

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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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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"SELF-INDUCED AND SELF-DEVISED"

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TO learn any subject properly it is necessary to go to its fundamental basis. In studying a language we go to its roots and its grammar. In studying geometry we learn certain fundamental laws, axioms and postulates. In studying mathematics we learn certain fundamental rules. The next step is to learn how to apply those rules. The architect learns how to apply the rules of geometry, the mathematician how to apply the rules to the deep problems of his subject, and so on, and we all know that to build a house without this knowledge, or to do even the simplest additions without it would result in chaos.

Yet, when it comes to "soul-life," the moral principles of action, humanity (and Theosophical students are part of humanity and suffer from the same failings) ignores laws and rules, axioms and postulates, and "acts as it thinks fit."

Soul or moral rules and laws are called "ethics," and ethics have largely left daily life at this era of evolution, though they are, in fact, the principles and fundamental bases of right action. Today humanity says that it is only concerned with Science, the science of the material world of so-called "facts," and it is not realized that ethics are also scientific facts. The absence of this last concept is a real danger, *the* real danger, for the present-day world.

Until ethics are seen to be scientific they will not be applied. Because it is not realized that humanity is composed of units, each unit living in accordance with some principles of action, and that these actions make up part of the sum total of actions under due mathematical rules and laws, we have begun to think in terms of mass movements, mass decisions, mass observations, etc.

Whereas it is good for us to think of the world as one world and to act for the best good of the whole, yet, unless we reiterate certain fundamental propositions as to what is best for the whole and how it can be attained, we will fail—as we are failing. Our troubles have arisen, we know, from past wrong actions—like a bad building designed wrongly from the start—but just what is the right process *now*? Though we all know from experience that it is easier and better to have a new house, rightly constructed and built, than to patch up one whose foundations are faulty and superstructure bad, with dry-rot spreading, when it comes to world conditions, without knowledge of principles and experience in their application, humanity is at sea.

A longer view than immediate peace is therefore necessary both in world and personal problems. Nothing but a scientific approach to moral behaviour will give us success, since all men act, think and feel, and as they do so make or mar the vast interwoven pattern of the Whole.

Students of Theosophy should be at the heart of the reconstruction of *principles*, but how many are? How many build their lives on the Three Fundamental Propositions of the Philosophy they are supposed to be studying? How many have learnt that *human* evolution is a self-induced and self-devised evolution and that all other evolution, when once the man stage has been reached, is human-animal or animal-human, that is, self-assertion or self-preservation? Truly human evolution is by self-surrender, self-control; control of the animal-human and the human-animal by the truly human, the Manasic Being. But how?

The student's first true awakening is perhaps when he sees the implication of the words of the Third Fundamental—"self-induced and self-devised ways and means."

Ways and means to what? The Third Fundamental tells us—to become the holiest of archangels—a Dhyani-Buddha. In terms of application, what is a Dhyani-Buddha? *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 573) tells us that a Dhyani-Buddha is the Adept's "elder 'twin Soul,' " the "Father-Soul."

It is only at the last and supreme initiation, however, that they learn it when placed face to face with the bright "Image."

For this great achievement no special gifts are possible; it is only personal merit that will win the prize. What is personal merit? To dwell on this phrase will help us to see that it is while in a human body that the goal must be reached. In order to make of the personal man the instrument of the Dhyani-Buddha, certain qualities must be built up in it and who can tell what we need

as well as we ourselves? Who knows, as well as we know, just what needs adjustment in us? Teachers and philosophy may point the way, but we ourselves must tread it.

The process is twofold: First the principles or the laws of growth must be learnt; secondly, when and how these can be or are not applied can be known but by our own self-analysis. Following self-analysis comes the endeavour to find those ways and means which will help us, and for this it is we ourselves who, knowing the idiosyncrasies of our nature, must take ourselves in hand and devise for ourselves the necessary ways and means.

With the starting of self-reformation on these lines begins the process of self-integration, self-rule, self-education, self-growth. Without this knowledge the self-rule and the self-control will become the rule and the control of the situation by the personality, and, while "other-dependence" is vile, the sublimation of the personality and the setting of its rule and its control over those of the truly human man will drive us further than ever from the goal.

