

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life

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THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA) PRIVATE LTD.  
40 New Marine Lines, Bombay 400 020, India

## Publisher's Announcements

**THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT:** Established November, 1930. Published monthly by Theosophy Company (India) Private Ltd., 40 New Marine Lines, Bombay 400 020, India.

This Magazine is an Independent Journal, unconnected with any theosophical society or other organization. The publishers assume full responsibility for all unsigned articles herein.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** No subscriptions are accepted for less than one year of 12 numbers, each beginning with the November issue. All subscriptions should be accompanied by the necessary remittance. Price, Rs. 21.00 £3.50, \$11.00 per annum, post free.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with wide margins, and addressed to the Editors. Copies should in all cases be retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Letters from subscribers and readers are welcomed, with criticisms, comments or questions on any subject treated in the Magazine. Questions on Theosophical philosophy and history will be replied to direct, or, if of sufficient general interest, in the pages of the Magazine.

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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Vol. 57, No. 2

December 1986

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### BUILDERS OF TOMORROW

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, May 1941.]

Do you want to do more than your best? Do you covet the work of another? No; you do not. You will sit calmly where you are, then, and, with an unaffected heart, picture to yourself the moral and physical deaths and famines which are now without the possibility of prevention or amelioration. Your faith will know that *all* is provided for.

—W. Q. JUDGE

A WAVE of sadness sweeps over us whenever we ponder over the miseries and sorrows, both mental and physical, that our fellow human beings are subjected to. Our sense of love and of fraternity suffers.

There have always been famines, cataclysms, epidemics, the violence and the extent of some of which have even influenced the course of history and thrown the karmic dice that have changed the face of one nation—or several—for centuries. Yet wars bring the horrors of the trials of humanity more blatantly to our doors. Why? Because in them is epitomized the activity of our own lower selves; and the causes of the passion which blinds so many human beings, driving them to madness, are exposed to sight with a vengeance. Is that all we have achieved during these millenniums in which we have written our destiny? What have we done with the gifts of the Gods?

Every human sigh echoes in our very souls; we feel ashamed of what we have. We feel ashamed to have done, and to do so little; and how trivial is our share even in thought while humanity groans under sin, despair, ignorance and pride! We are downcast and confused, for we do not know how to make any real effort to

bring relief. Yet in our very despondency lies the urge which makes us arise and search, so ingrained in the human soul is hope. It is in the hour of failure that hope comes to our rescue. When Hanuman was in despair because he had failed to find any trace of Sita in the palace of Ravana, he thought, "Hope is the source of good fortune. Hope causes the highest happiness. Indeed hope impels one always in all quests." And "thus pondering, he began once again to search for her." That hope is born of the knowledge, however vague, that somewhere Truth and Justice exist and that they will finally prevail. The quest begins without; it ends within; and when the Truth has been touched within, it will radiate forth as a circle of Light that will attract other searchers from the Darkness and set them on their own journeys.

Let us turn to the quotation given at the beginning of this article. What does Mr. Judge mean when he says that we have to picture to ourselves with an unaffected heart all the moral and physical deaths and famines which are now without the possibility of prevention or amelioration?

That our hearts should become hard, dry, analytic? Not at all. Mr. Judge himself indicates this as we read on. And the whole Philosophy gives us very clear indications that our hearts must become as sweet as the pulp of the mango to others, as hard as its stone to ourselves. In *Light on the Path* we are told that as we enter the Path our natures feel and react with much more sensitiveness than before to all that is going on. Buddha traced the Way of Love, as did the Great Brothers before and after Him. They taught that the way of all victories is Love; and that the only real peace is enclosed in Love's fruit; for, to practise Love and Charity, one has to learn how to bear much from one's fellow-men, how to forget and forgive. And Compassion being the Law of Laws, we *must* learn how to extract from the mighty Root the essence of all understanding. To do that we need *dispassion, understanding and faith*.

We must first of all appraise our position at its right value, dispassionately. "Do you want to do more than your best? Do you covet the work of another?" asks Mr. Judge. Our work is right where Karma has placed us and we cannot do more than our best—a best which ought to cover thought, feeling and deed. Moreover, outside of the evolution of our soul in its essence under the laws of Space, Causation, Time, or Ideation, Motive, Work, what are *we*? A passing spark rolled in and out of the Impersonal Furnace, where all that is of the transitory is burnt and destroyed; and that includes much that we treasure and think important. If

we can understand this even partially, we begin to look at things from a different angle, and we learn how to unfold a dispassionate view of the questions in hand, free from the colouring touch of personal feeling. Furthermore, we cannot but see how close we are to all the fragments of Humanity, be they sane or insane, saint or criminal, for all are reflected in the Soul.

So we have to come to the *understanding* of each of the fragments which constitute our collective humanity. And for that understanding to develop on a right basis, we need to gain knowledge and to practise *enlightened* love. Without knowledge we would become over-indulgent or too strict; without clear love, over-hard or too tender; and extremes are the walls of the Rajasika regions within which we are enclosed. With understanding, knowledge will build in us strength and love. Both of these allied will make of our thought a potent force which, joining others of a similar kind, will enable us to help, apparently "without even lifting a finger." And perhaps the deed we wish to accomplish will become materialized through another. To obtain such results it is not necessary to hypnotize oneself in extreme penance or contemplation, but simply to live, love and labour where one is, with gentleness of heart, simplicity of mind and frugality of feelings in regard to oneself. Right where we are we too may meet war in the feelings of others, but we can win that war through pity, love, and the knowledge that the ill-disposed ones will *in time* see the truth and give way under its inner pressure. As Lao-Tze has expressed it:

Who is there that can make muddy water clear? But if allowed to remain still, it will gradually become clear of itself. Who is there that can secure a state of absolute repose? But let time go on, and the state of repose will gradually arise.

In H.P.B.'s article, "Chelas and Lay-Chelas," one of the conditions required in the disciple is given as:

...unswerving faith in the law of Karma, independent of any power in nature that could interfere: a law whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies.

If our *faith* in Karma is based only on what we have studied intellectually, it will not be able to stand the shocks of certain revelations brought about by drastic events. Unless we have followed the web of Karma up to a certain point in our life and in the lives of others; in individuals and in their work in the history of mankind; in the small event which may take an un-

expected shape and crumble to pieces the strongest scheme; in the action and reaction between the furthest star and our earth, so that we get truly convinced that the Law is unerring, appearances notwithstanding, we shall be shaken by emotion, and despair will make us shudder and recoil. But we can make the Great Law part of our being each time our intuition lights up the correlation of events, however small.

Better still, each time we have suffered bitterly, been humiliated, met injustice and calumny, felt the pang of loss, been powerless when we have wanted to give, been chained and hammered in our hearts, remorseful for actions committed, we touch the living fire of Karma; and if we know how to extract the lesson we become to that extent more familiar with the Great Power in which we move and act. We can no more sit back and say, "This is the Karma of the world or of So-and-so," for we know that their Karma is our own, too, because we form one indivisible whole. Our heart learns to vibrate with compassion towards the wicked, the downtrodden, the proud, the fool, the dictator, and from each of them our minds will receive precious living lessons in Karmic lore.

Our faith will deepen and expand, will work with the event, good or bad, to make it yield its meaning, and will sweeten its results by the philosophical acceptance of it.

The worst event that clouds our vision for a while is but a *passing* cloud that Time will devour in its turn. H.P.B. says in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 418:

Chronos cuts down with his scythe even the longest and (to us) seemingly endless cycles, yet, for all that, limited in Eternity, and puts down with the same scythe the mightiest rebels. Aye, not one will escape the scythe of Time! Praise the god or gods, or flout, one or both, and that scythe will not be made to tremble one millionth of a second in its ascending or descending course.

We have, then, to work heart and soul with our times and to face fearlessly their results and the openings they offer; karmically, they are those fitted to give us a better understanding of others—which ultimately spells better service. Instead of installing Karma as a relentless Law, we shall discover its compensating justice, its opportunities often hidden under trifles or pains, and the great majestic sweep of its metaphysical aspect which is the Train of Duration.

Out of the suffering which sweeps mankind may come some chastisement of souls and hearts, which will break down the walls of the Rajasika regions, and bring people to profit by the

Light of Sattva to clean up the mess they have made of their lives. On the sites of the many slums destroyed, better quarters may be built. Out of the conceit crushed, a spirit of humbleness and appreciation may be born. Out of the blood and the sacrifice of the many, some respect for the life of others may be formed which in turn may lead to the realization of Universal Brotherhood.

