doubtless of interest and significance to students of Theosophy, as is also the idea that is gaining increasing acceptance today that the universe has gone through many births and deaths. It has long been maintained by some scientists that the Universe expands and contracts periodically (producing manifestation and non-manifestation), and at each expansion time starts all over again. It is now believed that our Sun will die after some five thousand million years, but other stars will then be starting their cycles. “Many of them,” we are told, “will doubtless have agreeable planets on which our descendants will settle. With the barest luck, the various races of our descendants should last the full 75 thousand million years before the dreaded contraction of the Universe.”

The idea of expansion and contraction is inherent in the *Secret Doctrine* metaphor of "the Great Breath":

The appearance and disappearance of the Universe are pictured as an outbreathing and inbreathing of "the Great Breath," which is eternal, and which, being Motion, is one of the three aspects of the Absolute — Abstract Space and Duration being the other two. When the "Great Breath" is projected, it is called the Divine Breath, and is regarded as the breathing of the Unknowable Deity — the One Existence — which breathes out a thought, as it were, which becomes the Kosmos. So also is it when the Divine Breath is inspired again the Universe disappears into the bosom of "the Great Mother," who then sleeps "wrapped in her invisible robes." (I. 43)

... nature runs down and disappears from the objective plane, only to re-emerge after a time of rest out of the subjective and to reascend once more. Our Kosmos and Nature will run down only to reappear on a more perfect plane after every PRALAYA. (I. 149)

The question whether the Universe is finite or infinite was touched upon in "In the Light of Theosophy" for April 1970. As stated there, "Limitless Infinitude, or what theosophists call 'absolute abstract space,' is one thing, and should not be confused with the *manifested* universe which is necessarily finite, for all manifestations have their limits both in space and in time."

The fact that even infants differ in temperament and begin to express themselves as individuals from the time of birth has been attested by mothers, nurses and pediatricians. Of late, many psychiatrists seem to have lost sight of this and have tended to give greater importance to the influence of the environment upon the child. This one-sided emphasis on environment is rejected in an article entitled "The Origin of Personality" in the August *Scientific American*. Authors Alexander Thomas, Stella Chess and Herbert G. Birch (respectively professor of psychiatry at the New York University School of Medicine, professor of child psychiatry at the same institution, and professor of pediatrics at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York) report the findings of their long-term systematic investigation of differences in the behavioural reactions of infants.

It was found that of those children who had similar family upbringing-

ing, some developed severe psychological problems while others had no such problems. On the other hand, some children, in spite of experiencing severe family disorganization and poor parental care, were free of serious personality disturbances. Domineering, authoritarian handling by the parents might make one youngster anxious and submissive and another defiant and antagonistic.

The authors reject both the "nature" and "nurture" concepts and maintain that the personality is shaped by the constant interplay of temperament and environment. The detailed behavioural data collected by them on all the children have been analysed both in statistical and in descriptive terms. In their own words:

Our preliminary exploration had already answered our first question: Children do show distinct individuality in temperament in the first weeks of life, independently of their parents' handling or personality style. Our long-term study has now established that the original characteristics of temperament tend to persist in most children over the years. . . .

Of course a child's temperament is not immutable. In the course of his development the environmental circumstances may heighten, diminish or otherwise modify his reactions and behaviour. . . .

In general our studies indicate that a demand that conflicts excessively with any temperamental characteristics and capacities is likely to place a child under heavy and even unbearable stress. This means that parents and teachers need to recognize what a specific child can and cannot do. . . . Obviously a detailed knowledge of a child's temperamental characteristics can be of great help to parents in handling the child and avoiding the development of behavioural problems. . . .

The paramount conclusion from our studies is that the debate over the relative importance of nature and nurture only confuses the issue. What is important is the interaction between the two — between the child's own characteristics and his environment. If the two influences are harmonized, one can expect healthy development of the child; if they are dissonant, behavioural problems are almost sure to ensue. . . .

Theory and practice in psychiatry must take into full account the individual and his uniqueness: how children differ and how these differences act to influence their psychological growth. A given environment will not have the identical functional meaning for all children. Much will depend on the temperamental make-up of the child. As we learn more about how specific parental at-

titudes and practices and other specific factors in the environment of the child interact with specific temperamental, mental and physical attributes of individual children, it should become considerably easier to foster the child's healthy development.

