

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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### A MESSAGE OF THE WINTER SOLSTICE

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Christmas comes just at the time of the winter solstice; the days then are shortest, and *Darkness* is more upon the face of the earth than ever. All the sun-gods were believed to be annually born at that epoch; for from this time its Light dispels more and more darkness with each succeeding day, and the power of the *Sun* begins to increase.

—H.P.B. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 23*)

Let but thy heart, oh man,  
Become a valley low,  
And God shall rain on it  
Till it shall overflow.  
Oh, shame, the silkworm works  
And spins till it can fly,  
And thou, my soul, wilt still  
On thine old earth-clod lie.

—ANGELUS SILESIVS

PHILOSOPHY explains the intimate correspondence which exists between the descent on earth of Divine Teachers and the incarnation of the Spirit, the Higher Triad informing and embodied by the human Mind-Body. Both these processes also correspond to the new birth of psychosomatic Nature every year, marked by the seasonal festival of the Winter Solstice.

H.P.B. says that “the ‘great Master’ is the term used by Lohanos or Lamas to indicate one’s ‘HIGHER SELF.’ It is the equivalent of *Avalokitesvara*”

*tesvara*, and the same as *Adi-Budha* with the Buddhist Occultists, ATMAN the 'Self' (the Higher Self) with the Brahmans, and CHRISTOS with the ancient Gnostics." This Guru or Master is designated as the Sage Father and the Compassionate Mother — "the Father who is in heaven" of the Christians and the Gnostics.

Lanoos or Chelas also fully and unequivocally recognize the existence of the *Guruparampara* chain, the Line of Gurus, which W. Q. Judge speaks of as the "intangible but mighty chain." And this chain, he says, "extends up from our teacher or preceptor to the highest spiritual chief in whose ray or descending line one may happen to be." And, on this Line, the human Mind-Soul finds "the Initiate, who leads the disciple, through the Knowledge given to him, to his spiritual, or second birth." That Initiate is called "the Father, Guru, or Master," says H.P.B. Thus, the human Monad or Spirit, Atma-Buddhi, descending from "the highest spiritual Chief" to whose class in the Great School it belongs, has an indissoluble link with the Chief; similarly, the human mind-soul or self-consciousness has a kinship with the Initiate who becomes the Teacher or Guru of the incarnated manasic being, the soul in the body.

Thus, the lower personality has two guides and Gurus — his own Inner Higher Manasic Soul and the Initiate to whose guidance the embodied man is willing and prepared to submit. The Higher Individuality also has similar affiliations.

The seasons of the earth are not only physical in effect; the psychic and the noetic aspects of the four seasons are realities; and the earnest student of Occultism uses his knowledge of the law of correspondence and analogy to improve and elevate his own personal life. Just as for the yogis there is a certain time-period for dying or leaving the corpus, so also from the time-period connected with the realities symbolized by fire and light, the bright fortnight of Luna, the half-year period during which the sun moves northward, help can be derived by the devotee and the intelligent aspirant who yearns to be as one newly born.

The festival of the Winter Solstice that we are nearing represents the beginning of the period during which our spiritual aspirations can become fruitful in soul-growth. H.P.B. says that "the astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter." The earth is under the starry influence of pure *Akasha*, though matter is woefully polluted by human passions and prides. As it happens, from the Winter Solstice to the Summer Solstice the power of the Divine Astral overpowers the shadowy operations of the demoniac astral, and genuin

tudents must learn to take advantage of this natural phenomenon.

In the triple process referred to above, there are numerous implications. The thoughtful reader will make adequate use of them and practice with greater intelligence the precepts they point to.

What then shall we do?

As embodied souls we should exercise our power of thought, will and feeling according to our Theosophical teachings. Our mind is in the grip of lust, anger and greed, all three born of personal egotism. Our personal emotions, some selfish, others sweet, enslave our mind; behind will stands desire, and the force of desires presses our will into its service. The self of the ordinary man (not only of the wicked) is the desire self; his Kama functions where his Atma ought to. Kama-desire has usurped the place of Atma, the Self, Buddhi, the discerning Spiritual Soul, and Manas, the "faculty which makes of man an intelligent and moral being," says H.P.B. It ought to distinguish him from the animal; instead, his enslavement by desires and passions makes man lower than the beast.

The philosophy which brings the knowledge of this topsyturvy situation also offers the technique by which man can free himself from the grip of passions, use them instead of being used by them. The science of occultism further instructs its votary how to catch the radiance of the Higher Manasic Ego and transform his mind into a shining vehicle of its parent. The second birth is the birth of the lower personal mind, free from the dark womb of kamic substances and born as an entity — "an infant crying in the night, an infant crying for the light"; and the cry intelligently and devotedly sent out brings to it as a response the stream of Wisdom-Light of its Manasic Father and Teacher. The path or the bridge, says H.P.B.,

serves as a medium of communication between the two, and conveys from the Lower to the Higher Ego all those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, or be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent *personality* that survive death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in eternity to his having lived.

These are very important, highly significant and profoundly potent words.

The death of kama as master, the birth of *Antahkarana* and its yearning for the Light constitutes one, and an early, type of second birth. It

is one of the truths conveyed through the symbol of the Winter Solstice.

The personal man must undertake the dual task of thinking according to Theosophical teachings. The ordinary man thinks that his inclinations and sense-impressions direct him. His desires energize his senses and organs, on the one hand, and enslave and exploit his mind, on the other. The basis of thought for the aspirant is different: he must seek guidance from the Esoteric Philosophy, from the Science of Occultism, from the Wisdom-Religion. Assiduously, continuously, in the small plain duties of life, in his study and meditation, in his acts of Theosophical service, he must secure for himself the guidance of the infallible and ever-consistent instructions of Robert Crosbie, W. Q. Judge, H.P.B. and the Masters. One-pointedness in meditation and study is necessary; but of greater value is one-pointedness in the routine of waking life. The memory of the Teachings is perfected slowly and gradually and the appropriate and applicable instruction is found ready at hand, hour by hour, if we remember the Masters — Their Natures, Their Powers, Their Wisdom and Their Compassion. When the Guru, our own Inner Divinity, comes under the influence and guidance of the Great Gurus, a new deeper aspect of Second Birth is experienced — another phase of the Festival of the Winter Solstice.

The personal man, receiving the afflatus of the Individual man, grows in strength, in graciousness, in knowledge and in devotion. The Light of Manas descends to increase the flame, to impart a new colour, a new tone, a new knowledge, and the aspirant has passed one gamut of tests and trials, has emerged a true disciple, triumphant in humility, for what he carries within his heart is the compassion lent to him, what he has of knowledge in his head is also borrowed from the heavenly United Lodge of the Great Theosophists. This experience is still another New Birth which the Festival of the Winter Solstice proclaims.

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LIFE is always opening new and unexpected things to us. There is no monotony in living to him who walks even the quietest and tamest path with open and perspective eyes. The monotony of life, if life is monotonous to you, is in you, not in the world.

—PHILLIPS BROOKS

## A MATTER OF DISCIPLINE

Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

—*St. Matthew, III. 10*

IN ITS MARCH across aeons of time, nature evinces an order and a pattern eminently suited to the nights and days of human destiny. Law governs nature and becomes embodied in nature's workings. It is only when man emerges on the scene that a new force comes into play. Man alone has the choice of going wrong. He is "free." He has been exercising this freedom for some eighteen million years and the consequences of his wrong choices hinder his efforts at self-redemption.

To retrace his erring steps and then take the road that leads to knowledge, peace and power is possible to the man. Except for the truly depraved, there are hardly any hopeless cases; for, if a spark of aspiration remains, there exist the potentialities of success. But the man has to search for his own medicine and take it. No one else can do it for him. That is why it is stated that he has to progress by self-induced and self-devised means checked by Karma. The urge to mend broken fences, the devising of ways by which this can be achieved has to come from the Self. It is not that self which delights in evil or which seeks to steep itself in sense-indulgence that has to be relied on. In the task of reformation, reliance has to be placed implicitly on that starry part of the man — his true Self — which in moments of calm is perceived in the voice of conscience, in prophetic dreams and in a thousand other ways which escape the blurred vision and the dulled consciousness of the man who has exiled himself from the state where truth and goodness and beauty abide.

The self-inducement is generated in several ways. The afflicted of fate, the searchers after truth, those who desire possessions (tangible and intangible), and the wise, have each within them the inducement to seek for that knowledge which human ingenuity fails to provide. But this "inducement" may desert the afflicted and the inquirer and the man of high desire unless they turn themselves into the wise; for, when affliction is ended and the inquiry and desire are satisfied, there may come a sense of fulfilment followed by complacency. This feeling of achievement may induce the desire to drift, to lie back and take it easy. Danger lies in such somnolence, for the hold on the Self is for the time being loosened, and the veil of matter begins to turn opaque again.

The self-devising of ways to reach the goal is an exercise not to be lightly undertaken, nor attempted at levels lower than those of the higher mind. That this devising is a periodical and continuous process is evident, since for each new stage of effort a different curriculum is inevitable. The disciplines of the kindergarten stage are not for colleges or for research institutions. But here, any resemblance to ordinary teaching academies and their programmes comes to an end. If the aspirant wants to survive the ordeals of the chela stages, he has to devise such ways as will provide within themselves the near automatic generation and sustenance of a spirit of enthusiasm. The fanatic revels in his fanaticism because he finds a regenerating enthusiasm in the propagation of his belief. He is not deviated from his course by reason of fear or any humanitarian considerations. He has tenacity of purpose and his mind is so full, it has no room for doubts. He refuses to envisage failure. This fanaticism is a characteristic of the lower mind which is ensnared by desire and which narrows the idea of brotherhood to a clique, faction, community or group.