Will the workers be ready to serve in the long lean years and the upheavals that will follow in the track of struggles and wars, and prepare the field for a new great Awakening? That is our task in and on ourselves, while the battles rage outwardly. To employ thought for reconstruction, to open the mind to justice and the heart to Brotherhood in both its inner and outward sense—this is to be the fruit of *Faith*.

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WE believe we can contribute something essential towards the understanding of life. We nevertheless remain aware that with this procedure, we can grasp only a section of reality, not the whole reality of life. This is predetermined by our choice of methods, and is true of every one of them. If we use the methods of chemistry to answer some question we may encounter, we can expect an answer only within the realm of chemical processes. If one defines life as chemical movement, the definition already embodies an abstraction such as all scientific reflection must make, and the resulting image naturally excludes all personal values associated with individual life.

If we wish to comprehend the whole of reality, the phenomena of life as a whole, the only course left to us is to integrate the numerous separate results which can be obtained by the various methods of the sciences and humanities. Each discipline of knowledge makes its own contribution towards the overall image of life, none is dispensable, and all of them are continually progressing together.

—ADOLF BUTENANDT

## THE FUNDAMENTAL TENETS OF CHRISTIANITY AND THEOSOPHY

[Reprinted from *The Theosophist*, July 1884]

MUCH interest has of late been exhibited in European as well as Asiatic newspapers, especially in the *Madras Mail*, in regard to the subject of Theosophy in its relation to Christianity. Clergymen have delivered lectures on Theosophy, and their lectures exhibited a deplorable want of information about the subject on which they lectured. Learned correspondents displayed great skill in asking, in the space of a few lines, many more questions than could be satisfactorily explained in so many columns, and when in the course of the controversy we attempted to demonstrate that an arbitrary forgiveness of sins was an impossibility and an injustice, our adversaries charged us with an intention to overthrow the fundamental doctrines of "Christianity." They declared that such an attack on Christianity would "hurt their feelings," they threw up the sponge, sounded the bugle for retreat, and would listen no longer.

We argued that Theosophy is not opposed to *true Christianity*, but only to that which is false in the *Christian doctrines*, and we attempted to prove that many of the Christian doctrines are false or misunderstood; but it is impossible to argue the question without coming into antagonistic contact with the feelings of those whose emotional natures cling to these doctrines by force of education and habit. New ideas and new truths are not borne into the mind without pain. Those would-be investigators, who prefer the sweet dreams of old superstitions to a painful revelation of glorious truths, cannot investigate properly and must be contented to wait until sooner or later their minds ripen to understanding and their eyes are opened to see the light that has already dawned around them.

The age of superstition is passing away and the age of reason advances. Old superstitions and fetishes are laid away amongst the rubbish of the past, and we bestow a pitying glance upon the playthings which helped to amuse us in our youth, but which now have become useless. A religious system based upon ignorance can exist no longer, and unless it is followed by a religion based upon reason, its destruction will be followed by irreligion, materialism and spiritual death.

The civilized world is teeming with journals exposing the fallacies and absurdities of many of the Christian doctrines; they

treat us *ad nauseam* to an endless repetition of childish Bible-stories by dishing them up in their exoteric sense; while they apparently do not even suspect that an esoteric sense is hidden behind; and that the Bible, no less than the tales of "Thousand and one nights," contains great truths, if we only know where to look for them. The apostles of materialism express their disgust at those fables and the public applaud them; but those apostles have only come to destroy, they do not build; they have nothing better to offer, and the public that applauded them, standing before the unbridged gulf of dark materialism, recoils in horror and clings again to its weakened creeds.

*Christian Theology* says: "You must believe the stories of our bible, no matter how impossible they may appear to you."

*Materialism* says: "The stories told in the bible are unreasonable, absurd and ridiculous, and he who believes them is a fool."

*Theosophy* says: "Many of the bible-stories are purposely made absurd, so that no one should take them in their literal sense. We must try to understand their esoteric meaning, and we shall then find many important truths hidden in them."

*Christian Theology* says: "We believe that there is an old bridge somewhere, which spans the gulf that separates time from eternity. It is said that our forefathers have passed over that bridge, although none of them has returned; its material may be rotten, but in want of anything better we must trust to it."

*Materialism* says: "Fool! There is no such bridge. We all shall have to jump into the chasm and we can do nothing better than to resign ourselves to our fate."

*Theosophy* says: "The gulf is of your own creation. No bridge is necessary, because you have wings to fly over it, and it is only fear that holds you back. Spread the wings of your soul and trust to your powers and you will be safe."

*The Christian doctrine* says: "God is a loving father. He created the heaven and the earth out of nothing; he made Adam out of a piece of clay and Eve out of one of Adam's ribs. He is the engineer who turns the wheel of the world and he can make it go or stop it as he pleases."

*Materialism* says: "Nonsense! Everything that exists is ruled by blind laws, and these blind laws have come into existence by chance. If other conditions had prevailed, other laws would have been the result. There is no intelligence in nature. Man developed out of a monkey and the monkey out of protoplasm."

*Theosophy* says: "The whole universe is God. It evolved out of itself and by its own divine will; being itself the supreme, infinite

and incomprehensible source of all wisdom, power and intelligence. The laws of nature must be unchangeable because they are perfect and just; and although man's present form is a result of his evolution from inferior forms, his physical evolution is accompanied by a corresponding spiritual evolution, in which also the law of the 'survival of the fittest' prevails. It says that primordial man before his descent into matter was bisexual, and that the allegory of Adam and Eve hides a great truth, which is also found in the sacred books of the most ancient religions."

*Christian Theology* says: "Jesus Christ is our personal saviour, who can save whomsoever he pleases, if we only believe in him."

*Materialism* says: "Jesus Christ has never existed and can therefore not save you. Historical evidence proves this."

*Theosophy* says: "Christ is a principle which exists within you, and you must save yourself by clinging to that higher principle and by crucifying your lower passions and animal desires. This Christ-principle has never died and is the only thing in us which is immortal. If we separate ourselves from that principle by following the attractions of matter, we shall surely (spiritually) die; but if we assimilate ourselves with it, we shall become immortal."

*Christian Theology* says: "You must pray loud enough so that God will hear you, and you must pray with skill so as to persuade him to do as you please."

*Materialism* says: "Your God is a creation of your own imagination and no amount of shouting will have any effect on him; he cannot hear you, because he does not exist."

*Theosophy* says: "You are Gods yourselves, and it is in your own power to grant your own prayers. The right way to pray is to act. Matter clings to you only so long as you cling to matter, and it depends on your own efforts to become free."

*Christian Theology* says: "You must do right, because that pleases God and he will reward you; but if you act wrongly the devil will catch and punish you."

*Materialism* says: "Individual happiness is the highest object of life, and we must do all we can to obtain that happiness while we live; but we must be careful by doing so not to interfere with the rights of others, because the police constable might catch us and then our happiness would come to a premature end."

*Theosophy* says: "Man as such has no permanent individual existence and cannot injure another without injuring himself. Selfishness is the greatest evil, and we cannot benefit ourselves except by benefiting others; because we are all only inherent parts

of one universal whole.”

*Christian Theology* says: “Never mind, if you happen to do wrong your sins will be forgiven you, provided you repent and ask God to forgive them.”

*Materialism* says: “The ideas of right and wrong are only results of our education. What is considered wrong in one country may be called right in another. If our conscience suffers in consequence of having acted wrongly, it is only because we imagine such acts to be wrong; if we imagined them to be right, we would be proud of them.”

*Theosophy* says: “A sin can be outgrown but cannot be forgiven. The law of justice is eternal and cannot be changed, and every act, whether good or evil, has its corresponding good or evil consequences. A man may forgive an injustice done to him, because the magnitude of that injustice depends entirely on his own estimation of the same; human law may be changed according to the persuasiveness or the cunning of a lawyer, the sympathies of a jury or the partiality of a judge; but moral law is unchangeable, because it is eternal.”

*Christian Theology* says: “This is the time of grace; after this life is over, everlasting joy or endless misery awaits you.”

*Materialism* says: “Nothing awaits you and there is no life after death.”

*Theosophy* says: “As night and day, labour and rest follow each other in succession, so follow one upon another the different states of existence. There is no death for the spirit but only a period of rest and subjective enjoyment of his merits, after which a new and objective life begins. One life is too short for the evolution of a perfect man; but nature is not stingy and has provided for us by the law of reincarnation.”

*The Christian* says: “Oh Lord! save *my* soul and the souls of the men and women that belong to my church, but destroy our enemies.”