To know ourselves by self-analysis—a scientific and unemotional analysis—to be able to compare ourselves with the ideal, step by step, as we learn any difficult subject, with our eye on the goal, will stimulate in us the desire to find out those self-induced and self-devised ways and means which we need. We do not have to guess on this Path any more than we have to guess at mathematics and geometry, but we do have to learn and to *apply*. Individual responsibility is a fact; individual application of right principles alone will in time destroy the present mass control, for, as a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, so one human soul becoming a self-integrated being will awaken other souls to self-responsibility.

THERE is but one general law of vision (physical and mental or spiritual) but there is a qualifying special law proving that all vision must be determined by the quality or grade of man's spirit and soul.

—MIRZA ISMAIL

THE COMING CYCLE

WE are in a New-Year cycle, and with the increase in the light and power of the sun—the “visible symbol of the impersonal Deity”—we can so resolve and will as to make the coming year bring forth everlasting good. Though we may not understand exactly what is meant when it is said that “the astral life of the earth is young and strong between Christmas and Easter,” we can at least take advantage of the rising cycle to analyse ourselves and ask what we can do in the future.

The message of Theosophy is often said to be that of Hope, Responsibility and Immortality, but looking at humanity today we find, instead, Despair, Licence and a sense of Nothingness. Man has lost his vision, and with it, his stimulus to action. It is said that “without vision the people perish,” and we see this before our eyes today. But, and this is important, why do we, students of Theosophy, separate ourselves from the rest of the world? We know the tenets, no doubt, but have we made them practical? Do we really live in terms of them or are we in a world of happy day-dreams, experiencing a sense of satisfaction with what we think we know? Is our vision one of “mind-painted pictures of good deeds”? Are our dreams those of an eternity of sacrifice, selflessness and work?

The Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* states the difference between the stages of evolution of the lower kingdoms of Nature and those of man. Nature is moved and guided entirely by natural impulse; man has to evolve by self-induced and self-devised efforts. He has also to learn *how* to do this. Instead of being ruled by a common mind, the Universal Mind, his evolution is by individual effort. He is now a “self,” a being who can choose what he will do. And with this “gift” of the power to choose and to learn, he has been given a vision of what is right to do. Instead of being moved by the common instinct and therefore having no individual responsibility (within certain limits), he has to be self-governed; he has to accept responsibility for all he does and thinks and feels.

We long for knowledge and have the inherent desire to learn more and more, but we take most of our thinking from others without analysing what we take, so that we are, in fact, for the most part ruled by the common thought of the age. We fall a prey to mass psychology and are ruled by advertisements which create the desire to possess this or that, or which impel us to believe what we are asked to believe. In this age of transition

men are breaking through many of the old ideas, and this is good, but what is being put in their place?

We are apt to forget that we are not only thinking beings, but also moral beings. We are responsible for what we think or feel or do. The basis for man's moral nature is shown in the first sentence of the Third Fundamental Proposition, and also at the end. All souls come from the same root; all are going through the same journey; all are working towards the unity of mind and heart and action which has its seat in the harmony of Spirit. The Second Fundamental has shown that all is ruled by Law. Therefore, if man gains a knowledge of Law, he sees his responsibility not only to himself but to all beings derived from the Universal Oversoul, "itself an aspect of the Unknown Root." Man is immortal in his true nature, but he has to gain *conscious* immortality by evolving along these lines, and if he does not succeed in this *Manvantara* he has to continue his efforts in a succeeding period of evolution.

This is the vision man needs. It develops accuracy of action, not mere technical accuracy, but moral accuracy—a true balancing of cause and effect—and the perfect expression of the Ideas in the Universal Mind. It means that he uses Nature's laws after learning them, and so becomes a co-worker with Nature, helping her (since all aspects of Nature are sentient and progressing), and so in time taking his rightful position as the intelligence behind all Nature.

In order to reach this condition, man's moral or feeling nature has to undergo a change. From self-enjoyment and self-love, emotion has to rise to the universal level, and to do so, he needs the vision that all men and all creatures are brothers, that all belong to one family, where the wiser help the less wise, the stronger the weaker. The whole training given by the wise and the strong to the less wise and the weak is that of self-responsibility. Bit by bit we begin to appreciate the vision given us of the really Wise. Our heart responds in devotion to those Elder Brothers whose sacrifice we begin to glimpse, until we become, with full self-responsibility, their willing servants in carrying out their work, which is ours, namely, the service of humanity and of all Nature.