The man devoted to an ideal and whose aspirations have their roots and origin in the higher mind, is also enthusiastic — even more so. He too has tenacity of purpose and is without fear. He too refuses to envisage failure. Yet the difference between them is as marked as is that of light from darkness. The man of the higher mind cannot, dare not, violate the laws of brotherhood. He refuses to dominate the minds of men. He is compassionate and charitable to others' failings, yet is unflinchingly fixed in the True. The truly devoted does not blazen forth his devotion. He does not wear its insignia upon his sleeve. He loses himself in the stream of humanity, yet is apart from them; he takes his knowledge from divine sources, yet remains humble. He becomes a co-worker with nature.

Envisaging this goal, that of devotion through works, how is one to set about the task of devising ways for attaining it? The start of any effort in this direction must be on the basis of one's assets or the lack of them in the mental and moral aspects of one's nature. In formulating any course of conduct, it has to be constantly kept in mind that any activity intiated on the inner planes of being should not be allowed to deteriorate into a form of outside ritual. All movement has to be a natural and not a forced outflow from within outwards.

It is a self-evident fact that it is only the higher which can in justice examine the lower, assess its performance and prescribe remedies where some principle is broken or a moral precept violated. It is as dangerous

to relegate this function to the lower mind as it is to entrust the cure of diseases to a quack. But the higher mind is so swathed in the fogs generated by the lower as to be hardly perceptible or even recognizable. The first act of discipline is therefore the invoking of the Higher Mind. For this, the lower mind has to be made free of all impure desire, which includes all desires to which the personal man of name and form reacts. The beginner is never sure where the lower stops and the higher begins. Therefore the discipline demands that he concentrate on attaining a calmness where all or nearly all cerebration ceases. Then is he required to sit in judgment on his own acts, deeds, thoughts and feelings of the past twenty-four hours, and decide how far they fall short of the Paramitas. It is a long and arduous course of self-discipline. Does he feel elated or ashamed during the review? Then is he no longer the impersonal judge and it is only the lower mind that is masquerading as the higher. Heavy falls, severe jolts, the sense of shame and guilt will come as the student oscillates between the personal and the impersonal. Yet, through it all, the discipline has to be adhered to, the poise maintained when facing the records of failures and successes.

The greatest enemy of discipline is *Tamas*. It freezes action and impoverishes the will. It tends both in the beginning and the end to stupefy the soul. *Tamas* will continue to dominate the man so long as *Rajas* and *Sattva* remain dormant in him. The student-server has to understand the play and interplay of the three qualities within him if he embarks on a regular course of discipline. He has to convince himself of the supreme fact that when *Rajas* and *Tamas* are held back, the quality of *Sattva* will prevail. The aim of all Theosophical endeavour is the achievement of this *Sattva* state of consciousness. The only method by which this can be brought about is the adoption of a course (a regular *organized* effort) of discipline which has for its goal the uninterrupted dominance of the spiritual mind over its earthly counterpart. There are no short cuts to success — no quick formulas for the gaining of soul-stamina.

There is a school of thought which propagates the wrong belief that if the desires (bad, immoral and even devilish) which lurk within the dark corners of the mind were allowed free and unrestrained expression, they would be thrown out of the system, satiety would set in, and the man would stand totally purged of the undesirable. No tenet could be more abominable or pernicious. An all-consuming desire starts from a pin-point of corrosion and then expands and waxes strong, as does the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart. In the end, it is not the worm

but the blossom that dies — its life vampirized, its fragrance devastated. It is the worm of desire, the worm of the senses, the worm of the separative self that has to be killed past reanimation. Again, it is discipline alone that can make this possible, and this discipline can be undertaken continuously through the force of an awakened spiritual Will.

The fanatic, the immoral man and the lunatic also find their strength through the power of the will. But that will is different from and subordinate to the will used by the man of Wisdom and he who proceeds deliberately towards his martyrdom. Wherein then lies the difference? It lies in the fact that whereas the one wakes up the will resident in one principle of his being, the other uses that aspect of the will which functions in a principle superior to that available to the man who delights in the heady fumes that are emitted by matter. No river can rise above its source; and the will-force used by the lower desires remains and functions on that plane only. At death, it will perish when the material lower mind perishes. The will that outlasts the mortal man is a part of the immortal aspect of himself — the higher mind which is beyond the reach of the perishable aspects of himself. When Sri Krishna tells Arjuna: "Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same to thee, and then prepare for battle," he is in reality giving to him the first lesson in the stirring up of the purified will. Once emplaced in the higher mind by the act of rising above the pairs of opposites, Arjuna could still perform action — even the slaughter inevitable on a field of battle — and yet be free from sin.

For the performance of his duty as a warrior, Arjuna is advised to use the will-force which can be drawn upon only when the man ascends to the region of the Higher Mind. Since the student is concerned with the raising of his consciousness to that plane only, the disciplines pertaining to that particular field of endeavour need alone be considered. How does one reach to the Higher Mind, and that not by fits and starts, but at will and on the instant? The obvious answer is: by practice and absence of desire. But the principles which govern such practice have to be understood. It is a truism that the human mind abhors a vacuum. If it is not filled with good, it gets automatically filled with evil — inevitably and invariably so. What lesson does this truism have in daily living? It means, among other things, that the student has to steep himself in sattvic activity during all the hours of waking existence. Duties have to be discharged as a disciplined offering to the Self; while all the time social activity has to be made to reflect the new orientation. The danger lies

uring times of stress, as also in moments of leisure, or when seeming justice blinds the man to all else save the torture of his hurt. It is at such times that imperceptibly the discipline tends to get relaxed. It is during hours of gloom that the aspirant should take to heart the advice that realization comes by dwelling on the thing to be realized. For the aspirant, this "dwelling" has to be on and also *in* the Self. If this is not done, then this crucial "dwelling" is shifted to any of the numerous aspects of the mortal life. These may not necessarily be evil or amoral; yet, because they pertain to the lower mind, they but clutter up the space meant to be occupied by the ideations of the higher.

The question that sometimes haunts the disciple is whether all his effort and strain has been worth his while and whether he has done right by himself in abandoning pleasurable pursuits for the rigours of a total discipline, and that too in search of an immortality which he but barely understands and which he may after all fail to experience. May not his quest lead to blind alleys and untimely death? This question comes up periodically when the man of limited vision looks for signs of progress and finds hardly any. On each such occasion, he alone has to decide whether he will carry on or abandon the struggle. Analogous situations are met with in ordinary life also. There are drop-outs from schools and colleges, and the reasons which seemed cogent and valid when such steps were taken appear to be hasty and ill-advised as the lapse of time begins to provide an unbiased look and a wider perspective. Yet, if the aspirant but pursues his studies and his discipline diligently, he will discover within the same philosophy which had heartened him to take the plunge those very ingredients which can give him strength in his hour of spiritual need.

The will to do, the soul to dare are essential equipments for leading the life of chelaship.

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IF you will think of what you ought to do for other people, your character will take care of itself. Character is a by-product, and any man who devotes himself to its cultivation in his own case will become a selfish prig.

—WOODROW WILSON

# RANDOM NOTES FROM "THE THEOSOPHIST"

## MAN AND HIS BODIES

[The author of an anonymous article, "Mediums and Yogis," stated: "As the magnetic power is directed to any particular faculty, so that faculty at once forms a direct line of communication with the spirit (sixth principle — *spiritual* soul), which, receiving the impressions, conveys them back to the physical body." H.P.B. remarked in a footnote:]

In the normal or natural state, the sensations are transmitted from the lowest physical to the highest spiritual body, *i.e.*, from the first to the 6th principle (the 7th being no organized or conditioned body, but an infinite, hence unconditioned principle or state), the faculties of each body having to awaken the faculties of the next higher one, to transmit the message in succession, until they reach the last, when, having received the impression, the latter (the spiritual soul) sends it back in an inverse order to the body. Hence, the faculties of some of the "bodies" (we use this word for want of a better term) being less developed, they fail to transmit the message correctly to the highest principle, and thus also fail to produce the right impression upon the physical senses, as a telegram may have started for the place of its destination faultless, and have been bungled up and misinterpreted by the telegraph operator at some intermediate station. This is why some people, otherwise endowed with great intellectual powers and perceptive faculties, are often utterly unable to appreciate — say, the beauties of nature, or some particular moral quality; as, however perfect their physical intellect — unless the original, material or rough physical impression conveyed has passed in a circuit through the sieve of every "principle" — (from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 up to 7, and down again from 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, to No. 1) — and that every "sieve" is in good order — the spiritual perception will always be imperfect. The Yogi, who, by a constant training and incessant watchfulness, keeps his septenary instrument in good tune and whose spirit has obtained a perfect control over all, can, at will, and by paralysing the functions of the four intermediate principles, communicate from body to spirit and *vice versa* — direct.

[The author further stated in his article: "The Yogi forms a direct connection between his spiritual soul and any faculty, and, by the power of his trained will, that is by magnetic influence, concentrates all his powers in the soul, which enables him to grasp

the subject of his enquiry and convey it back to the physical organs, through the various channels of communication." H.P.B. commented:]

Or — direct, which is oftener the case, we believe.

[The author also said: "If he desires to traverse space in spirit, this is easily done by him by transferring the faculty of *will* . . ." H.P.B. remarked:]

From the physical to the Spiritual body and concentrating it there, we understand it.