*The Materialist* says: “We have no souls; but it is advisable that we should live together in peace, because that will be more comfortable for all.”

*Theosophy* says: “All men have from nature equal and sacred rights, but all men are not equals. We all are members of one family, and it is the duty of those that are higher to assist to raise those that are lower. Selfishness is the root from which grows all evil, and whatever we do should be done for the benefit of the universal brotherhood of humanity.”

But it will be said: “If you take away all these doctrines from

Christianity, what will there be left?"

We answer: "The truth will be left. If you understand the symbolical teachings of Christianity, you will see that we have taken away none of them; but that they are essentially the same as the teachings of Theosophy. We have destroyed nothing but error, because truth is eternal and cannot be destroyed. There can be only one truth and consequently only one religion, because there is no religion higher than truth."

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FOOLS when they do hear are like the deaf; of them does the proverb bear witness that they are absent when present.

Eyes and ears are bad witnesses to men, if they have souls that understand not their language.

The many have not as many thoughts as the things they meet with; nor, if they do remark them, do they understand them, though they believe they do.

If you do not expect the unexpected, you will not find it; for it is hard to be sought out and difficult.

Those who seek for gold dig up much earth and find a little.

Wisdom is one thing. It is to know the thought by which all things are steered through all things.

You cannot step twice into the same rivers; for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.

Men do not know how that which is drawn in different directions harmonizes with itself. The harmonious structure of the world depends upon opposite tension, like that of the bow and the lyre.

It is opposition that brings things together.

The hidden harmony is better than the open.

You must couple together things whole and things not whole, what is drawn together and what is drawn asunder, the harmonious and the discordant. The one is made up of all things, and all things issue from the one.

Men would not have known the name of justice if there were no injustice.

It is hard to fight with desire. Whatever it wishes to get, it purchases at the cost of soul.

—HERACLITUS

## THE BHAGAVAD-GITA AND COSMOGENESIS

The *Bhagavad-Gita*...can be read in many different ways, each depending on the viewpoint taken, *e.g.*, whether it is considered in its application to the individual, or to cosmogenesis, or to the evolution of the Astral world, or the Hierarchies in Nature, or to the moral nature, and so on.

—W. Q. JUDGE: *The Bhagavad-Gita*, “Antecedent Words”

THE “psychological system of the Hindus” is said to underlie every word of the poem. Man, in his nobler aspirations, is also said to be continually imitating the higher spiritual planes. In his essence, man is God, is the real perceiver, the Self, the final support of every phase of consciousness. The Self eternally persists and is always unmodified. Further, this inner Self is ready to help the outer man to grasp after it, and the noble pursuit of the great philosophical and moral truths is our eternal endeavour to realize them as a part of our being.

Considering the *Gita* from the viewpoint of cosmogenesis, the first principle to grasp is that the substratum, or support, for the whole Cosmos is the presiding Spirit; and all the various changes in life, whether of a material nature or solely in mental states, are cognizable because the presiding Spirit within is not modifiable. “*Purusha* is the aspect of the individual Spirit in every human breast; it is the cause of our experiencing pain and pleasure through the connection with nature found in the body.... *Purusha* is the persisting individuality which connects all reincarnations, as if it were the thread, and has hence been called the ‘thread Soul’ ” (*Gita*, p. 96 fn).<sup>1</sup> This gives us our sense of continuing identity, and the basis of our kinship with all human beings and with all other beings in evolution. On a clear understanding of this universal, fundamental *base* will rest the understanding of the *Gita* and such practical and moral applications as we may make to our own lives.

Cosmogenesis cannot, then, be separated from anthropogenesis. The man-stage in evolution is that point at which Matter, on the ascending arc of developing consciousness, and Spirit, on the descending arc of sacrifice, meet, blend and illuminate one another. Spirit, Matter and Mind are three inseparable components of evolution; but, above, and so to say separate, from them is the Supreme Spirit, personified by Krishna in the poem: the perfected

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<sup>1</sup> All page references are to William Q. Judge's rendition of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

Sage, once a man, now a Divine Personage. "The spirit in the body is called *Maheshwara*, the Great Lord, the spectator, the admonisher, the sustainer, the enjoyer, and also the *Paramatma*, the highest soul" (p. 96). "He who seeth the Supreme Being existing alike imperishable in all perishable things, sees indeed" (p. 97). The implications of this philosophy are that evolution is universal and eternal. Its root is found in "the indestructible, unprovable Spirit. . . for it is without birth and meeteth not death; it is ancient, constant, and eternal. . . universal, permanent, immovable. . . invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable" (pp. 12-13). This is a side of Nature which describes the Spirit, using speech and mind images to give some understanding of its metaphysical character.

One may begin to wonder about the *why* of manifestation and evolution, if these attributes of "Spirit" are those that we choose as our ideals, as goals to pursue, first with study, and then with practice in daily life. For this reason, cosmogenesis has to be understood. We are, all of us, and all the rest of manifested Nature, visible and invisible, *in* evolution. This is one fact that cannot be done away with. Since we are here, we must have come from somewhere. Since we have faculties, talents, inclinations, and the reverse, these must have been developed earlier through life-experiences. To give us this sense of history, the *Gita* draws our attention, first to the life-giver, the Sun, Vivaswat, which is at the centre of our system (p. 30). Krishna as the Supreme Spirit, as an Avatara, is the "Great Sacrifice" who constitutes himself, under Law, the Guru and Teacher of the beings now evolving.

Cosmogenesis concerns problems and areas far vaster than our mere solar system; but, to us with our limitations, our own solar system is vast enough to begin with; so Krishna as the *Verbum-Logos* sets Vivaswat, the Sun, into its course at the time of a new manifestation and establishes its laws, as is also done for every other being of the system. The Sun thus represents not only life physical, but also life spiritual—the first manifestation of divine wisdom at the beginning of evolution. In turn, Vivaswat taught Manu—a generic title for the reigning spirit of the sensuous universe, the present one being Vaivaswata Manu. The poem proceeds, in the words of Krishna, to explain to Arjuna the progression, in a hierarchical manner, of teaching and education: "Manu made it [this exhaustless doctrine of Yoga] known unto Ikshwaku [the founder of the Indian solar dynasty]; and being thus transmitted from one unto another it was studied by the Rajarshees [Royal Sages], until at length in the course of time

the mighty art was lost. . .” (p. 30). This sweep, in brief, of the history of true philosophy can be seen in analogy in the history and mythology of all the great world religions and cultures.

Arjuna is puzzled about Krishna having been “in the beginning” the teacher of Manu, Ikshwaku, and others; and Krishna then expounds the doctrine of reincarnation: “Both I and thou have passed through many births. . . . I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness” (p. 31). He shows Arjuna the fundamental law of the universe—the permanent Spirit manifesting eternally through many vehicles of matter, and evolution of consciousness producing the various “qualities”: *Sattva*—truth and goodness, *Rajas*—activity and passion, and *Tamas*—inertia and laziness; also the four “castes” among men, which are the result of their own self-induced evolution, choices made by each man-mind over many lives. (p. 32)

To understand further cosmogenesis as explained in the *Gita*: Krishna tells Arjuna that true evolution is only achieved through dispassion and the observance of the law of brotherhood in daily living. True devotion is the putting away of all self-interest. He speaks of the “Lord of the world” (p. 40), lord over “illuminated sages. . . devoted to the good of all creatures” (p. 42); and indicates that all that is done by anyone is left as an imprint on life, nature and the inner being of everyone. Devotion to the good of all creatures, he says, leads to becoming acquainted with the true Self. At the end of the seventh chapter, Krishna indicates that such a discipline will lead the devotee to an understanding of the cosmogenesis of the Hindus, and the next chapter explains it.

The whole Universe is boundless and ageless and is termed “Brahman,” the exhaustless, the causeless-cause and the rootless-root of ALL—the “OM.” “Adhyatma” is the eternal pilgrim, the individual Self in each one. “Karma” is the eternal, unswerving Law of the Cosmos—Spirit in action in every part of the manifested universe. “Adhibhuta” is the basis of all things, the Spirit dwelling in all mutable forms of nature. The Spiritual Person, Purusha, is the man become perfected, and is called “Adhidaivata.” And, finally, Krishna as an Avatara, an embodied Sage, using the rarefied matter that he has transmuted into a body that he can use at the high stage of evolution, is called the “Adhiyajna,” the Great Sacrifice (pp. 58-59). These verses at the beginning of the eighth chapter describe the whole process whereby the Supreme, the ONE, becomes the conditioned, and from the conditioned state merges again in the ONE. It is the cycle of sacrifice:

the Supreme Brahman sacrifices Itself in the first instance and ultimately the individual sacrifices himself to be merged in the original Essence.