Though progress has been made in observing and analysing the temperamental differences in children from birth onwards, modern thought has not yet put forward any satisfactory explanation as to *why* this should be so. Even identical twins differ in traits and tendencies of character. The doctrine of heredity as propounded today is at a loss when faced with these congenital differences. A satisfactory solution cannot be found outside of the twin doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, for these differences are the result of antecedent causes. At birth, man brings his characteristics — *skandhas* — from previous incarnations and from them as germ or basis builds up a new set of *skandhas* for the new life. These become the foundations of his personality, and lay down the trend of the life that is to be lived. Of the *skandhas* some last throughout the span of a man's life. They have their youth, maturity and old age; and as it is on them as a substratum that the personality is built, their separation leads to decrepitude and death. Other *skandhas* are more nebulous and are replaceable in a comparatively short time. It is these that make possible a rapid change in the personality, for weal or woe.

Under the title "More Babies Needed, Not Fewer," *Vogue* (August 15) prints an interview with Jane Jacobs, author and America's controversial urban critic. Discussing with interviewer Letica Kent the "jargon" of current population control programmes, she lashes out at compulsory public policies which are implicit in these campaigns. The issue of population control, she points out, "diverts us from facing the real changes and improvements we need to make." Our problem is the undone work, not the numbers of people. Family-planning programmes will not eliminate the problems we have allowed to pile up.

Replying to some of the commonly raised arguments in favour of population control, Jane Jacobs said, among other things:

... underdeveloped countries ... have very unproductive agriculture. But underdeveloped countries can change. Colin Clark, the English economist, estimates that if other countries were as productive in their agriculture as Holland, the world could support ten times its present population. And even Dutch agriculture is

increasing. The total amount of food that could be produced in this world — without harm to the planet — is incalculable. . . .

Whether or not we run out of resources depends on whether or not we keep wasting them as we do now. . . . Whether or not we run out of resources also depends on our learning to use a wider range of resources than the few we now exploit. . . .

The ecology of people is just *not* like the ecology of other animals. Other animals live on what nature provides more or less ready-made. People develop new goods and services, new resources, new means of abundance. . . . Think of all the land modern economies have released for food production by inventing tractors to replace millions of hungry draft animals and by developing synthetic fibres to replace flax and cotton. And think of the forests that were saved when modern economies started using coal and oil for fuel. My point is that along with the natural ecology we also have a human ecology and there is nothing to be gained by pretending that people are like deer or insects. . . .

Population control . . . might do enormous harm to the human ecology. . . . Who knows whether it isn't extremely important for some human beings to come from large families and some from small ones? We ought to be wary of anything that tends to destroy human diversity. We surely need diversity in sizes and kinds of families just as much as we need diversity of talents, occupational preferences, and personalities. In fact, so far as the family is concerned, we've probably already tended toward too much standardization. I mean the standardized American family.

To the question, "Can we at least agree that the underdeveloped countries need population control to overcome their poverty?" Jane Jacobs' reply was:

No. People are producers as well as consumers, and wherever poverty is deep and persistent, it is because a great deal of work is just not being done, because people are not producing. Whatever the particular causes of this stagnation, "over-population" is not one. Take a look at the world. Some of the poorest countries, like Colombia, are very thinly populated. If densely populated Japan and Western Europe were poor, and thinly populated Colombia and Congo and Brazil were prosperous, a nice case might be made that people reinforce their poverty by their own numbers. India's trouble is that its people are not productive enough to provide for their own needs. When India had fewer people a generation ago, and still fewer two or three generations ago, it

wasn't correspondingly more prosperous. If India were to have fewer people in the future than it has now, but nothing else were to change radically, the fewer people would continue poor and unproductive. Again, population control is an evasion....

Of course, if we don't get on with our huge amount of undone and still undeveloped work, we are going to have a lot of idle people and a decaying environment. But Zero Population Growth would not change that.

In most countries, the educational system does not meet the present needs of society. In many places the students themselves are challenging the aims of education and the methods at present in use. But though there is general agreement that a crisis exists, opinions differ regarding its origins and on ways of dealing with it.