(May 1882)

[In *Light* of February 11, 1882, "C.C.M.," in the article "Communicating Spirits," said the following:

"It will thus be seen (1) that only the first, or earth-bound class, and the third, the perfected spirits, have power *voluntarily* to communicate with us and to interfere in human affairs, and this by reason of the *body* (though of very different sort) which serves as the medium of communication; and (2) that the 'earth-bound' condition supposes the continuance of the 'astral' body. This, according to occultist teaching, is in *process* of disintegration — the communication becoming more and more incoherent as that process advances. According to the *recent teaching* in *The Theosophist*, the *Linga-Sarira* is dissolved *with the external body* at the death of the latter. This is quite opposed to what we are told by Eliphas Levi and many other authorities, and does not appear probable."

H.P.B. replied as follows under the title "The Present Great Need of a Metaphysico-Spiritual Vocabulary":]

... The term "spirit" coupled with the idea of "embodiment" becomes as incorrect, and as great a fallacy as to represent the non-conditioned, or the *Infinite* "ALL" (the one *Reality*) by a limited and conditioned portion of a finite object, one of the evanescent mirages ever flickering and disappearing in our phenomenal world. The "perfected" rather "*Perfect Spirit*" — since the *Absolute*, or limitless UNITY and perfection can neither be divided, nor can it be invested with attributes and degrees involving *gradual* perfectibility — can become the Unity or spirit but after having lost every form and shape — (hence body), which would necessarily make of it a DUALITY. It can have no relation to, or concern with, any object of consciousness in our illusionary world, as

this alone would involve dualism, which must exist wherever there is any relation at all. Hence — if under the name of “Perfected Spirit” — ABSOLUTE consciousness is meant, then the latter, incapable of either internal or external cognition, must necessarily be viewed as incapable also of a *voluntary* communication with us mortals. And, since we undertake to divide “souls” or “spiritual entities” into classes and degrees, how can we presume, whatever be our authority, to limit those so flip-pantly but to three classes? Surely, the careful study of the doctrine of the *seven* principles of living mortal man, as taught by the Arahat esotericism, each of which principles is subdivided in its turn into seven more, would serve at least one useful purpose, namely, to bring something like order into this infinite chaos and confusion of terms and things. As a proof of this, we now find our esteemed friend “C.C.M.” confusing the Sanskrit term “Linga-Sarira” with the *Mayavi* or *Kama Rupa* — the “astral soul,” and calling the doctrine of its dissolution with the body — a “recent teaching.” If he but turns to the back volumes of *The Theosophist* he will find in the November issue of 1879 (Art. “Yoga Vidya”) a correct definition of the term in that sentence which says (p. 44, col. 2) that the *Linga-Sarira* “. . . is the subtile, ethereal element of the Ego of an organism (whether human or animal or vegetable) . . . inseparably united to . . . the latter, and never leaving it but at death.” And if so, how could the “astral body” of man, if we call it *Linga-Sarira*, leave him during his lifetime and appear as his double, as we know is repeatedly the case with mediums and other peculiarly endowed persons? The answer is simple: that which appears, or the “double,” is called *Mayavi-Rupa* (illusionary form) when acting blindly; and — *Kama-Rupa*, “will” or “desire-form” when compelled into an objective shape by the conscious will and desire of its possessor. The *Jivatma* (vital principle) and *Linga-Sarira* (Sex-body)<sup>1</sup> are *inner principles*; while the *Mayavi-Rupa* is the *outside* “soul” so to say: one which envelops the physical body, like in a filmy ethereal casing. It is a perfect counterpart of the man and even of the clothing which he happens to wear.<sup>2</sup> And this principle is liable to become condensed into opacity, compelled to it, either by the law of intermagnetic action, or by the potentiality of *Yoga-balla* or “adept-power.”

<sup>1</sup> In this esoteric sense *Linga* means neither “phallus” as translated by some, nor “knowledge,” as done by others; but rather “male” or “sex.” Badarayana calls it in his *Darsana* (system of philosophy) *kritsita Sarira*, the “contemptible body,” as it is but the *turba*—stirring principle within man resulting in animal emanations.

<sup>2</sup> See in this connection *The Soul of Things* by Prof. Denton.

Thus, the "*Linga-Sarira*" is "dissolved with the external body at the death of the latter." It dissolves slowly and gradually, its adhesion to the body becoming weaker, as the particles disintegrate. During the process of decay, it may, on sultry nights, be sometimes seen over the grave. Owing to the dry and electric atmosphere it manifests itself and stands as a bluish flame, often as a luminous pillar, of "odyle," bearing a more or less vague resemblance to the outward form of the body laid under the sod. Popular superstition, ignorant of the nature of these *post-mortem* gaseous emanations, mistakes them for the presence of the "suffering" soul, the personal *spirit* of the deceased, hovering over his body's tomb. Yet, when the work of destruction has been completed, and nature has broken entirely the cohesion of corporeal particles, the *Linga-Sarira* is dispersed with the body of which it was but an emanation.

It is high time then, that we should think of making a "metaphysico-spiritual vocabulary." If we adopt Eastern beliefs and accept their system of thought under whatever name — we must take care that they be not disfigured through our carelessness and misunderstanding of the real meaning of the terms. The sooner we do it, the better for the Spiritualists and ourselves; lest, as we see, it should lead our best friends — those who travel along a parallel, if not quite identical, path with us, and are pursuing the same and one knowledge — to a severe conflict of shadows. A battle, based upon a misconception of words elevated to the dignity of dogmas and an ignorance of synonyms for what is but one and the same thing, would be something to be extremely regretted. The more so as many of our enemies show themselves but too eager to convert such simple misconceptions of terms into irreconcilable heresies as to facts and axioms.

(April 1882)

[William Oxley's article, "Hierosophy and Theosophy," drew from H.P.B. a number of footnotes. The statements on which the notes are based are printed below in brackets.]

[In dealing with what *appears* to be the difference between Hierosophic and Theosophic teachings, as to Rebirth, or Reincarnation, we should have to deal with what Theosophy terms the "Seventh principle" in man, but which I have termed the "Master atom." . . . Is that "Seventh principle" an *entity*, i.e., is it a differentiated atom of life? . . . In *appearance* — yes. In *reality* — no. The term "atom of life" has an application only permissible on the plane of human thought and consciousness. It is relative.

not absolute. If we must go back far enough, or deep enough, I urge that there is but one Life and one Substance; and that all which is, is but the phenomenon of differentiation, which is ceaseless, changing, and eternal.]

This is good, *orthodox* occultism as it now stands. Only with our correspondent's permission, we are obliged to remind him that according to the Occult doctrine the term "Master Atom" is not applicable to the seventh principle, though it can be very properly used in reference to the sixth, the vehicle of spirit, or spiritual soul. The views of the occultists upon *spirit* and soul may be said to adopt the middle ground between the theories of Boscovich and Helmholtz, on the intimate nature of matter. The seventh principle, or rather its essence, belongs to the *seventh* state of matter, *i.e.*, a state which may be viewed in our mundane conceptions as pure spirit; while the nature of the *sixth* principle is not a *centre of force* like its spirit, a centre in which the idea of all substance disappears altogether, but a fluidic or rather ethereal "atom." The former is undifferentiated, the latter, differentiated matter, though in its highest and purest state; one, the life that animates the atom, the other the vehicle that contains it.

[This "master atom" in order to make itself visible, or cognizable, on the various planes in its descent, attracts to itself *other atoms*, which form its envelope, or clothing; and *these atoms*, by virtue of contact — temporary as it is — impregnated with the life quality of the master atom, and according to the development in the scale of consciousness, consciousness while ascending, unconsciousness while descending — so, conditions are supplied for phenomenal expressions on the infinite variety of Being.]

This is *heterodox*. If by "Master atom" the *divine* "human monad" is meant, then it remains unconscious or rather irresponsible whether "descending" or "ascending" the circle of spheres for three and a half rounds, after which, so long as it is united to personalities it remains both conscious and responsible.

[My late visit to Egypt brought me into contact with the ancient Egyptian doctrine of metempsychosis, which seemed to teach, that the soul, or vivifying principle, after leaving the body, was reincarnated in lower and even animal forms, and that it must pass through every variety of organized life forms, until at the end of three thousand years it would return and be reunited with the physical body, which was so carefully preserved and mummified under this idea. Time has proved the fallacy of the doc-

trine, as so many mummies, now in existence, are considerably older than the 3,000 years, and the so-called soul has *not* returned to claim its physical body. We must therefore seek for another solution to an ancient doctrine which, undoubtedly, had an underlying tone of truth.]

Mr. Oxley will permit us to correct him. He looks at the objective terrestrial and *empty* shell — the "mummy" — and forgets that there may be hidden under the crude allegory a great scientific and occult truth. We are taught that for 3,000 years at least the "mummy," notwithstanding all the chemical preparations, goes on throwing off, to the last, invisible atoms, which from the hour of death, re-entering the various *vortices* of being, go indeed "through every variety of organized life forms." But it is not the soul, the fifth, least of all the sixth principle, but the *life atoms* of the *jiva*, the second principle. At the end of the 3,000 years, sometimes more, and sometimes less, after endless transmigrations all these atoms are once more drawn together, and are made to form the new outer clothing or the body of the same monad (the real soul) which had already been clothed with them two or three thousands of years before. Even in the worst case, that of the annihilation of the conscious *personal* principle, the monad or individual soul is ever the same as are also the atoms of the lower principles which, regenerated and renewed in this ever-flowing river of being, are magnetically drawn together owing to their affinity, and are once more reincarnated together. Such was the true occult theory of the Egyptians.

[I notice the Editor's note in March number of *The Theosophist*, in reply to the query raised by a correspondent in reference to the retrogression of the "spiritual survival" after physical death. . . . The real question involved is this: "Does the life principle that escapes from the human body at death, maintain the consciousness of its individuality, not personality; and if so, does that conscious individuality advance to higher, or more interior, states of being?" To which we reply in the affirmative.]