In the seventh chapter of the poem, Krishna tells Arjuna about the divisions of the universe. He says: "I am the cause, I am the production and the dissolution of the whole universe. . . . Earth, water, fire, air, and akasa, Manas, Buddhi, and Ahankara is the eightfold division of my nature. It is inferior; know that my superior nature is different and is the knower. . ." (p. 53). He indicates that the cause of any error lies in "the delusion of the opposites which springs from liking and disliking" (p. 56). This is the result of the original polarization of Spirit and Matter that commences the sweep of evolution. The ONE issues from the unknown as light, sound and life. It becomes the TWO: Spirit and Matter (form), united always by the thread of Mind, Manas or Consciousness; thus forming the primordial THREE, the triangle of all existence. From these three come all differentiations. Krishna calls this "my divine mystery: myself causing things to exist and supporting them all but dwelling not in them." (p. 64)

Duration involves immense periods of time; the field of evolution includes the beginning and the end of worlds, systems of worlds and galaxies. Krishna says: "Understand that all things are in me even as the mighty air which passes everywhere is in space. . . . at the end of a Kalpa [an age or a cycle of time] all things return into my nature, and then again at the beginning of another Kalpa I cause them to evolve again. Taking control of my own nature I emanate again and again this whole assemblage of beings, without their will, by the power of the material essence (*prakriti*)" (pp. 64-65). Without the prior concept of the Great Sacrifice of the Sage, the "material essence" referred to here may go unnoticed. All progress resulting ultimately in conscious immortality for the Man-mind is conditional and predicated on his own efforts to emerge from the local confines of his selfish kamic sphere, and widen out to the life and light of the universe in which he lives, and, with his mind, penetrate to the kernel of matter in search of the soul of ALL that is there. This advance is not selfish or limited to his good alone, for he draws a whole host of "lives" with him, and to them represents the acme of their developing self-consciousness.

Speaking again to Arjuna of the beginnings of evolution, Krishna indicates that He, as "the mighty Ruler of the universe and without birth or beginning" (p. 70), is the source of all perfection, ideals and aspirations. From Him came "the seven

great Sages and the four Manus" who are of His nature and were born of His mind, and from them sprang this world (pp. 70-71). Chapters X and XI in the *Gita* indicate all the chief perfections and the ideals that this universe of experience offers as objects to be meditated upon by the aspirant, who thus is encouraged to emulate those who have preceded him on the path to the Supreme. This spiritual vision of the Vishvarupa (the form of the Universe) gives Arjuna an inkling of what "the Supreme Spirit of this universe" (p. 81) includes. Krishna declares that he is "Time matured" (p. 83), indicating that all cycles and forces find their field and culmination in His compass. Duration and the fraction of a second are all matters of awareness. Nothing is inconsequential or too small in the eyes and the Consciousness of the ALL.

The process of reappearance and rebirth, then, is a universal one, in which the *real* man, as the microcosm of the macrocosm, fulfils his karmic function. In general this is a work whereby "the man within strives to raise the whole mass of physical substance up to a higher level and to inform it all with a larger measure of spiritual influence" (*Ocean*, p. 44). In the eighth chapter of the *Gita*, Krishna tells Arjuna:

All worlds up to that of Brahman are subject to rebirth again and again, but they...who reach to me have no rebirth. Those who are acquainted with day and night know that the day of Brahma is a thousand revolutions of the yugas and that his night extendeth for a thousand more. At the coming on of that day all things issue forth from the unmanifested into manifestation, so on the approach of that night they merge again into the unmanifested...But there is that which upon the dissolution of all things else is not destroyed; it is indivisible, indestructible, and of another nature from the visible. That called the unmanifested and exhaustless is called the supreme goal, which having once attained they never more return—it is my supreme abode. (pp. 60-61)

In another place, Krishna indicates that the goal of man's efforts to perfect himself "is the Primeval Spirit from which floweth the never-ending stream of conditioned existence" (p. 106). And here is a great mystery: How can the Spirit of the universe involve itself in evolution if It is separate and apart? It is explained by Krishna a little later in the *Gita*:

It is even a portion of myself which, having assumed life in this world of conditioned existence, draweth together the five senses and the mind in order that it may obtain a body and may leave it again. And those are carried by the Sovereign Lord to

and from whatever body he enters or quits. . . . I enter the earth supporting all living things by my power, and I am that property of sap which is taste, nourishing all the herbs and plants of the field. Becoming the internal fire of the living, I associate with the upward and downward breathing, and cause the four kinds of food to digest. I am in the hearts of all men and from me come memory, knowledge, and also the loss of both. . . . As I am above the divisible and also superior to the indivisible, therefore both in the world and in the *Vedas* am I known as the Supreme Spirit. (pp. 106-8)

It is difficult to study the marvellous ideas contained in the *Bhagavad-Gita*—on evolution, the spiritual essence, the relationship of each man to himself, to his brothers, to Nature and all its creatures—without beginning to see that we are all Arjunas, and that Krishna is our own Higher Self, not apart from, but within our own hearts. We see and know that we have to contend with some aspects of nature which at present seem to hinder us, and we begin to understand that we have in the past made choices that now have resulted under Law in pain and sorrow for ourselves. “The hands that smite us are our own.” We learn that we can develop a true faith—in the Higher Self, in our own evolution, in Nature, which through a wider understanding we can see is made up of life-atoms, each potentially man in the far distant future, and that we can assist in their development, just as those we now look upon as Teachers have sacrificed to assist in our current evolutionary struggle. “OM TAT SAT, these are said to be the threefold designation of the Supreme Being” (p. 119). They contain a benediction, an affirmation and a promise. Used as a focus for meditation even while engaged in life’s duties, one thinks of OM as the Universe controlled by the Supreme Spirit; of TAT as representing the highest in the aspirant, his Higher Self; and of SAT as that universal consciousness of and in the WHOLE, the ALL, which marks the culmination of the ladder of all evolution. A fundamental truism is that each one makes independent choices, always; and so Krishna closes his discourse with the injunction: “Act as seemeth best unto thee” (p. 131), which, as free choice, represents the only way that man harmonizes with Nature’s laws and purposes.

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## THE PHOENIX ASCENDING

### II.—Dynamics of Transformation

Can you imagine the phoenix  
arising from the ashes yet not flying off?  
We have form only momentarily,  
but it blinds us.  
How can we all be conscious at the same time  
yet separately?  
Copper in the alchemist's forge  
loses its copper qualities.  
Seeds in springtime sprout into trees  
and are seeds no more.  
Brushwood placed on the fire is transformed.  
The snow-world melts away.  
You step on my footprint and it vanishes.

—JALAL-UD-DIN RUMI

IS not the process whereby the food that we eat is built up into living matter a marvel? Here is an alchemy going on all the time in all that lives and breathes, and we take this miracle in our stride. The transmutation of base metals into gold was regarded as an insane dream of the alchemists. However much they were derided, modern chemistry owes its best fundamental discoveries to alchemy. And Madame Blavatsky prophesied that "chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths." She added:

Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle—whether you call it organic or inorganic—*is a life*. Every atom and molecule in the Universe is both *life-giving* and *death-giving* to that form, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation universes and the ephemeral vehicles. . . and as eternally destroys and changes the *forms* and expels those souls from their temporary abodes. It creates and kills; it is self-generating and self-destroying; it brings into being, and annihilates, that mystery of mysteries—the *living body* of man, animal, or plant, every second in time and space; and it generates equally life and death, beauty and ugliness, good and bad, and even the agreeable and disagreeable, the beneficent

and maleficent sensations. It is that mysterious LIFE, represented collectively by countless myriads of lives. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 261)

This is plain, nonetheless occult chemistry, to which Madame Blavatsky relates the alchemy of mediaeval times—a spiritual transmutation as far as man is concerned:

No doubt that there is such a thing in Nature as transmutation of the baser metals into the nobler, or gold. But this is only one aspect of alchemy, the terrestrial or purely material, for we sense logically the same process taking place in the bowels of the earth. Yet, besides and beyond this interpretation, there is in alchemy a symbolical meaning, purely psychic and spiritual. While the Kabbalist-Alchemist seeks for the realization of the former, the Occultist-Alchemist, spurning the gold of the mines, gives all his attention and directs his efforts only towards the transmutation of the baser *quaternary* into the divine upper *trinity* of man, which when finally blended are one. (*The Theosophical Glossary*: “Alchemy”)