The sense of immortality is rooted deep in us, but it needs nurturing, and that is just what is wrong with our world today, especially the world of the youth. Unless we are careful, the world to be of the very young today, as they grow up, will be no better.

The youth cannot live without vision, but what kind of vision

do they need? The vision offered to them today is that of freedom from responsibility. They are putting themselves back to the animal stage where instinct rules, and where uncontrolled actions and emotions hold sway. Live "naturally," they are taught. Why look after the body and its living conditions? Some animals don't. Why control anger, hatred, affection, or the urge for sensation? Animals don't. We have forgotten that in the human kingdom there is an added burden which we cannot escape. It is the power to recall sensations and to recapture them; to look ahead to them with pleasure, heightening the pleasure to the *n*th degree. Whether a man admits it or not, he is not merely an animal. He lives under different laws and cannot avoid bringing on himself disastrous consequences if he lives as an animal. Today he is being taught how apparently to escape from the results of his actions. He forgets natural law, and in time licence causes not only the lowering of moral standards but also disasters to health. Even more, it shows a lack of will-power, and once that goes, stagnation follows.

As students of Theosophy, part of our trouble is lack of a reasoned vision in terms of its practical working out. The goal is so far away. But we can set ourselves lesser goals as resting-places *en route*. We need to take stock of ourselves and see how far we are better off in practical life than those who have not the advantage of our philosophy.

One of the successful chelas of whom we know a little, Damodar K. Mavalankar, wrote:

If each member were but to do his duty to search, to investigate, to study, to digest and join with his fellow-men, actuated by the same noble aspirations, in giving to mankind the benefits of their labour, the day would not be very far off when the Masters of Occultism might find the necessary conditions to enable them to once more live in the world as openly and freely as did their predecessors of times long, long gone by, and give to such a prepared people the benefits of THEIR knowledge.

We can, each one of us, take the points given in the above-quoted words and find out whether we are following them or not.

Search: This needs effort. We have the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, and the answer to any question we can ask is to be found in the printed word. But we need to search for it with an open mind. We need to search also in the depths of our own heart.

Study and investigation: We have not only to study and investigate what we read in our books—which itself is a long

and arduous process—but in all aspects of life we must develop an attitude of mind which investigates before accepting anything. We must prove to ourselves, by reason and knowledge, whether a thing is part of the harmony of life or the reverse. What did H.P.B. and other Teachers say about it, and why?

This brings us to the next point: *Digestion* of what is studied. Only after search and investigation can come the digestion of all the facts. Digestion takes time. Do we give it? If, as a result of our search, study and investigation, we feel that H.P.B. and the Great Teachers are right, then we must find ourselves agreeing with them. If we take the prideful attitude that we know more than they, then we need some more heart-searching. With digestion comes the recognition of our duty to humanity, what is due to it from us. As Damodar says, we are to give others the benefits of our study and labour.

“Ideas rule the world,” and the mere fact that true spiritual ideas are not ruling the world today means that we students are not thinking them and expressing them sufficiently. Are we living in terms of them ourselves? Or are we living in terms of selfishness, greed, laziness, self-satisfaction and lack of will-power?

A much greater familiarity with all the ideas put forth for practical living is needed by us. Once we are familiar with them, we must study them and digest them, so that in time we may pass them on to others, with our inner conviction that they are correct. But the first stage is to spread what Theosophy teaches on these everyday problems.

Let us analyse in what ways our instincts control our lives, thoughts, feelings, and also automatic actions; let us find out to what extent we are self-controlled, to what extent that control is in terms of our present knowledge and experience, and to what extent it is in terms of the principle “Thus have I heard.” This is self-examination, by means of which we can see ourselves and our walk in life more clearly.

One further point. Let us apply all this advice to *ourselves*, not to others. When we feel inclined to judge another, let us ask, “What have *I* done?” Most of us will find that the beam in our own eye, that beam of wrong thoughts and feelings and actions, is far bigger and more penetrating than the mote we have discovered in the eye of another. This is very humiliating, but also very rewarding. Let our New-Year resolutions be along these lines so that we can truly prepare ourselves to be of use in the next Great Cycle.