We are sorry to reply in the negative. That which maintains the consciousness of its individuality is the sixth principle in conjunction with the seventh and a portion of the fifth and its vehicle the fourth — the triad thus constituting the conscious *monad*. Life-atoms or "life principle" (the *Jiv*) that escapes at death has no consciousness in its disintegrated condition, nor has this any bearing upon the "grand purposes of creation."

(July 1883)

[“A Parsi F.T.S.” discussed, under the title “Theosophy and the Avesta,” the septenary division of man’s constitution, as contained in the ancient Zoroastrian Scriptures. H.P.B. appended to his article the following footnote.]

Our Brother has but to look into the oldest sacred books of China — namely, the *Yi King*, or *Book of Changes* (translated by James Legge) written 1200 B.C., to find that same *Septenary* division of man mentioned in that system of Divination. *Zhing*, which is translated correctly enough “essence,” is the more subtle and pure part of matter — the grosser form of the elementary ether; *Khi*, or “spirit,” is the breath, still material but purer than the *zhing* and is made of the finer and more active form of ether. In the *hwun*, or soul (*animus*), the *Khi* predominates, and the *zhing* (or *zing*) in the *pho* or animal soul. At death the *hwun* (or spiritual soul) wanders away, ascending, and the *pho* (the root of the Tibetan word *Pho-hat*) descends and is changed into a ghostly shade (the shell). Dr. Medhurst thinks that “the *Kwei Shans*” (see *Theology of the Chinese*, pp. 10–12) are “the expanding and contracting principles of human life! The *Kwei Shans* are brought about by the dissolution of the human frame, and consist of the expanding and ascending *Shan* which rambles about in space, and of the contracted and shrivelled *Kwei*, which reverts to earth and nonentity. Therefore, the *Kwei* is the physical body; the *Shan* is the vital principle; the *Kwei-Shan* the *linga-sariram*, or the vital soul; *Zhing* the fourth principle or *Kama-Rupa*, the essence of will; *pho* (the animal soul); *Khi* the spiritual soul; and *Hwun* the pure spirit — the seven principles of our occult doctrine!

(October 1882)

[In an occult treatise compiled and translated from the German it was stated that man “became involved in sensuality, that is, he went from 4 to 9 and fell into darkness.” This drew the following editorial remark:]

Number 4 represents the sacred square, which is the symbol of the manifested logos. 4 becomes 9 when the logos or the spiritual monad attaches itself to the remaining 5 principles in man. This is the descent of spirit into matter which is darkness.

(May 1884)

## THE SENSE OF INSECURITY AND ITS ANTIDOTE

WHAT IS more destructive of meaningful living than that ubiquitous enemy amongst us today, the sense of insecurity? It attacks under various guises. There is the worldwide fear of nuclear disaster and of the hazards of pollution. Many live in dread of unemployment, or of disrupted family life, either through lack of decent housing or through being moved around like pawns at the dictates of industry. The young know the frustration of fruitless job-hunting and their elders the bleak prospect of redundancy. For the old looms up the prospect of neglect and institutional existence towards the end.

Granted, insecurity is no new thing. Our life as mortals makes it inevitable. But perhaps never before have we been brought to such awareness of it as now, with the constantly given out statistics of nerve disorders, crime and violence, plus the astonishing number of those who, if not precisely drug addicts, cannot get through the day without their regular intake of sedatives.

To turn from such unhappy facts to the writings of Mr. Judge is to drink a deep restorative draught of the elixir of life. Yet he himself knew insecurity, for at an early age he lost his mother, and was only thirteen when his father transported the whole family from Dublin to the city of New York. His marriage, at the outset, had its problems, and his only child, a little daughter, died in infancy. His very work for Theosophy brought down jealousy and hatred upon him as friends became enemies and former co-workers attacked him with false accusations. For much of his life he had poor health, originating in a fever caught in South America, and he died — prematurely, many would say — at the age of forty-five. So he could not be blind to the *fact* of human insecurity, and indeed summed it up feelingly and understandingly when he wrote: "The great problems of life: why we are here, why we suffer, and where may justice be found that will show the reason for the sufferings of the good man, or, indeed, for the sufferings of any one, press upon us." (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 78)

But against the *sense* of insecurity he was wholly buttressed by the teachings of Theosophy, and would have all of us be likewise by the same. Granted that "the existence of evil, of suffering, and of sorrow" may be "a hopeless puzzle to the mere philanthropist or theologian" (*An Epitome of Theosophy*, p. 30), they should not be so to the student of Theosophy — "the only system of religion and philosophy which gives

satisfactory explanation of such problems as these." (*Ibid.*, p. 29)

Once in contact, it is for students to absorb its supporting teaching so that it "may become an integral part of their constant thought" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 66), and throughout his life and in all his writings the particular belief that Mr. Judge keeps in the forefront is Karma. Its truth is substantiated for him by the very conditions which, for others, produce the sense of insecurity. "The doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation are provable," he says, "by the facts and necessities of life and the human soul. If we are souls, then Reincarnation is absolutely necessary. Karma is absolutely necessary, or else this world is a vast mass of chance which no one can admit." ("A Letter from W. Q. Judge," reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, March 1969)

Surely anyone who gives thought to this must see the truth of it, even if he does no more than look into history. What is the alternative save to accept the principle of universal meaninglessness running pointlessly throughout all creation? Given such a principle (if one may call it so), we would have good cause to feel insecure and to nourish a sense of bitter resentment — against what, or whom? But Karma, "the just and perfect law of Karma," as Mr. Judge tells us in his *Echoes from the Orient* (p. 17), saves us from having to see all that befalls us as merely "the mysterious workings of an irresponsible providence."

If we accept this law we may begin even here and now, and even if only partially and dimly, to see cause and effect in our own present circumstances. Mr. Judge points this out in one of his letters to his disciple Jasper Niemand. "Often what seem evil and 'pain' are not absolutely so, but only necessary adjustments in the progress of the soul. . . . What is Evil now? Loss of friends? No; if you are self-centred.<sup>1</sup> Slander? Not if you rely on Karma. There is only evil when you rebel against immutable decrees that must be worked out." (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 25-26)

That is Karma — adjustment. And since all of it cannot be worked out in the present life, we have the twin doctrine of Reincarnation. "That which men call death is but a change of location for the Ego, a mere transformation, a forsaking for a time of the mortal frame, a short period of rest before one reassumes another human frame in the world of mortals." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 233)

Here is another way of regarding insecurity. It is an inevitable part of this transitory world. "Nothing in the material world endures ab-

<sup>1</sup> That is, in the *true* self.

olutely unchanged in itself or its conditions, even for the smallest conceivable portion of time," Mr. Judge reminds us (*Echoes from the Orient*, p. 9). Is not this more basic than even the problems we spoke of first — loss of work, loss of home, loss of health? Mr. Judge would not minimize any of these, but would say, as in one of his letters, that with regard to the bad present "the only way we can alter it is by such action now as makes of each one a centre for good, a force that makes 'for righteousness,' and that is guided by wisdom." (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 76)

But, for that profound sense of insecurity arising from the fact, disguise or evade it as we may, that all is transitory, he would ever point us to the great doctrine of Karma, which alone can satisfy that within us which is not the prey of time.

"Karma never errs and will surely repay." (*Echoes from the Orient*, p. 46)

Knowing Mr. Judge as we do from his life and writings, we may take it that in saying that he pledges us his solemn word.

"Let us then have great faith and confidence."

This, from a different context (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 78), is the complement of the above. Together, they provide our *vade mecum*.

Dwell on them, fellow students of Theosophy. They may show us the validity of yet another precept voiced by Mr. Judge: "The way gets clearer as we go on, but as *we* get clearer we get less anxious as to the way ahead." (*Ibid.*, p. 140)

The "way ahead" is our Karmic pilgrimage. Strive to see it as that rather than as the threat of insecure tomorrows.

To a great and devoted Teacher, what return do we owe? Gratitude, of course, but also, surely, a sincere endeavour to practise what he taught.

In our corrupt and sinister age, dark with all the evils of Kali Yuga, let us heed the words of this great Theosophist: "I hope no weak souls will be shaken off their base. If they get on their *own* base they will not be shaken off." (*Ibid.*, p. 133)

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HAPPINESS is not the reward of virtue, but is virtue itself.

—SPINOZA

## THE BASIS OF CHANGE

WE KNOW that this is a universe of change; that no manifested thing remains identically the same even for the fraction of a second. Everything is in incessant flux. How to account for it? The fact is meaningless until accounted for. To account for a fact means to see a cause or motive for it; a result or an end to be achieved by it. When we examine ourselves we can see that none of our external actions of any kind come to pass of themselves. They are all preceded as well as accompanied and followed by internal action which we call thought, will, feeling, volition, and by many other names. So when we try to take a real view of the facts we can rise of our own knowledge to a higher plane of perception and see something at least as to the *why of incessant* change.

Every man can see that there can be no evolution without change. But very few men try to see that evolution, or change, has three fundamental bases. These three fundamental factors are nothing but a metaphysical counterpart of the familiar three fundamental factors of physical action. Everyone knows that physically speaking there cannot be any action except on the basis of a lever. Now, a lever incessantly presents three changing relations which we name power, weight and fulcrum. The power may be at one end or at the other or in the middle, but if power is in the middle, the fulcrum will be at one end and the weight at the other. So we can run through the gamut of possibilities of these three relations or factors in a lever and see how many actually there are.