This higher human alchemy has been taught by all Sages, Saints, Adepts, Masters down the ages, who have advocated purity of thought, word and deed and a complete detachment of the mind from transitory things by the practice of the six treasures or virtues: *sama* (calmness), *dama* (self-control), *uparati* (self-withdrawal), *titiksha* (forbearance), *shraddha* (faith), *samadhana* (self-settledness). It is only through the perfected continuity of the will, incessantly striving towards the highest ideal of divine manhood, that the alchemical awakening to the Spirit can be achieved. Here there is no place for passivity or relaxation of the will. To give a focus to continued aspiration, *The Voice of the Silence* teaches:

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

The Book of the Golden Precepts also points out that the One Self is not only to be found in the Awakened Ones but is also mirrored in the tiniest of atoms. While the claim of transmutation of lead into gold made in mediaeval times was not accepted then, the transmutation of one element into another was achieved in the closing years of the last century, that is, just before the dawn

of the Aquarian age. The French scientist, Antoine Henri Becquerel, discovered radioactivity in uranium in 1896. Further investigations of the phenomenon were made by Pierre and Marie Curie, and the three shared the 1903 Nobel Prize for physics for their discovery, which was to lead to the conclusion that the transmutation of uranium into lead has been taking place in the earth's crust for millions of years. The discovery of quantum mechanics in physics and of radioactivity in chemistry revolutionized science from the beginnings of this century, and more and more inventions, both good and evil, are coming out of Pandora's box, as it were, since then.

The atomic changes liberate a relatively immense amount of energy compared to the minute amount of matter usually involved. Einstein has come out with the formula that the energy released has a direct relation to the mass of matter used, or rather matter and energy are one in the equation  $E = mc^2$ . This has paved the way for the manufacture of atom bombs, and today the stockpiling of nuclear warheads by the major powers continues, with the power to destroy the earth several times over. Man has made the work of the Death god, Yama, easier.

But coming back to the science of the transmutation of elements, as the elements are built up of electrically charged particles, alchemy is only a change in the state of electrification of the atom. Madame Blavatsky, in justification of the assertions of the Occult works and referring to Paracelsus' *Mysterium Magnum*, affirms that "not one of the elements regarded by chemistry as such really deserves the name," and in commenting on verse 9, Stanza III, in the *Book of Dzyan*—"Light is cold flame, and flame is fire, and the fire produces heat, which yields water, the water of life in the Great Mother"—she observes that all these words—"Light," "Flame," "Hot," "Cold," "Fire," "Heat," "Water," etc.—are the correlations of Electricity, and she adds:

Mighty word, and a still mightier symbol! Sacred generator of a no less sacred progeny; of fire—the creator, the preserver and the destroyer; of light—the essence of our divine ancestors; of Flame—the Soul of things. Electricity, ONE Life at the upper rung of Being, and Astral Fluid, the Athanor of the Alchemists, at its lowest; GOD and DEVIL, GOOD and EVIL. (*S.D.*, I, 81)

Here in such prophetic words, and elsewhere too in *The Secret Doctrine*, Madame Blavatsky has touched on the benefits as well as the dangers—"god" and "devil"—of the exceptional technical achievements, resulting out of ideas and conceptions about the world of the ultra-small, that came with quantum mechanics and

radioactivity.

Every one of the dedicated scientists feels, like the Chorus in *Prometheus Bound*, "Vast boon was this thou gavest unto mortals..." but the "fire" received has turned into the greatest curse. Ostensibly dedicated to the welfare of humanity, but perverted by misguided leaders, politicians and statesmen, science and technology are posing a threat to the survival of humanity itself. Will this threat lead to the abolition of war, as Arnold Toynbee hoped? The historian wrote in a doubtful vein:

War can be abolished, even if it were to prove impossible to cure all human beings of committing non-military crimes of violence. I think the invention of nuclear weapons makes it probable that we shall succeed in abolishing war, in spite of the difficulty of giving up a habit that is five thousand years old. The assumption underlying the institution of war was that one of the belligerents would win, that the other would lose, and that the advantage of victory for the winner would be greater than the cost. This calculation often proved wrong. Wars were often disastrous to the victors too. But it is clear that, in a war fought with nuclear weapons, there can be no such thing as even a costly victory. This prospect deprives states of a rational incentive for going to war.

However, human nature is only partially rational. It is conceivable that we might irrationally commit mass suicide.

Fear has given way to depression, and later to contempt for life, and so death, losing its sting, seems to exert a fascination because of its inevitability. A study of how people die in present-day society is instructive of their life patterns. Apart from nuclear fatalities, the emergence of newly discovered killers like AIDS is an indication of the increasingly liberal attitudes and behaviour of a society going down the Gadarene path. Confounded by all manner of desires, entangled in the net of delusion, firmly attached to the gratification of their desires, these persons "descend into hell," observes the *Bhagavad-Gita*, referring obviously to such a demoniacal society. The *Gita* continues:

Those who are born with the demoniacal disposition...know not the nature of action nor of cessation from action, they know not purity nor right behaviour, they possess no truthfulness. They deny that the universe has any truth in it...they say creatures are produced alone through the union of the sexes, and that all is for enjoyment only...They indulge insatiable desires, are full of hypocrisy, fast-fixed in false beliefs through their delusions...

convinced until death that the enjoyment of the objects of their desires is the supreme good. Fast-bound by the hundred cords of desire, prone to lust and anger, they seek by injustice and the accumulation of wealth for the gratification of their own lusts and appetites.

In striking contrast to the demoniacal kind is the godlike seeker after *Brahma Vidya* who leads an exacting life, as he is serious about apprehending the meaning of death and discovering the secret of immortality. He is after the elixir of life which will turn this base, leaden, devilish craze for gratification of desires into the golden threshold leading on to "the hid battlements of Eternity." He summons a fresh release of creative energy from the inexhaustible fount of the Self within, which has been ignored time and again but, like the Hound of Heaven,

...with unhurrying chase,  
And unperturbèd pace,  
Deliberate speed, majestic instancy...

pursues the Seeker, as his true guru and guide. And what is more, he realizes that he has only been running away from himself, as the Kingdom of Heaven is to be sought within, not outside. *The Voice of the Silence* so aptly describes the transformation wrought within him:

Behold! thou hast become the Light, thou hast become the Sound, thou art thy Master and thy God. Thou art THYSELF the object of thy search: the VOICE unbroken, that resounds throughout eternities, exempt from change, from sin exempt, the Seven Sounds in one,

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE.

(*To be continued*)

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THERE is at least one philosophic problem in which all thinking men are interested. It is the problem of cosmology: the problem of understanding the world—including ourselves, and our knowledge, as part of the world.

—KARL POPPER

## "DIG OUT THE KNOWLEDGE"

A GOOD rule in life is never to ask a question unless the answer is really necessary for oneself. The constant mental urge to gather irrelevant *facts*, as well as the subconscious desire to know everything, ruins the higher faculties of the mind, wastes pranic vitality and shows an innate self-centredness, because *someone else has to answer the question*, someone else has to use up vitality, drag the mind down to the unnecessary in life, and either develop extreme patience or give way to impatience!

Students of Theosophy are no exception to this. They have, of course, the duty to learn the Teachings thoroughly so that they may apply them intelligently and promulgate them accurately; but, after all, that learning is the task of each one. How often, however, do they ask all kinds of unnecessary questions even about the Teachings themselves—unnecessary because they could themselves find the answers by putting forth the necessary effort! This criticism does not, naturally, apply to the inquirer or new student, who does not yet know his way around the authentic textbooks of Theosophy. It is for meeting the needs of such as these that the older student should be left as free as possible. And yet those who have been studying for years think it perfectly all right to demand time and energy from another student so that their questions may be answered without effort to themselves. And rarely is there a recognition of the sacrifice of the answerer, who is often a very busy person with limited time available for the prosecution of his own Theosophical study. No earnest student minds devoting time and energy to helping fellow-students solve genuine difficulties, but what are genuine questions and when should they be put?

Add to the rule mentioned above: Never ask a question until the books have been searched for the answer, until one's *own* vitality and time have been spent in the search, among other reasons for that mentioned by Mr. Judge:

...if we dig out the knowledge, we drag down at the same time rocks and debris of other sorts, whereas, if a miner hands us the nugget, that is all we get at the time.

To take an example, how often we hear the question, even from fairly old students: "How long does one stay in the Kama-loka before reaching Devachan?" The answer is in the books: a few hours, a day, a week, a month or months, or years. What more can one want? Similar questions will arise in the minds of students.