It was to stimulate and give urgency to thinking on the fundamentals of education, its place in society and in the lives of individuals that 1970 was proclaimed International Education Year. (See "In the Light of Theosophy" for February 1970). As part of its programme for the year, Unesco convened in Paris an international symposium on education and man's development. Experts from 23 countries met to discuss the nature and achievements of existing education systems, to assess their output in terms of the needs they are expected to meet, and to plan the broad outline of a new pattern of education in the light of the ethical and technical renovation of the concept of education and of its contribution to man's development.

In his opening address, Director-General René Maheu emphasized the need for a new approach to education:

Education of course covers a great complexity of activities, institutionalized or otherwise, directed to the accomplishment of a multiplicity of functions.... Nevertheless in this International Education Year, I should like attention to be shifted to another aspect of education which, though probably the most important, is in general relatively neglected, I mean the actual aims of education. To put it briefly, there is much talk about how, but in my opinion not enough about what and even less about why. When I say "what" I mean the sort of person that education produces, and when I say "why" I mean the reason why that sort of person is being produced....

Education has two essential functions: tradition and innovation. The first function implies the handing down of a heritage,

the consolidation of the past, albeit a past which has been analysed or interpreted. The second function represents a factor for change. First of all, any active education worthy of the name challenges all existing realities and ideas. Instead of merely surveying the accepted ways of dealing with problems, it proposes new solutions, going deeper it develops critical attitudes and furnishes heuristic methods, that is to say methods of invention and discovery, which by changing the mental outlook bring to light problems in all the places where tradition showed only solutions. . . .

You should approach education from the twofold point of view of its capacity for internal renewal and of its capacity to contribute to external renewal. What is needed is to concentrate on the malleability of education and the malleability of mankind and to see how the former can be of service to the latter. Education must change not only to keep pace with the constant varying of the present-day world but because it is the greatest factor making for change in man and because it is only through change that man can develop and thereby attain to his full stature as a human being. . . .

If as I believe the present *educational model* is undergoing radical revision, this revision cannot be solely technical. It must be ethical as well — indeed ethical above all. This for the very good reason that any educational model is at once the projection and the creation of a human model — which to be sure has no meaning save in ethical terms. There can be no theory of education which is not a theory of the purpose of man, whether in his social or his universal aspect, because education is the *praxis* which shapes to certain purposes the element of malleability implanted in man by nature and of contingency implanted in him by history. What are the purposes to which present-day education is shaping the malleability and contingency of contemporary man? Whence are they derived and whither do they lead? In the last analysis, this is everything and the rest is mechanism.

For far too long now education has been blindly pursuing the enhancement of man's powers. It is high time that it concerned itself with the use of those powers not on behalf of his happiness — the word is too vague because it is so highly charged with subjectivity . . . but on behalf of his freedom and his dignity. Knowledge is power: of that there can be no doubt. But power does not necessarily mean achievement; it can also mean destruction or degradation both of oneself and of others. The world is strewn with ruins; and history from the earliest times right up to the present day is one long record of the criminal abuses of

human power.

It is time that education, in reflecting on its purposes, brought man to himself. . . . "Man," the poet has told us, "must be re-suscitated." (*Unesco Chronicle*)

The physical risks involved in blood transfusions are now well known; patients receiving transfusions sometimes contract serious illness from blood contaminated with the hepatitis virus. To solve the problem, researchers in several laboratories are currently trying to develop a blood substitute that would be safe, cheap and plentiful. Some of them are hopeful that a clear liquid made of synthetic substances called fluorocarbons and polyols might be the answer. *Newsweek* (November 2) explains:

In liquid form, fluorocarbons act like red blood cells in their capacity to carry oxygen from the lungs to body cells and bring carbon dioxide back to the lungs. The polyols with which the fluorocarbons are mixed are large molecules that have some of the properties of the proteins in blood plasma; they attract water and thus provide a liquid medium for transporting the fluorocarbons as well as filling the blood vessels.

It is admitted that the quality of the blood is as varied as the sources. To eliminate the risks of transfusions, some U.S. hospitals are resorting to another safe technique. In cases of pre-scheduled surgery, they ask the patient himself to come in a month or so before the operation and donate a supply of his own blood.