Applying that same principle of the lever metaphysically, in the field of causes, any man can see that although change is the fact, it cannot come about unless, first, there is something which is changeable, that is, whose relation can be altered in regard to other things. That corresponds to the weight in the physical lever. Metaphysically, we name this changeable aspect of life, Matter. But that alone is not enough to produce that metaphysical change which we designate "cause" any more than the weight is sufficient to produce the physical change. What corresponds to the power in the physical lever is that which is unchanging, and it is this unchanging aspect or relation in life that is meant metaphysically by the word Spirit.

So, at the basis of all change, when regarded from the standpoint of causation, we have Matter-Life which is changeable in its relation with the rest of Life. Then we have its exact opposite — that aspect of Life which represents the enduring, the permanent, the unchanging, as power

a lever, and that is what is meant by the word Spirit. But though we have the unchanging Spirit and changeable Matter, still there can be no change without the presence of the third element of the metaphysical lever, in the same manner as power and weight by themselves cannot produce physical action without a fulcrum.

What, metaphysically speaking, is the fulcrum of all causal action? It is that which we call Mind, and just as Spirit represents the unchanging aspect and Matter the changeable aspect of Life, so Mind represents the connecting link, the bond between Spirit and Matter. Wherever we see, we see Spirit — if we look with the Eye of Wisdom, that is, the Eye of Life. We see Matter, if we look with the eye of sense. We see Mind, if we look with the eye of reason. In Theosophy this Trinity is sometimes spoken of as the Three Witnesses of Karma, the word "Karma" meaning action, physical, metaphysical or spiritual, and intellectual. These Three Witnesses are in symbolism the Three Eyes which every being can cast upon life: the Eye of Sense which is shared by all beings; the Eye of Spirit, which is likewise shared by all beings, the highest as well as the lowest; and the Eye of Reason which exists only in man.

In these three terms, more particularly in a study of mind — its real value — we get a glimpse of what Occultism, or Theosophy, or the Wisdom-Religion speaks of as Reincarnation. How is mind produced? Let us seek a physical illustration: Water is produced by the fusion of two invisible, impalpable, intangible gases. They are fused so that the characteristic qualities of both gases instantly disappear and are replaced by something that is visible, that is tangible, that is palpable, and that we name water. Think of the immense variation water is capable of with the fusion of the two gases that lie invisible at its root. So with mind, which is produced by the union of Spirit with Matter. Then we have the lever of Life, which every being is. His Soul, or Spirit, is the power — the Eye of Wisdom; his body, or form of whatever kind, is the weight to be used, to be moved, to be transported; his mind is the fulcrum between weight and power, between Matter and Spirit.

The greatest mistake of our religion and our science alike is to think of Matter, Mind and Spirit each as an independent factor, whereas all evidence of nature without and of our own nature within will tell any man the moment he begins to look — not merely with the Eye of Sense, not merely with the Eye of Reason, not merely even with the Eye of Spirit, but with the triune Eye of Wisdom-Reason-Experience — that these three are but aspects of one and the same reality. People forget

that fundamental truth of necessity is axiomatic. It exists by virtue of itself. It is the canon, the criterion by which all lesser and relative things are to be measured. Now, if we take these three Eyes, these three Witnesses to Karma, we have the spiritual value of the physical and metaphysical lever. The Eye of Wisdom is the power; the Eye of Sense is the weight to be shifted hither and thither; the Eye of Reason is the fulcrum upon which that shifting should be based. The Eye of Sense in man is the physical and personal being, which we take to be the whole man. The Eye of Reason is a dim and darkened Eye indeed, always able to see effects everywhere, only rarely able to see causes, but knowing intuitively that for every effect there must be a cause. The Eye of Wisdom in man is that mystery of the eternities — our Self-Consciousness.

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H. P. BLAVATSKY . . . is — whether from the standpoint of her enemies or that of her friends — the most remarkable person of this century . . . She was born in Russia, and in the year 1875 caused the starting of the Theosophical Society. Ever since that date she has been the target for abuse and vilification of the vilest sort, and, sad to say for human nature, those who have received benefits from her have not given to her efforts that support which was due. But knowing her intimately, we know that she cares nothing for the abuse or the lukewarmness of theosophists, for, as declared by herself, she is not working for this century but for another yet to come, secure in the truth of Reincarnation and content if she can but sow the seeds that in another age will grow, blossom, and bear good fruit . . . We are convinced that, when the personality denominated H. P. Blavatsky shall have passed away, her pupils and her friends will acknowledge her greatness — perhaps not before.

—*The Path*, February 1890

# LONELY MUSINGS

## II

[Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, February 1886.—Eds.]

Always and always higher, from the throng  
Lawless and witless, lead his feet aright  
Life's perils and perplexities among,  
To the white centre of the sacred light.

(From E. Arnold's translation of Proclus' *Prayer to the Muses*)

IT IS a very natural and deep-seated feeling to desire by external act or repeated words to impress upon the mind the relative importance of a future life and the high wisdom of trying to realize its secrets.

All the rituals of all the religions of the world are but an exemplification of this.

The student of occultism may think that he has passed beyond these things, and that he is now in possession of a motive power that can never alter; nevertheless such aids to right thinking cannot always be put aside in the earlier stages. For indeed who does not feel the impossibility of always keeping the heart at its highest pitch of enthusiastic devotion, and the will at its maximum of determined energy? There must be moments of weariness when the heart grows despondent and the spirit droops, and when any ceremonial would be readily accepted and performed as a help to restore the dying energy.

With the knowledge that there exist in nature more subtle forces than the ordinary man is cognizant of, the student may even be tempted to fancy that there are incantations of power which might save him trouble in restoring the proper equilibrium, but he must learn that nothing can take the place of the strenuous energy of the *Will*, and that in himself alone lies the power to lift himself again to the level from which he has fallen. No! the ceremonials and incantations of those who aspire to practise Raj-yoga must all be performed within.

But various hints may be given to the student which may help him to attain the proper equilibrium and to keep it throughout the day. Such help he will find to lie in fixing the mind on the main questions of existence the first thing in the morning. Before he gets up let him thoroughly wake himself and ask himself three questions — What am I? Why do I work? How do I work? Each one will find his own words to answer these questions, but the general meaning of them will be somewhat as follows:

What am I? I am a fragment of the all-pervading Deity, entombed in the flesh, and working out through slow and painful progress its evolution towards liberation and reunion.

Why do I work? I work to reach the home from which I started — the pure state of unconditioned Being — the richer for having fulfilled my mission in the vale of tears.

How do I work? I work by striving to allow neither good nor evil fortune to disturb the perfect serenity of my soul — by detachment from all earthly desires — by keeping the ultimate goal steadfastly in view — by doing good to all sentient creatures, and so extending this sympathy and pity for all that endures life — and by using every earthly act that has to be performed, as an act of sacrifice and devotion to the Deity within.

Those unacquainted with the eastern wisdom may be apt to remark that such thoughts altogether transcend ordinary morality — and such indeed is the case. What the various exoteric religions of the world blindly grope after, Theosophy leads to with scientific accuracy, and what is commonly known by the name of “saintship” is but a step in the progress.

The student should also remember that individual, like national development, must, as Matthew Arnold puts it, proceed simultaneously along many parallel lines — to act otherwise is to produce a malproportioned nature — be it in nation or in man. In other words, to quote one of our Teachers, “the way is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life. None alone can take the disciple more than one step onwards. All steps are necessary to make up the ladder.” Of what use are devotional rhapsodies or transcendental aspirations, unless to nerve you for the work of life? The mere delight in emotion is like enjoying a view from an eminence over some beautiful country, with far away on the horizon the misty heights of the celestial mountains for which you are bound, but unless used as a stimulus to face the heat and toil of the journey across the plain, you will never reach the mountains, and the mere emotion become little better than an intellectual narcotic.

But true is it that *Bhakti*, though the last of the three gates of Perfection, is also the first, for without devotion whence can come the motive to seek for the unseen? And how can there be any true progress without the necessary prelude of an intense realization of the ultimate goal? The devotional feeling, however, must be used as a stimulus — not enjoyed as a sedative.

Similarly "*Gnana*" and "*Karma*" — knowledge and work — without the fire of "*Bhakti*," are unable singly to conduct to the Supreme. The student on either of these paths may attain felicity among the Devas, but he cannot hope to reach the stupendous heights of the all-perfected Humanity unless he develops on his upward way some germs of devotion, which, however, it is almost impossible that he should fail to do. Indeed, the truer way of stating the question will probably be that though the predominating element in every soul will attract each to a separate pathway — one to the path of Knowledge — one to the path of Work or Duty — and one to the path of Love or Devotion; yet no soul of a true disciple is entirely without the other two elements, while the union of all three in perfect equilibrium must ever be the object before the disciple's mind.

—PILGRIM

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THE EDITOR thinks it to be impossible to say anything new, and all that can be said was published centuries ago by the ancients. He also holds that nowadays there is a thirst for more, more, more articles and books, all repeating the old ideas while they pretend to be giving out original thoughts. Why not read and re-read the thoughts as given? And the reply is that it is not pleasant to take so much trouble; besides, the modern method is not the same; and, above all, we are lazy of mind as well as superficial, therefore there must be constant restatement. Give out the doctrines found in the *Upanishads* in the old form and they are scouted, but rewrite them with a modern title and it will be considered. Hence while seeing no excuse for the existence of any magazine, the Editor is forced by circumstances to continue the publication of his own, however faulty it may be.

—W. Q. JUDGE in *The Path*, June 1892

## “ISIS UNVEILED” OF PITRIS AND MEDIUMS

In Theosophical teachings the term “Spirit” is applied solely to that which *belongs directly to Universal Consciousness*, and which is its homogeneous and unadulterated emanation.