It is so little realized that to have the words of an answer given is useless; it is information, titbits of knowledge. To *know* an answer implies study, meditation, application. Not to ask questions until all the groundwork has been laid implies that one has begun, in little, to realize what is due from oneself to others, not so much what is due from others to oneself.

Add one more rule: Never ask a question unless you are prepared to weigh instead of querying the answer. Don't query the answer in the hope of converting oneself or another. Those questions arising out of questions! They are merely the attempt to fit the answers into the existing edifice we have built up—or to throw the answers out because they will destroy our edifice!

The wiles of the lower manas are almost endless.

Questions arising from the heart are mostly in terms of application of principles, not for oneself but in order to be the better able to help the great Work.

Questions of a truly spiritual nature are born from the suffering undergone in the effort to grasp a spiritual idea, and the answer given will not be informative but just the key which will unlock the door of the lower mind so that it can assimilate the idea.

Pythagoras was right: we cannot and should not question till we know enough to question.

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EVERYTHING harmonizes with me, which is harmonious to thee, O Universe. Nothing for me is too early nor too late, which is in due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O Nature: from thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all things return.

Occupy thyself with few things, says the philosopher, if thou wouldst be tranquil. But consider if it would not be better to say, Do what is necessary, and whatever the reason requires, and as it requires. For this brings not only the tranquillity which comes from doing well, but also that which comes from doing few things. For the greatest part of what we say and do being unnecessary, if a man takes this away, he will have more leisure and less uneasiness. Accordingly on every occasion a man should ask himself, Is this one of the unnecessary things? Now a man should take away not only unnecessary acts, but also unnecessary thoughts, for thus superfluous acts will not follow after.

—MARCUS AURELIUS

## MYSTIC PRACTICES AND THEIR DEGRADATION

Theosophy commands us to work for Humanity, one method whereof is to watch the steps of erring humanity and to erect sign-posts against certain pitfalls. . . .

TEACHERS of humanity have always held their torches high to the one fact that Man is more than a mere bundle of bones, flesh, muscles and nerves, and consequently have given out their teachings as applicable to the Real Man and not to his visible vesture—the body. This is the primary reason why no teaching worthy of the name of religion yields its real import if only the key of the physical plane is applied to it. And knowers of the Truth, small though their number may have been in any given sphere, have always laid bare, to the gaze of those who could see, the esoteric meaning of such teachings by the application of the key of sanctified common sense, which is beyond a doubt metaphysical and occult. There is always the necessity for caution, care and scrutiny of every serious statement which underlies the conventional practices that bear the stamp of religion and are being perpetuated by exoteric doctrines.

Of the many sacrifices, rituals and practices now in vogue, *Pranayama* is on the lips of many. Having had in former times a serious occult bearing, this practice, once confined to the enlightened class of men, has by the passage of time now come to the degraded level of being regarded as a breathing exercise and a priestly prescription for the realization of God. This is a form of *hatha yoga* and the utmost that can come of it are some psychic powers of a trifling nature which most often are misused by unbalanced minds. The followers of the Inner Path have therefore eschewed this as dangerous and undesirable. Further, this practice being generally pursued with a certain regularity and resoluteness, the mind is bound to apprehend levels quite different from the physical plane, but the brain-consciousness of the practitioner, not being the natural efflorescence of spiritual culture based on nobility of thought and unselfishness of purpose, is absolutely incapable of anything but distortions. Such distortions seriously interfere with the direct perception of Truth. Is there any wonder, then, that this misadventure generally ends in theomania if not in insanity?

To comprehend the extent of the danger represented by this practice, it is necessary to recognize that it is no longer confined to any particular caste or creed. It has caught the fancy of all who would take short cuts to progress, who will not think for them-

selves or “look in any direction with heart at peace and free from fear,” and whose power of perception is so dimmed that they cannot listen to the exhortation in the *Gita*:

Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error.

In the sevenfold constitution of man, *Prana* is the third principle of the lower quaternary and the *Pranic* currents circulate in the astral body which serves as the substratum and the model for the physical. That even the powers of the five senses through which the Inner Man contacts things objective are located in the *Linga Sarira* (the astral body) is common knowledge to students of Theosophy. Just as there are in the astral body the five senses used for perception (the *jnanaindriyas*) for which exist in the physical body the corresponding five organs used for action (the *karmaindriyas*), so, too, the *Pranic* currents in the astral body reveal themselves in the physical body as the incoming and the outgoing breath.

*Prana* has thus come to be familiarly associated with the physical breath. It is but natural, therefore, that an injunction in a spiritual text with this word in it should be understood by the man of superficial knowledge, who has identified himself with his physical covering, as having something to do with the physical breath, the shadow of the real *Pranic* currents. Hence *Pranayama* to him consists of *Puraka*, inspiration, *Rechaka*, expiration, and *Kumbhaka*, retention of the breath between these two movements. This physiological practice has been codified and has been given a place in the duties of a *Sadhaka*, practitioner, and such control of the breath and the “vital airs” is being resorted to for liberation of the forces of freedom for the attainment of *yoga*!

The stages of cleansing and acquisition of strength, fortitude, steadiness and lightness formulated by the Givers of the Law have all been unfortunately taken to apply to the physical body, whereas in truth they are meant for the mind, to accomplish the transmutation of the *Kama-Manas* into *Buddhi-Manas*. One should therefore try to see in the implication of *Pranayama* the application of the second of the seven golden keys—“*Shila*, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action.”

After all is said and done, the purely bodily actions and func-

tions are of far less importance than what a man *thinks* and *feels*, what desires he encourages in his mind, and allows to take root and grow there.

Chelaship does not consist in any kind of eating or drinking, in any practices, observances, forms or rituals; it is an attitude of Mind.

If *Pranayama* means regulated breath, what should be its real significance to the aspirant if not the establishment of rhythm and harmony in the incarnated Ego who breathes out into its vehicles and breathes back into the Monadic Soul? And similarly, on a higher spiral, the Macrocosmic Powers breathe themselves into Microcosmic entities and retire; then the latter breathe out towards the manifested world and in towards the Powers. The great task of man, therefore, as the controller of all the forces of the macrocosm, reflected, though in miniature, in the microcosm over which he presides, is to fulfil the purpose of unfolding his divinity to a larger extent, in a greater measure, consciously and deliberately, and thereby elevating the "lives" around him which are dependent on him and are waiting to be raised higher.

It would mean also for the soul to find the middle path, poised as it is between the outgoing breath of *Pravriddhi*, helped by his objective contact through his senses, and the incoming breath of *Nivridhi*, symbolizing his turning inward and walking the Path towards the one Centre, enriched of course by his experience of the first movement. The object, therefore, is the tranquillization of the mental processes as defined by Patanjali and the attainment of the Equal-Mindedness which is called Yoga.

A step further into the subject would bring us closer to the five kinds of "vital airs"—*Prana*, *Apana*, *Vyana*, *Udana* and *Samana*—and their functions, of which H.P.B. writes in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 566-7):

Read the dialogue between the sages Narada and Davamata in the *Anugita*, the antiquity and importance of which MS. (an episode from the *Mahabharata*) one can learn in the *Sacred Books of the East*, edited by Prof. Max Müller. Narada is discussing upon the breaths or the "life-winds," as they are called in the clumsy translations of such words as *Prana*, *Apana*, etc., whose full esoteric meaning and application to individual functions can hardly be rendered in English.

And referring to the adaptation of such a "fire of Wisdom" to exoteric ritualism for the profane, we hear H.P.B. say:

This is the chief concern of the Brahmans who were the first to set the example to other nations who thus anthropomorphized and

carnalized the grandest metaphysical truths.

While, therefore, it is well-nigh impossible to bring to the consciousness of the undisciplined mind the abstruse metaphysical concept of this too common word, *Pranayama*, it may definitely be said that in various places this symbolic expression has been used to hold in its treasure-chest varying shades of the truth, to be unfolded in proportion to the intuitional light brought to bear upon it by the student. This mystic practice is therefore not a play with the breath but has everything to do with the attempt to obtain esoteric knowledge or the wisdom of the Divine Self.

Breathing in the gentle breezes of Theosophia, it should be possible to breathe out the balmy breezes of sacrifice, which would fit the practitioner to live entirely in terms of altruism and selflessness and thus to forge his link stronger than ever to the glorious chain of Brotherhood, the highest links of which are those Stainless Ones, serving as a Beacon to many a weak and weary pilgrim that he may see the Light and learn to walk the Path aright.