JACOB BOEHME

I

[This article on the mystic philosopher Jacob Boehme, by Franz Hartmann, appeared in *Theosophical Siftings*, Vol II (1889). In *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. refers to Boehme in glowing terms as "a great Occultist" (II, 595), "the Prince of all the mediaeval Seers" (II, 634), "the nursling of the genii (Nirmanakayas) who watched over and guided him" (I, 494). She quotes with approval a writer of her time who remarked that "every new scientific discovery goes to prove *his profound and intuitive insight into the most secret workings of nature*" (I, 494). Attention is invited to W. Q. Judge's article, "Jacob Boehme and the Secret Doctrine" (reprinted in *Vernal Blooms*). A note in *The Theosophical Glossary* on this "prominent Theosophist of the mediaeval ages" states in part:

"He was a thoroughborn Mystic, and evidently of a constitution which is most rare; one of those fine natures whose material envelope impedes in no way the direct, even if only occasional, intercommunion between the intellectual and the spiritual Ego. It is this *Ego* which Jacob Boehme, like so many other untrained mystics, mistook for God. 'Man must acknowledge,' he writes, 'that this knowledge is not his own, but from God, who manifests the *Ideas* of Wisdom to the Soul of Man, *in what measure he pleases.*' Had this great Theosophist mastered Eastern Occultism he might have expressed it otherwise. He would have known then that the 'god' who spoke through his poor uncultured and untrained brain, was his own divine *Ego*, the omniscient Deity within himself, and that what that Deity gave out was not in 'what measure he pleased,' but in the measure of the capacities of the mortal and temporary dwelling IT informed."

The article will be concluded in our next issue.

—Eds.]

JACOB Boehme was born in the year 1575, at Alt Seidenburg, a place about two miles distant from Goerlitz in Germany. He was the son of poor country people, and in his youth he herded the cattle of his parents. He was then sent to school, where he learned how to read and to write, and afterwards he entered as an apprentice a shoemaker's shop.

It seems that even in early youth he was able to enter into an abnormal state of consciousness and to behold images in the astral light; for once, while herding the cattle and standing on

the top of a hill, he suddenly saw an arched opening of a vault, built of large red stones, and surrounded by bushes. He went through that opening into the vault, and in its depths he beheld a vessel filled with money.

He, however, experienced no desire to possess himself of that treasure; but, supposing that it was a product of the spirits of darkness made to lead him into temptation, he fled.

On a later occasion, while left alone in the shoemaker's shop, an unknown stranger entered, asking to buy a pair of shoes. Boehme, supposing himself not entitled to make such a bargain in the absence of his master, asked an extraordinary high price, hoping thus to get rid of the person who desired to purchase. Nevertheless, the stranger bought the shoes and left the shop. After leaving, he stopped in front of the shop, and, with a loud and solemn voice called to Boehme:

“Jacob, come outside.”

Boehme was very much astonished to see that the stranger knew his name. He went out in the street to meet him, and there the stranger, grasping him by the hand, and, with deeply penetrating eyes looking into his eyes, spoke the following words: “Jacob, you are now little; but you will become a great man, and the world will wonder about you. Be pious, live in the fear of God, and honour His word. Especially do I admonish you to read the Bible; herein you will find comfort and consolation; for you will have to suffer a great deal of trouble, poverty, and persecution. Nevertheless, do not fear, but remain firm; for God loves you, and is gracious to you.” He then again pressed Boehme's hand, gave him another kind look and went away.

This remarkable event made a great impression on the mind of Jacob Boehme. He earnestly went through the practical exercises necessary in the study of practical occultism; that is to say, he practised patience, piety, simplicity of thought and purpose, modesty, resignation of his self-will to divine law, and he kept in mind the promise given in the Bible, that those who earnestly ask the Father in Heaven for the communication of the Holy Ghost will have the spirit of sanctity awakened within themselves, and be illuminated with His wisdom.

Such an illumination, indeed, took place within his mind, and for seven days in succession Jacob Boehme was in an ecstatic state, during which he was surrounded by the light of the Spirit, his consciousness immersed in contemplation and happiness. It is not stated what he saw during those visions, nor would such a statement have the result of gratifying the curiosity of the reader; for the things of the spirit are inconceivable to the external mind,

and can only be realized by those who, rising above the realms of the senses and entering a state of superior consciousness, can perceive them. Such a state does not necessarily include the exercise of the external faculties; for, while Plato says about Socrates that the latter once stood immovable for a day and a half upon one spot, in a state of such ecstasy, in the case of Jacob Boehme we find that during a similar condition he continued his external occupations in his profession.