—*The Theosophical Glossary*

BESIDES treating of the “elementals” and the “elementaries,” *Isis Unveiled* mentions other categories of entities that have their habitation in the unseen universe. Among these are the “spirits” of the dear departed and the entities known as Pitris.

To say that anyone can converse with the spirits of the dead is blasphemous. The concluding verse of the *Bhagvata* states that this supreme felicity is reserved alone for the holy sannyasis, the gurus and the yogis. “Long before they finally rid themselves of their mortal envelopes, the souls who have practised only good, such as those of the sannyasis and the vanaprasthas, acquire the faculty of conversing with the souls which preceded them to the swarga” (II. 107). The spirits, or rather souls, of the departed ones will freely communicate only with those whose atmosphere is as pure as their own, and to whose prayerful invocation they can respond without the risk of defiling their own celestial purity. When the soul of the invocator has reached perfect identity of essence with the Universal Soul, when matter is utterly conquered, then the adept can freely enter into daily and hourly communion with those who, though unburdened with their corporeal forms, are still themselves progressing through the endless series of transformations included in the gradual approach to the Paramatma, or the grand Universal Soul. (II. 108)

In the regions inaccessible except to the pure and the wise are the spirits of the Pitris. They are *not*, as erroneously supposed, the ancestors of the present living men, but those of the human races which preceded ours, and were physically and spiritually far superior to our modern pigmies. The *Manava-Dharma-Shastra* calls them the “lunar ancestors.” The Pitris, then, are a distinct race of spirits belonging to the mythological hierarchy, or rather to the Kabalistical nomenclature, and must be included with the good genii, or the daemons of the Greeks. When a fakir attributes his phenomena to the Pitris, he means only what the ancient philosophers and theurgists meant when they maintained that all the “miracles” were obtained through the intervention of the gods

the elementals, who are subordinate to the power of him "who knows." (II. 107)

The doctrine of planetary and terrestrial Pitris was revealed entirely in ancient India, as well as now, only at the last moment of initiation, and to the adepts of superior degrees. Many are the *fakirs* who, though pure and honest and self-devoted, have yet never seen the astral form of a purely human *pitar* (an ancestor or father), otherwise than at the solemn moment of their first and last initiation. It is in the presence of his instructor, the guru, and just before he is despatched into the world of the living, that he is suddenly placed face to face with the unknown PRESENCE. It is when the trinity of man becomes for a few seconds a UNITY, that the candidate is allowed, at the moment of the initiation, to behold his future self. Thus we read, in the Persian *Desatir*, of the "Resplendent one"; in the Greek philosopher-initiates, of the Augoeides, the self-shining, and in the ancient chronicles, that Plotinus was united to his "god" six times during his lifetime. (II. 114-15)

A man cannot perceive, touch, and converse with pure spirit through any of his bodily senses. Spirit alone can talk to and see spirit; and even our astral soul, the *Doppelganger*, is too gross, too much tainted with earthly matter to be trusted for correct perceptions. How dangerous mediumship or passivity can be for him who would aspire to reach to the spirit, is exemplified in the case of Socrates. He was a "medium," and therefore was never initiated into the Mysteries, for such was the rigorous law. But he had his "familiar spirit," as they call it—his *aimonion*; and this invisible counsellor became the cause of his death. There was a law against the admission not only of such as were convicted of deliberate witchcraft, but even of those who were known to have a "familiar spirit." This was just because a genuine medium is more or less irresponsible; and the eccentricities of Socrates are thus accounted for in some degree. A medium must be passive; and if a firm believer in his "spirit guide," he will allow himself to be ruled by the latter, not by the rules of the sanctuary. A medium of olden times, like the modern medium, was susceptible of being entranced at the will and pleasure of the "power" which controlled him. Therefore, he was never entrusted with the awful secrets of the final initiation, "never to be revealed under the penalty of death." In unguarded moments of "spiritual inspiration," Socrates revealed that which he had never learnt; and was therefore put to death as an atheist. (II. 117-18)

Much of what is given in *Isis Unveiled* on the subject has been

reiterated verbatim in H.P.B.'s article on "Elementals," posthumously published in *Lucifer* of August 1893. On the subject of the *Pitris*, very illuminating knowledge is given in the article "Thoughts on the Elementals" (reprinted in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*), from which the following is extracted:

The *Pitris*, or our "lunar ancestors," and the communication of mortals with them, have been several times mentioned by Spiritualists as an argument that Hindoos *do* believe in, and even worship "Spirits." This is a great mistake. It is not the *Pitris* individually that were ever consulted, but their *stored wisdom* collectively; that wisdom being shown *mystically* and allegorically on the bright side of the moon....

One of the names of the moon in Sanskrit is *Soma*, which is also the name, as is well known, of the mystic drink of the Brahmins and shows the connection between the two. A "soma-drinker" attains the power of placing himself in direct *rapport* with the bright side of the moon, thus deriving inspiration from *the concentrated intellectual energy of the blessed ancestors*.... The word *Pitri* does mean, no doubt, the ancestor; but that which is invoked is the *lunar* wisdom esoterically and not the "Lunar ancestor."... If most of the Brahmanical religious ceremonies are connected with the full moon, so do the dark ceremonies of the sorcerers take place at the new moon and its last quarter.... The Sorcerer, the *Dugpa*, who always performs his hellish rites on the day of the new moon, when the benignant influence of the *Pitris* is at its lowest ebb, crystallizes some of the Satanic energy of his predecessors in evil, and turns it to his own vile ends; while the Brahman, on the other hand, pursues a corresponding benevolent course with the energy bequeathed him by his *Pitris*.... This is the true Spiritualism of which the heart and soul have been entirely missed by the modern Spiritualists.

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PER SE, the theory of evolution is not new, for every cosmogony — even the Jewish *Genesis*, for him who understands it — has it. And *Manu*, who replaces special creation with periodical revolutions or *Pralayas*, followed, many thousands of years ago, the chain of transformation from the lowest animal to the highest — man, even more comprehensively if less scientifically (in the modern sense of the word) than Haeckel.

—*The Theosophist*, December 1879

## THE CHOSEN WAY

Thou art enlightened — choose thy way.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THERE WAS something eerie in the force of the great wind that buffeted the walls of the lonely house. The roar of breakers on the near-by beach added terrifyingly to its howl. But the Scholar read on regardless, safe in his lamplit study. He was a diligent writer of erudite books, which called for a deal of research, though in so far as they dealt with the philosophy of the Good Life he felt comfortably sure that he spoke from experience.

At last a particularly violent blast caused him to lie back in his chair and listen. "Heaven pity any poor souls abroad tonight!" he murmured piously, using the word "souls" in the conventional sense which makes it a mere synonym for "persons." For, much as he valued the Good Life, he was never quite sure precisely who, or what, lived it. Was it the body, with its appetites and energies, or the mind with its powers of analysis and criticism? He hoped to reach a decision before he died by means of further studious reading. That, naturally, called for seclusion. But being the last of his family, it mattered to no one if he lived as a hermit.

What caused him to rise, he knew not. A cry? — or only a vague sensation? But on going to the window and unbarring the shutters he was confronted with a wild scene. Huge billows were swelling and crashing, the clouds scudding over them around the full moon, and even through the storm he seemed to hear a babel of anguished voices, though no ship or raft or lifeboat was visibly wrestling with the awesome sea.

Presently, but only vaguely, he did make out a host of struggling figures, who, as they drifted nearer, were suddenly caught between two giant waves, one advancing and one retreating. Next minute they had vanished in the swirl of them, and, simultaneously, the wind dropped and all was calm. The sea lay like glass before the Scholar's astonished eyes. He staggered back, closed the shutters, and sank into his chair again.

Much shaken, he sat brooding. His mind was a practical one. It was not in its nature to evoke such a vision. The awful scene, he felt, must derive from something in his reading, but as book after book arose within his memory, each in turn had to be dismissed as a likely source. Suddenly, out of forgotten years, the image of a small slim book at last

came back to him. *The Voice of the Silence!* Yes, in his youth he had been a student of Theosophy. What had deflected him from that old Path he knew not, but all too soon his feet had wandered. The little book might survive, though. It was rare for him to part with any book.

After some searching he found it, and, returning to his chair, began turning the pages in the mellow lamplight. Between two lay a silken marker. In the margin a pencil-mark indicated a passage.

The Scholar perused it.

Behold the Hosts of Souls. Watch how they hover o'er the stormy sea of human life, and how, exhausted, bleeding, broken-winged, they drop one after other on the swelling waves. Tossed by the fierce winds, chased by the gale, they drift into the eddies and disappear within the first great vortex. (p. 9)

“Poor souls!” murmured the Scholar, as he had done earlier that night, but differently now, with deeper meaning, deeper feeling, recalling the misery of the hopeless struggle he had witnessed. What had been the end of it? Extinction! And what precisely did that mean? Could souls too weak to cope unaided with “the stormy sea of human life” cease to be? The thought was a fearful one. It made him shudder. But there were priests and teachers, were there not, to aid them? His own books also must have helped many. How fortunate that he had been able to lead a life of studious seclusion and write them!

Then why, he wondered irritably, must he leave his chair and fall to pacing to and fro? Why the absurd feeling that he could have done *something* to save those visionary figures from their fate? As he passed his desk he stooped over the little long-forgotten book lying open on it, and from the stanza already read his eye travelled to the next one, which, unlike the former, bore no pencil-mark.