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#### TO MY GURUDEVA

My Gurudeva, I aspire not  
To look at Thy face:  
I am unworthy;  
I aspire not to gaze at Thy effulgence:  
I am blind;  
I aspire not to hear Thy voice,  
For, where have I the ear  
That hears the Voiceless Voice?  
Let me be the speck of mire  
On which Thy feet tread.

## THE SIMPLE LIFE OF SPIRIT

THEOSOPHY takes this attitude towards destiny: we have generated certain causes and in terms of their effects our destiny is fixed. If we put our finger in the fire it will burn, but it does not follow that we must put our finger in the fire. There free will comes in. Destiny is fixed, but *we* have created it. Therefore we can unmake it by an equal amount of force. A person has within him all the necessary power, but the change must first come within and not in the environment. That change comes by meditation and study.

Those who try to change the outer circumstances are living the material life. Those who want instead to change their own action on them are living the spiritual life. The former do not believe in themselves. Those who do, know that the environment will change as they change. Meditation should bring into operation that which one possesses. One must become that which one *is*. For that, we want to understand the laws that govern our growth; we want the faculty of practicality which is born of a spiritual attitude. We get that by our own self-effort.

We require to live the simple life—that life which, in a natural and simple way, will enable the highest in us to express itself, irrespective of the environment. As long as we think circumstances limit us, instead of that we limit them, we produce limitations. If we firmly hold the idea that we have to change ourselves, we shall find no limitation from time or space. Nature gives with wisdom, with justice; our environment is the very best for us always, but we want to act on it spiritually. In spiritual life it is not *what* we do that matters, but *how* we do it. Let the nature that is ours express itself. Then our circumstances will change. The door will open for us.

The simple life is different for different people. It means, not necessarily living in a simple physical way, but in a simple spiritual way, which removes naturally from our spiritual environment all that is unnecessary. People want some kind of a code drawn up. We must live the simple, natural life to express ourselves from within; we may not believe in any code, in any creed, save the moral law within us. Let us live in terms of that code and we shall evolve our faculty of living the spiritual life, more and more deeply and profoundly.

Living the spiritual life, we have time to do everything in a harmonious way. What has spiritual life to do with whether we have to do a thousand things or only one? What is necessary is

doing that one thing or a thousand things as a movement from within. We are always moved by impacts from without. Somebody wants us to do this or that, or something attracts us this way or that, so we go on a road not made by our own spiritual centre. We must make our surroundings such as will let us manifest our inherent powers as a centre of consciousness.

Spiritual life is straightforward, easy, clear. Material life is difficult because we bother with a million things. If we have one thing, then to support that we need another. By throwing off one thing we break the chain of the added things.

But in living the simple life we must be fearless; the fear that comes from shadows of the world without, makes cowards of us. The simple life becomes the heroic life; a heroism that is not recognized by the world—doing our common duty, hour by hour, in the best and highest possible way. It is easy to be heroic once in a lifetime, to rise to the occasion against great odds. Wonderful, but easy compared to living constantly as heroes, not in the eyes of the world, but in the eyes of our own Divine Self.

We must have the quality of self-sufficiency. We may roam the world, homeless, friendless; and yet everyone is a friend; everywhere is a home. The Buddha charged His disciples to wander the world alone and homeless, so that they might never be alone and never homeless. If we live the simple life, the heroic life, the self-sacrificing life, we may not be very learned, people may not call us great; but we shall carry strength and peace and bliss wherever we go, and, after all, what more do we want? We may not understand the heavens over our heads or the earth below our feet, but we shall understand the simplicity of God-consciousness which makes them both. If we move very fast in a motorcar all the objects of the earth pass by, but the objects in the heavens move with us; they accompany us. The many-faced life of matter is always vanishing; the simple life of Spirit ever abides.

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A FOOL may be known by six things: anger, without cause; speech, without profit; change, without progress; inquiry, without object; putting trust in a stranger, and mistaking foes for friends.

—ARABIAN PROVERB

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

For too long, violence has been looked upon as a criminal-justice problem. Its study has traditionally been the domain of behaviourists and sociobiologists. Now epidemiologists have stepped in and are studying violence as though it were a deadly infection, sometimes reaching epidemic proportions. Scientists' search for clues to understand and stop the spate of murders, suicides and injuries that occur at a certain time or in a certain area are revealing startling, and to them often puzzling, parallels between violence and disease.

At the Violence Epidemiology Branch of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, U.S.A., researchers—a sociologist, criminologist, medical anthropologist, psychiatrist, statistician and others—monitor murders, suicides and other acts of violence, using the same scientific methods and epidemiological tools that their co-workers employ to study outbreaks of diseases. Sherry Baker's article, "A Plague Called Violence," in the August *Omni*, centres round the palpable similarity between these two curses:

The connection between violence and disease is more than a metaphor. Just as certain parasites and bacteria multiply quickly when environmental conditions are favourable to their growth, violence seems to "breed" in certain geographic areas. The idea to commit murder or suicide may prove to be contagious, to spread through a community like an infection. . . .

Before they can cure violence, however, researchers must understand it as completely as they do the simplest infection. One clue they've unearthed is that both murder and suicide may be contagious. Short-term outbursts. . . indicate that some acts of violence are *not* randomly distributed. David Phillips, a sociologist at the University of California at San Diego, believes he has uncovered a way in which violence may spread from person to person. A disturbing link exists, he says, between certain news stories and certain suicides and murders.

"For centuries people have worried about the role imitation plays in causing violence to spread," Phillips says. Experiments conducted under laboratory conditions showed that volunteers exposed to violent films and TV shows became aggressive when given the opportunity. The imitation hypothesis was further tested by studying media coverage of actual acts of violence from 1947 onwards. It was found that in the days following a widely publicized suicide or murder story, there was a rise in similar incidents

because of the imitation process. "No alternative explanation has been found yet to fit the data," says Phillips.

While controversy rages over Phillips's work, researchers have documented another similarity between violence and disease.

Just as certain diseases are endemic to particular regions—malaria to the tropics, for instance—some kinds of violence appear to be concentrated in geographic areas. . . . The argument that environment affects behaviour is hardly new. . . .

Not only do stimuli outside the body affect behaviour, apparently factors within the body also contribute to the way people act. For centuries researchers have been debating the role biology plays in violence.

Though violence is a complex problem and there are other causes behind it, sensational details of suicide, murder and other crimes that the media all too often wallow in spreading do play a role in spurring on some unfortunates to go and do likewise. The responsibility of newspapers and other media is grave indeed.

Equally grave is our responsibility for the thoughts we think, for merely *thinking* of crime can supply the psychological impulse for other crimes by sensitives to whom such thoughts reach out.

Who but has noticed in the columns of the daily press similar incidents? They meet the eye constantly. In cases of murder, of every description, and of other crimes of a diabolical character, the act is attributed, in nine cases out of ten, by the offenders themselves, to *irresistible obsessions*. "*Something* whispered constantly in my ear. . . . *Somebody* was incessantly pushing and leading me on." Such are the too-frequent confessions of the criminals. Physicians attribute them to hallucinations of disordered brains, and call the homicidal impulse temporary *lunacy*. But is lunacy itself well understood by any psychologist? Has its cause ever been brought under a hypothesis capable of withstanding the challenge of an uncompromising investigator? . . .

Almost nothing is known of the laws of magnetism and the other imponderable agents; almost nothing of their effects upon our bodies and minds; even that which is known and moreover perfectly demonstrated, is attributed to chance, and curious *coincidences*. But we do know, by these coincidences, that "there are periods when certain diseases, propensities, fortunes, and misfortunes of humanity are more rife than at others." There are times of epidemic in moral and physical affairs. . . .

"The seeds of vice and crime appear to be sown under the surface of society, and to spring up and bring forth fruit with appal-

ling rapidly and paralysing succession."... "We know," says Dr. Charles Elam, "that certain pathological conditions have a tendency to become epidemic, *influenced by causes not yet investigated*. . . . We see how strong is the tendency of opinion once promulgated to run into an epidemic form—no opinion, no delusion, is too absurd to assume this collective character. We observe, also, how remarkably the same ideas reproduce themselves and *reappear in successive ages*; . . . no crime is too horrible to become popular, homicide, infanticide, suicide, poisoning, or any other diabolical human conception. . . . In epidemics, the cause of the rapid spread at that particular period *remains a mystery!*"

These few lines contain an undeniable *psychological* fact, sketched with a masterly pen, and at the same time a *half-confession* of utter ignorance—"Causes not yet investigated." Why not be honest and add at once, "*impossible to investigate with present scientific methods?*" (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 274-76)

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Georges Dumezil, who died in Paris on October 11, excelled as an archaeologist, linguist and historian of Indo-European civilizations and made a seminal contribution to the study of comparative mythology. In an article in *The Times of India* (October 23), Prof. Charles Malamoud, himself a scholar of Sanskrit who teaches at the Ecole Pratique de Hautes Etudes at the Sorbonne in Paris, refers to Dumezil's thesis that the Indo-European languages, as they are spoken today or have been spoken in the past in the areas between India and Ireland, have some obvious and other less obvious similarities because they are derived from a common mother language which we do not know directly today.