Afterwards, in the year 1594, he became master-shoemaker, and married a woman with whom he lived for thirty years, and there were four sons born to him, who followed the same profession as himself.

In the year 1600, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, another divine illumination took place in his mind, and this time he learned to know the innermost foundation of nature, and acquired the capacity to see henceforth with eyes of the soul into the heart of all things, a faculty which remained with him even in his normal condition.

Ten years afterwards, *anno* 1610, his third illumination took place, and that which in former visions had appeared to him chaotic and multiplied was now recognized by him as a Unity, like a harp of many strings, of which each string is a separate instrument, while the whole is only one harp. He now recognized the divine order of nature, and how from the trunk of the tree of life spring different branches, bearing manifold leaves and flowers and fruits, and he became impressed with the necessity of writing down what he saw and preserving it.

Thus, beginning with the year 1612, and up to his end in the year 1624, he wrote many books about the things which he saw in the light of his own spirit, comprising thirty books full of the deepest mysteries regarding God and the angels, Christ and Man, Heaven and Hell and Nature, and the secret things of the world, and all this he did, not for the purpose of earthly gain, but for the redemption of mankind from ignorance regarding the things of the Spirit.

But his first work, entitled "Aurora" (the beginning of the new day), was not quite finished when, by the indiscretion of a friend, copies of the manuscript came into the hands of the clergy. The head parson of Goerlitz, whose name was Gregorius Richter, a person entirely incapable of conceiving of the depths of that religion which he professed to teach, in ignorance of the divine mysteries of true Christianity, of which he knew nothing but its superficial aspect and form, too vain to bear with toleration that

a poor shoemaker should be in possession of any spiritual knowledge which he, the well-fed priest, did not possess, became Jacob Boehme's bitterest enemy, denouncing and cursing the author of that book, and his hate was raised to the utmost degree by the meekness and modesty with which Boehme received the inquiries and denunciations directed toward him.

Soon the bigoted priest publicly in the pulpit accused Boehme of being a disturber of the peace and a heretic, asking the City Council of Goerlitz to punish the traitor, and threatening that if he were not removed from the town, the anger of God would be awakened and he would cause the whole place to be swallowed up by the earth, in the same manner in which he claimed that Korah, Dathan, and Abiram had perished after resisting Moses, the man of God.

In vain Jacob Boehme attempted to reason personally with the infuriated Doctor of Divinity. New curses and insults were the result of his interview with him, and the parson threatened to have Jacob Boehme arrested and put in prison. The City Council was afraid of the priest and, although he could not substantiate any charge against Boehme, nevertheless they ordered him to leave the town for fear of the consequences that might result if they did not comply with Rev. Richter's request.

Patiently Boehme submitted to the unjust decree. He requested to be permitted to go home and take leave of his family before going into banishment, and even this was refused to him. Then his only answer was: "Very well; if I cannot do otherwise, I will be contented."

Boehme left; but during the following night greater courage entered into the hearts and a better judgment into the heads of the Councilmen. They reproached themselves for having banished an inoffensive man, and the very next day they called Jacob Boehme back, and permitted him to remain, stipulating, however, that he should give up to them the manuscript of "Aurora," and that henceforth he should abstain from the writing of books.

For seven years, Boehme, in obedience to this foolish decree, restrained himself from writing down the experiences which he enjoyed in the realm of the spirit, and, instead of bringing light to mankind, contented himself with mending their shoes. Hard was the battle required to stem the tidal wave of the spirit, which with overpowering strength descended upon his soul; but at last, encouraged by the advice of his friends, who counselled him not to resist any longer the impulse coming from God, for fear of disobeying man-made authorities, he resumed the labour of writing.

The writings of Jacob Boehme soon made their way in the world, and attracted the attention of those who were capable of realizing and appreciating their true character. He found many friends and followers among the high and the lowly, the rich and the poor, and it seemed, indeed, as if a new outpouring of the Spirit of Truth was intended to take place in priest-ridden and bigoted Germany.