If through the Hall of Wisdom, thou would'st reach the Vale of Bliss, Disciple, close fast thy senses against the great dire heresy of Separateness that weans thee from the rest. (p. 9)

Separateness — not seclusion! The words seemed suddenly to change places. Was it mere chance that had brought these two passages to his notice, or was there, on this strange night, some lesson being impressed on him? He did not discredit such things. In the course of his life he had known several odd coincidences, all of which had later shown a purpose that affected him, and in every case the medium had been the printed word. The printed word had great potency. None could vouch

or that better than himself. But when the Hosts of Souls had appeared to him as drowning in the Great Vortex it was his personal help that he had felt a swift, strong impulse to render them. The printed word would have availed them nothing, he thought ironically.

The Scholar sat long in his lamplit study, as others have sat in their ivory towers. He was not a man to change his attitude to life suddenly, nor would he ever be other than a writer, giving of his best in his chosen sphere. But towards dawn he began to ask himself, need one form of service exclude the other? Need his hand abstain from kindly human contacts because its task at other times was to ply the pen? How limited, he thought, had been his outlook! How insidiously had his seclusion become separateness! "And I believed," he sighed, "that I already dwelt in the Hall of Wisdom, while apparently it still lies somewhere far ahead."

A ray of sunshine stole between the shutters. The Scholar went over and opened them. The day was fine, the sky rosy, the sea calm. After looking out, he turned to his desk, and, as was his habit before breakfast, began to put ready his paper and pen and the books of reference to which he meant to sit down immediately afterwards. But he halted, with outstretched hand, and for a few moments stood meditating. Then, with an odd smile, he closed the roll-top lid and locked it. "I am needed elsewhere, I think, today," he said aloud.

As he turned away, he noticed the little ancient book, which, retrieved from a dark cupboard, now lay open with a shaft of sunshine on the page. It was not the page he had read earlier. His sleeve must have brushed the book, turning over several together. A happy accident, he thought, scanning it. Here was his mantra as from that day forward.

"The man who does not go through his appointed work in life — has lived in vain." (p. 38)

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THE HIGHEST seat of authority is the voice of the spirit in us.

—S. RADHAKRISHNAN

## THE RELATION OF COLOUR TO THE INTERLACED TRIANGLES, OR THE PENTACLE

[The following is reprinted from *Lucifer* for February 1888. It was originally a paper read before the Chicago Branch of the Theosophical Society by its Secretary.—EDS.]

COLOUR registers grades of vibration. Vibration registers grades of life. Life, esoterically considered, is ascent towards its source—the great First Cause, the celestial sun which lights universal creation.

If a ray of white light is passed through a triangular piece of glass, called a prism, it becomes separated into the seven colours known as the “solar spectrum.” Careful scientific analysis has proven that these colours are produced by different rates of vibration.

It has shown that the slowest vibrations are red, the quickest violet. The red ray of the spectrum gives 477 millions of millions (or billions) of vibrations in a second, the orange 506, the yellow 535, the green 577, the blue 622, indigo 658, and violet 699.

Thus there is a regular ascent in the colour-scale from red to violet, and the trans-violet rays go on octaves higher, becoming invisible to the physical eye as their rates of vibration increase.

It has also been discovered that these seven prismatic rays of the solar spectrum correspond to the seven notes on the musical scale, the ray of slowest vibration, red, being a correlate of the bass note of the musical gamut, and the violet ray answering to the highest musical note.

When the vibrations exceed a certain limit, the tympanum of the ear has not time to recoil before a succeeding impulse arrives, and it remains motionless. Darkness and silence are, therefore, equivalents for the cessation of vibrations on the retina of the eye and tympanum of the ear, respectively. Incidentally it may be stated that cold is also considered to be the cessation of vibrations through the nerves of feeling.

Colour, therefore, is to light what pitch is to sound—both depend on length of vibrations.

The thought will immediately suggest itself in this connection that if colour and music are thus correlated, the perfect clairvoyant might see a concert as well as hear it. This is true and there are instances on record of such transcendent views. In one case of this kind, it was not alone a poetical play of colour springing into life under the touch of a German professor's hands, but a host of airy sprites clothed in the

various rays which called them forth.

*Isis* declares that "sounds and colours are all spiritual numerals; as the seven prismatic rays proceed from one spot in Heaven, so the seven powers of nature, each of them a number, are the seven radiations of the Unity, the central, spiritual SUN."<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to follow along the lines of these suggestions, and trace the origin of chanting the seven vowels to one of their gods, among the Egyptians, as a hymn of praise at sunrise. In the so-called mythical Golden Age this must have been the mode of putting themselves *en rapport* or *in tune* with the Cosmic powers, and ensuring harmony while the vibrations were synchronous.

The third necessary correlation to be considered in this analysis is that of form. Scientific research has proven that not only are music and colour due to rates of vibration, but form also marshals itself into objective being in obedience to the same mysterious law. This is demonstrated by the familiar experiment of placing some dry sand on a square of glass, and drawing a violin bow across the edge. Under the influence of this intonation, the sand assumes star shapes of perfect proportion; if other material is placed on the square of glass at the same time, other shapes are assumed, varying in proportion to the power resident in the atoms to *respond* to the vibrations communicated.

It is noticeable, however, that the vibration makes the spaces, and the sand falls into the *rest* places.

We have now discovered a triangular key — light, music, form — which will disclose to us the exact relations which colour sustains to the interlaced triangles, the six-rayed star, universal symbol of creative force acting upon matter.<sup>2</sup> This triangular key is simply three modes of one being, three differential expressions of one force — vibration.

That which causes the vibration, we can only represent by the Ineffable Name, behind which burns the quenchless glory of En Soph, the Boundless.

Thus, in our symbology we start from the centre of a circle, which should be represented by white light.

<sup>1</sup> *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. I, p. 514

<sup>2</sup> Hence in Kabalistic symbolism the *pentacle*, or the six-pointed star, is the sign of the manifested "Logos," or the "Heavenly man," the Tetragrammaton. "The four-lettered Adni (*Adonai*, "the Lord"), is the *Eheieh* (the symbol of *life* or existence), is the Lord of the six limbs (6 Sephiroth) and his Bride (*Malkuth*, or physical nature, also Earth) in his seventh limb." (Cf. *Book of Numbers*, viii, 3-4)—ED., *Lucifer*

The seven rays issuing therefrom, must first pass through the interior and invisible triangle of Akasa, the prism AUM, before they can flow outward, and by their action upon chaos, wheel the myriad forms of physical life into consonance with their rates of vibration. In this manner is the visible formulated from the invisible. By such subtle music is born the gorgeous flora of our tropics, drinking its wealth of colour from the yellow and warm rays of the sunlight; and in accord with the same harmony is produced the subdued vegetation of colder climes. The blue and violet beams carry the quick pulses of the parent flame deep within the earth, and by-and-by she gives back that which she has received, transformed into a thousand brilliant hues woven in the magic-loom of Love, presided over by the solar spectrum. Or, as Egyptian myth phrases it, Osiris (the sun) weds Isis (the earth), and the child, Horus-Apollo, glorifies all things as the product of this divine union.

The culmination of light resides in the yellow ray, and hence to that colour is given the East point in our symbolized centre of radiation.<sup>3</sup> The others follow in the order of the solar spectrum.

But it is noticeable in this connection, that *in* that order, the coarsest and warmest of the visible rays — red — is placed next to the coldest and most refined ray, the violet. Here we have the analogy of contraries. The ray of lowest refrangibility and the ray of highest refrangibility become next-door neighbours in the divergent circle of necessity. What is the result? It is not hard to discover, when we know that the cooling colours are essential to the balanced action of the thermal rays. "A small amount of blue when combined with other rays will even increase the heat, because it kindles into activity its opposite warm principle, red, through chemical affinity."

Having determined the law which should govern the symbology of colours at the centre of our circle, we come next to the interlaced triangles.

The truly Theosophical Pentacle should be made by the interlacing of a white triangle with a black triangle — the white representing pure spirit, the black, gross matter. This is the true symbology, for the reason that white reflects all colours, and black absorbs all colours. It is the face of the White Ancient looking into the face of the Black Ancient.

Absolute blackness appears to give back nothing; nor does it ever

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<sup>3</sup> It is the secret of the great reverence shown in the East for this colour. It is the colour of the *Yogi* dress in India, and of the *Gelupka* sect ("Yellow caps") in Thibet. It symbolizes *pure blood* and sunlight, and is called "the stream of life." Red, as its opposite is the colour of the *Dugpas*, and black magicians.—ED., *Lucifer*

ave through processes of slow evolution, wrought by continued vibration upon its molecules from the Divine Centre of Light.

Continuous vibration polarizes these particles, so that at last rising from the lowest grade of refrangibility to the highest, into the invisible octaves of being, our planetary chain in its culmination will reach a point where every atom will give an answering thrill of resonance to the throbbing of the heart of the Universe — the Central Spiritual Sun.

As every substance in Nature has its colour, so the human family publish their grades of advancement to the clairvoyant eye by their astral colours; and seekers after the true Light may know what "ray" they are in, by a comparison of their own auras with the colours of the overshadowing soul.

The middle rays of the solar spectrum — blue, green, and yellow — give a very powerful triangle, a wonderful *working* triangle of forces; for green is Hermetic silver, yellow is Hermetic gold, and blue is a despatch-messenger from the "Lord of the Worlds," Jupiter.

The blue and the yellow of this group, on account of their position — the third and the fifth reckoned both ways — have been chosen as the colours of our incense-holders, alternating on the points of the Pentacle. As odours are also correlated with colours, and as sandal-wood is the perfume which belongs to the sun, we use that incense to intensify the vibration from the radiating points, in order to increase the volume of accord which will reach other centres at a distance; for the akasa is more sensitive than an Eolian harp — it registers the very aroma of our thoughts. It was, therefore, no exaggeration of the poet when he said:

"Guard well thy thought:  
Our thoughts are *heard* in Heaven."