The question arises [Professor Malamoud writes] as to where and when was the mother language a real and living one, before splitting into various historically attested dialects (Vedic Sanskrit, Avestic and Old Persian, Hittite, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavic, Baltic, Germanic, etc.). We do not know exactly. Perhaps the location was somewhere in Russia in the third millennium B.C.

The people who used to speak this language certainly formed a linguistic community, but we have no data allowing us to think of them as an ethnic group and we know hardly anything of their material culture. But the texts composed in the various languages deriving from this proto-Indo-European by the various sections of this group once they had migrated to their final destination all

over Europe and a part of Asia, show, when carefully examined, very neat and numerous traces of a common set of ideas, and of a common conception of the world. This is what Dumézil called ideology: it includes mythology, all kinds of religious notions, but also institutions and, generally speaking, a certain way of understanding society.

*The Secret Doctrine* leaves no doubt as to the fact that there was once a "mother language," "the root of the Sanskrit, very erroneously called 'the elder sister' of the Greek, instead of its mother." It was "the first language (now the mystery tongue of the Initiates) of the Fifth Race" (*S.D.*, II, 200). At the very outset of her *magnum opus* H.P.B. refers to a "very old Book" from which many later sacred writings belonging to different traditions were derived.

Tradition says that it was taken down in *Senzar*, the secret sacerdotal tongue, from the words of the Divine Beings, who dictated it to the sons of Light, in Central Asia, at the very beginning of the 5th (our) race; for there was a time when its language (the *Sen-zar*) was known to the Initiates of every nation, when the forefathers of the Toltec understood it as easily as the inhabitants of the lost Atlantis, who inherited it, in their turn, from the sages of the 3rd Race, the *Manushis*, who learnt it direct from the *Devas* of the 2nd and 1st Races. (*S.D.*, I, xliii)

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Each of us can participate actively during this "International Year of Peace" by thinking clearly what peace means and applying this to our daily lives. Peace is our common concern and each has the responsibility for creating it just as much as governments and world leaders. "Thoughts on the Meaning of Peace" in *World Goodwill Newsletter* (1986, No. 3) contain pointers to the contribution we can make by clear thinking and goodwill:

Each one of us has a different understanding of what "Peace" is, and we each have a different expectation as we wait for it to manifest on Earth. There are, after all, so many different approaches to all the different levels of peace, from peace within an individual to world peace, and from peace within a small family to peace within the whole human family.

If peace is more than the absence of war, then what is it really? If it is more than a quiet, tranquil state of contentment, then what does it really mean? . . .

Let us explore more precisely what it is in our attitudes that we must change, before we can really approach peace on an international and individual level. . . .

Peace is not something that we will reach some time, at some point in the future. Peace has to be created every day, here and now. It is not a reward which is waiting for us if we are "good." Peace is a capacity which every day has to be realized a little bit more.

Another belief we may have is that our own peace is always disturbed by others, by the outside world, by those who do not understand and do not have goodwill. This way of thinking leads us into the thoughtform of separation. Yet it is important to realize that each person in the world is seeking peace, because everyone wants and needs to be loved. It is only the paths which have to be taken in order to reach peace that are difficult, and that is true for everybody. If "others" disturb our own individual peace, then we must realize that we are not opening ourselves for the continuous unfoldment of real peace, but are seeking only an island of self-contentment. We should look at every "disturbance" as an opportunity to create a greater meaning for peace, because it has to be created in our relationships with others.

We cannot divide or deny our daily reality in order to establish peace, but we have to create it in circumstances of emotional disturbance, mental cleavage and physical stress. There is no longer any way to isolate ourselves from society in order to live in peace.

It is also wrong to think that we create peace by renouncing what we want to realize in our lives, by making ourselves "small" and keeping out of trouble. This would mean denying our capacities and our gifts and leaving it to others to accomplish what we see needs to be done to solve the problems in our environment. Nature never takes this route, but always stands for the development and affirmation of life.

We often think, too, that we should not fight if we want to create peace. Here again, we have to clarify our thoughts. Creating peace means also fighting human enslavement. We have to fight for freedom and for life. But we very often make the mistake of fighting our brothers and sisters instead of fighting human enslavement and evil. It is very important to make this distinction clearly. Fellow men and women are our brothers and sisters and want peace as much as we do. So we have to create situations where we fight together for peace and for life, where we are allies in the task, instead of continually being against each other.

Now let us see if we can identify some of the meanings of peace more clearly:

Peace is movement within the harmony of life.

Peace is created by linking the lower with the higher.

Peace is a capacity which can be developed every day in every situation.

Peace has to be reached together with others, not alone.

Peace is something that every human being aims for.

Peace is to be found in the realization of our lives.

Peace is fighting for others, for the good in every human being.

Peace is beauty and justice, acceptance and harmony, and finally,

Peace is goodwill in action.

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James T. Laney, president of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A., emphasizes "education of the heart" in an article in *Topic* (Issue No. 165), published by the United States Information Agency:

Until a few decades ago it was generally agreed that the most important part of the legacy from one generation to another consisted in a kind of wisdom: In what does the good life consist? What is worthy of one's commitment? What is more important than self-gratification? What is good or honourable or true? The second part consisted of knowledge and skill: teaching a younger generation how to make a living, how to master a profession, how to become a productive citizen. But through it all, education was seen as a moral endeavour—not because it sought to indoctrinate, but because it was a sharing of things that people held to be important. . . .

Virtue had a role—not in a preening self-regarding sense, but as the embodiment of certain qualities of life and of their importance for the body politic, qualities such as fidelity, good will, patience, discipline, promise-keeping, restraint. This was a legacy that took precedence over self. . . .

But times have changed. . . . In many academic disciplines there has been a retreat from the attempt to relate values and wisdom to what is being taught. . . . Education no longer seems to be the institutionalization of what we think is important to society. Instead, what we are emphasizing today, largely by default, is careerism. We seem to be turning out people who are bent upon

exploiting careers for their own ends rather than upon service through their professions for the sake of society.

And that is exactly what we are bound to do if we do not educate the heart. For without virtue, without the education of the heart, expertise and ambition easily become demonic. How can society survive if education does not attend to those qualities which it requires for its very perpetuation?

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A proper family upbringing can make all the difference in one's life when it comes to coping with stress, for those with a poor upbringing look for crutches ranging from alcohol to heroin when under pressure. Giving the keynote address at a seminar on drug abuse and alcoholism, Dr. Salim Sharif, director of Sandarshan (an institute for counselling and personnel growth in New Delhi) emphasized that stress was not merely an individual problem but something that concerned the family and community as well. (*The Times of India*, October 27)

Dr. Sharif suggested gaining an understanding of oneself to cope with stress, and because there is much confusion in this matter, the need for counselling arises.

A survey carried out by the Indian Council for Medical Research established that social drinking can lead to heavy alcoholic drinking. Those worst affected included students, government and bank officials, factory workers, businessmen and armed forces officers. Statistics reveal that most of the patients are males and usually in the prime of their lives.

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# THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

## By H. P. Blavatsky:

ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.  
THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.  
INDEX TO THE SECRET DOCTRINE  
THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY  
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE  
THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY  
THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE  
FIVE MESSAGES TO THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS  
RAJA-YOGA OF OCCULTISM  
SHE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH  
THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS  
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

## By William Q. Judge:

THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY  
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME  
THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
THE YOGA APHORISMS OF PATANJALI  
VERNAL BLOOMS  
THE HEART DOCTRINE  
ECHOES FROM THE ORIENT  
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THE BUILDING OF THE HOME  
"THUS HAVE I HEARD"  
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THE U.L.T.—ITS MISSION AND ITS FUTURE  
TEXTS FOR THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS  
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"  
U.L.T. PAMPHLET SERIES, Nos. 1-36  
H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

**T**HE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the Philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and how ever situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

*"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."*

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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BOMBAY 400 019, INDIA .. .. .	Anandi Niwas, Bhaudaji Road, Matunga
LONDON W2, 3AL, ENGLAND .. .. .	62 Queen's Garden
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