But if colours and sounds are spiritual numerals, then the seven symbolical points of the Pentacle represent numbers of the greatest importance in world-building, and in soul-building also. For we must all build our own souls. And the symbology of the interlacing of the triangle of spirit with the triangle of matter, finds its correspondence in man, the little world, who, though a spiritual ego, yet dwells in a physical house, and whose business it is to merge himself completely into the region of the white triangle.

When man has raised his vibrations into perfect harmony with the universal sun, he has then unbound himself from the wheel of re-birth — the Zodiac — and is ready to enter Nirvana.

The word "heaven" in Hebrew signifies the abode of the sun. When, therefore, the Nazarene said, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," he virtually declared that all the seven cosmic powers are resident within us.

Esoteric science recognizes man as a septenary working in conjunction with other orders of numerals which register divine vibrations.

All nature listens to that universal song, and the music of the spheres is no fable. The swarming zoospores in the protoplasm of plants hear it, and thrilled by that enchantment, fall into invisible rhythm, bringing up by quick marches into the region of Day the tiny dwellers in stem and leaf. How do we know that the mystery of the six-sided cell of the honey-bee may not find its solution here? Perhaps the bee is susceptible only to vibrations which fall into these lines, and faithfully obeys the master-musician in the construction of its hexagonal house. The great law of cosmic and microcosmic correspondence was revealed ages ago to the Sages who *listened*, and listening, *heard* the wondrous revelations breathed forth from the harp of Akasa. Sighing winds from other worlds passed over the delicate strings, and as they passed, uttered in soundless tones the profound mystery of near and remote planets. These Sages dwelt in that White Palace — the Lotus of the Heart — the sun-palace indeed. From centre to circumference their vast circle of vision was permeated by the reflected *All*, and from the White Palace they ascended the sacred mountain Meru, where dwelleth wisdom and love.

The key which opens the White Palace is held by the seven mystic children of the Royal Arch of the Rainbow, guarding the seven gates of the Sun, every gate of which answers to a musical note, and every note of which enfolds three tones.

Hence, if we understand the analogies of colour, we may open the six doors of Nature, and also the seventh, to Nirvana.

—M. L. BRAINARD

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WHO DESTROYS ought to rebuild; and *exact* science does nothing of the kind, at least so far as the question of the highest psychological aspirations of humanity is concerned.

—*The Theosophist*, December 1879

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

A recent statistical study indicates that changes in the earth's magnetism are a major cause of road and air accidents. For reasons scientists are unable to understand, they affect drivers and pilots who then commit errors of judgment or show poor co-ordination. (*The Times of India*, October 29)

It is admitted that magnetism is still a poorly understood force and that there are many mysteries in the magnetosphere which remain to be cleared up. The sun-earth link is of course well known, though hardly understood yet in all its complexities. Satellites were launched recently to gather more data on near-space magnetic fields, the solar "wind" (a stream of energetic particles expelled by the sun), the changes in magnetism and the relationship between the sun and global weather. Considerable importance is being given to this project and scientists from several nations are taking part in it.

Changes in pressure (as, say, experienced by an arthritic) are easily noted; they have an impact on the body. But magnetism affects also the mind and the autonomic functions and hence the behaviour. Investigators admit this, but are still in the dark as to how it happens — and will continue to be so as long as they look for purely physical causes.

Out of the numerous references to magnetism in Theosophical literature, we cull here but a few. Says *Isis Unveiled*:

*There is but one MAGNET in the universe, and from it proceeds the magnetization of everything existing. This magnet is of course what the kabalists term the central Spiritual Sun, or God. The sun, moon, planets, and stars he [Kircher] affirmed are highly magnetic; but they have become so by induction from living in the universal magnetic fluid — the Spiritual light. (I. 208-9)*

The reciprocal magnetic relations of the planetary orbs, which are all magnets, was with them [the ancients] an accepted fact. . . . By the radiant light of the universal magnetic ocean, whose electric waves bind the cosmos together, and in their ceaseless motion penetrate every atom and molecule of the boundless creation, the disciples of mesmerism — howbeit insufficient their various experiments — intuitively perceive the alpha and omega of the great mystery. Alone, the study of this agent, which is the divine breath, can unlock the secrets of psychology and physiology, of cosmical and spiritual phenomena. (I. 282)

And these are the words of a Master of Wisdom:

We know of no phenomenon in nature entirely unconnected with either magnetism or electricity.... Even simple muscular contraction is always accompanied with electric and magnetic phenomena, and there is the strongest connection between the magnetism of the earth, the changes of weather and *man*, who is the best barometer living, if he but knew how to decipher it properly.... it is the earth's magnetism that produces wind, storms, and rain....

Study magnetism with the help of occult doctrines, and then that which now will appear incomprehensible, *absurd* in the light of physical science, will become all clear.... Nature has linked all parts of her Empire together by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy, and, there is a mutual correlation even between a star and a man.

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William Gaylin, M.D., a practising psychiatrist in New York City and clinical professor of psychiatry at Columbia University Medical School, argues for the re-establishment of old-fashioned virtues and the recognition of our social responsibilities, in an article in the June *Psychology Today*:

I have heard the cry, "Let it all hang out," and I have dogmatically decided it should not. Various insupportable habits are being insinuated into the social marketplace, displacing traditional and respectable modes of conduct under the guise of improvement. It is time to redress the balance by rediscovering old-fashioned virtues. I should like to start by making a case for containment....

Your personal insights, resentments, anguishes, judgments, and tempers — the home movies of your soul — are not as irresistible to the objective viewer as you so egocentrically assume. They should never be casually foisted, untested, on even your most constant and indulgent friends.... I am referring to the raw sewage of unrefined emotion, discharged solely for purposes of expressing one's "true feelings" as a means of social exchange....

My daughter once suggested to me that vile temper was a form of public littering, and protested that she would as soon have a casual acquaintance drop a dirty Kleenex on her, as his foul language and ill humour. Why is it that often the same individual who is so strident in his advocacy of ecological purity, so determined

to protect the environment from material wastes, has an absolute compulsion to contaminate it with the spiritual droppings of his personal catharsis?

We have a responsibility not only to the social unit, which demands a certain amount of evasion, reserve, and dissembling, but also to our personal dignity to keep IT in. There is a necessary distinction between the innermost and external you. Preserve it. It is to your advantage. Besides, there is pride in self-discipline. It feels good to keep IT in. Keep IT in!

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In an article in the November *Reader's Digest* (Indian ed.), a distinguished British economist, Barbara Ward, speculates on man's future — and sees grounds for hope:

Today we in the West think very reluctantly about shortage. We are removed by many centuries from the classic summary of rational human behaviour given by Chinese philosopher Lao Tsu: "Here are my three treasures. Guard them and keep them. The first is compassion, the second frugality, the third the refusal to be foremost of all things under heaven." But these are almost precisely the treasures our thrusting societies have *not* sought. . . .

In the new debate, there is an optimistic school, which its opponents call the *techno-fixers*, and a pessimistic school, which the techno-fixers dismiss as *doomsayers*. In between lie many differences of emphasis, and varying priorities. But the broad distinction between hope and despair sets the direction of the debate. Let us look at each of these schools. . . .

Must we conclude that we are indeed living at the end of time? When one recalls that no civilization has ever achieved more than half a millennium without widespread social breakdown, when one realizes that the bandits and guerrillas of the next "interregnum" might carry plutonium bombs, it is indeed easy to foresee little but doom ahead.

Yet, there is a chance that the techno-fixers and the doomsayers are both wrong and both right — that the risks are enormous but answers are possible. . . .

Every risk of the doomsayers is a real risk, and demands full attention, and commitment to justice on a planetary scale, and a wholly new realization of the limits to exploitation and degradation that our air, soil, and water can sustain.

Is humanity capable of these larger visions? It is all too easy to dismiss the discipline and rationality needed as much too tall an order. Yet there are two reasons for believing that such pessimism is out of place.

The first is that underneath the apparent uniformity of break-neck urbanization and spreading technology, another range of options and ideals have started to form. Almost without being aware of it, the whole human family has started to discuss the humble, necessary foundations of its daily life. Only a decade ago the voices urging conservation and careful use could hardly be heard. Now they are listened to and respected. . . . Today we are in an altogether more serious world in which, even if prudence, thrift, and respect for life have not won all their battles, they are at least back in the lists, and it is the advocates of unlimited consumption and careless growth who wear a defensive look.

The second reason is simply that the questions of survival *are* being asked. If fear is the beginning of wisdom, then even the most fanatical ideologues or bloodthirsty nation-firsters may reflect that neither they, their cause, nor their enemies will survive an all-out nuclear conflict. And from this negative wisdom could grow the positive understanding that the risk of war can be offset only by embarking, patiently, unswervingly, devotedly on the concrete and co-operative tasks of peace.

Too vast a dream? Too naive a hope? Perhaps — yet our knowledge is worldwide. Our airs and oceans are equally shared. So are all the preconditions of material existence. If man has learnt to be loyal to his nation as well as to his family and his town, do we have to argue that no further extension of loyalty is possible — to the planet itself which carries our earthly life and all the means of sustaining it?

Civilizations are usually ended by sleepwalkers, acting out the nightmare to the end. There are undoubtedly sleepwalkers around. But there has probably never been a time when the risks and evils of society have been admitted and examined with such openness and objectivity. "The sleep of reason produces monsters." Possibly — but reason is now awake and analysing the monsters down to the last wishbone. This concern, this passionate re-examination, is the best guarantee that, in contradiction to the despairing cry of the New Testament prophet, we can rationally hope for delivery "from the wrath to come."