Jacob Boehme during that time wrote a number of books and pamphlets: "Aurora," "The Three Principles of Divine Being," "The Threefold Life of Man," "The Incarnation of Jesus Christ," "The Six Theosophical Points," "The Book of Terrestrial and Celestial Mysteries," "Biblical Calculation Regarding the Duration of the World," "The Four Complexions," "His Defence," "The Generation and Signature of all Beings," "True Repentance," "True Regeneration," "The Supersensual Life," "Regeneration and Divine Contemplation," "The Selection of Grace," "Holy Baptism," "Holy Communion," "Discourse between an Enlightened and an Unilluminated Soul," an essay on "Prayer," "Tables of the Three Principles of Divine Manifestation," "Key to the most Prominent Points," "One Hundred and Seventy-seven Theosophical Questions," "Theosophical Letters," and other smaller works and articles regarding philosophical matters.

In March, 1624, and shortly before his death, began for Jacob Boehme a time of great suffering. In 1623, Abraham von Frankenburg had some of Boehme's works published under the title of "The Way to Christ," and the appearance of this book, full of Divine Truth, again inflamed the envy and rage of the angry parson of Goerlitz, being blown into a flame by the observation of the great favour with which the book was received by all truly enlightened minds. With utmost fury he began again his persecutions of Jacob Boehme, cursing and damning him from the pulpit, and published against him a pasquil, full of personal insults and vulgar epithets, which contained neither reason nor logic; but in their place innumerable calumnies, such as only the brain of a person made insane by passion could invent or concoct.

This time Boehme did not remain so passive as on the former occasion; but he handed over to the City Council a written defence in justification of what he had done, and he moreover wrote a reply to Richter, answering in a quiet and dignified manner every point of the objection raised by him, annihilating his arguments by the force of his logic and by the power of truth. This defence was not in an ironical style, but pregnant with love and pity for the misguided man, modest and eloquent to a degree such as rarely can be found even among the greatest orators.

The City Council, however, being once more intimidated by the blustering priest, did not accept Boehme's defence, but expressed a wish that he should voluntarily leave the town, and they expressed this to him in the form of a well-meant advice, to save him from incurring the fate of heretics, which was to be burned alive at the stake by order of the Kurfürst or Emperor, either of whom might have been inclined to lend a willing ear to the representations of the clergy, hesitating very little to give the requisite order if the whim of the priesthood could be gratified by such a comparatively insignificant thing as the execution of a troublesome person who disturbed their peace.

Boehme, in obedience to that advice, which he well knew was a command in disguise, left Goerlitz on the 9th day of May, 1624, and went to Dresden, where he found an asylum in the house of a physician named Dr. Benjamin Hinkelman. There he received many honours and offers of aid; but he remained modest, writing to a friend that he intended to put his trust in no man, but in the living God; and that, as he was doing so, he was full of joy and all was well.

About this time Boehme, by order of the Kurfürst, was invited to take part in a learned disputation which was to take place between him and some of the best theologians of those times, including two professors of mathematics. The discussion took place, and Boehme astonished his opponents by the depths of his ideas and by his extraordinary knowledge in regard to divine and natural things; so that, when asked by the Kurfürst to give their decision, the theologians begged for time to investigate still more the matters which Boehme had represented to them, and which seemed to reach to the limits of what they believed themselves capable of grasping. One of these theologians, Gerhard by name, was heard to say that he would not take the whole world if it were offered to him as a bribe to condemn such a man, and the other, Dr. Meissner, answered that he was of the same opinion, and that they had no right to condemn that which surpassed their understanding; and thus it may be seen that not all the theologians were like Gregorius Richter; but that in the clerical profession, as in any other, there may be wise men and fools. Such theologians, of noble mind and without bigotry, were henceforth to be found among Jacob Boehme's admirers and friends, and whenever he met them he treated them with respect.

Soon afterwards he wrote his last work, entitled "Tables Regarding Divine Manifestation," and, having returned to his home, he was taken sick with a fever. His body began to swell, and he

announced to his friends that the time of his death was near. Then they asked him whether he was willing to die; and he replied: "Yes, according to the will of God." When his friends expressed the hope to find him improved on the following day, he said: "May God help that it shall be as you say. Amen."

This took place on a Friday; but on the next Sunday, on the 20th of November, 1624, before 1 a.m., Boehme called his son, Tobias, to his bedside, and asked him whether he did not hear a beautiful music. Later on, he asked what time it was, and when he was told that the clock struck two, he said: "This is not yet time for me; in three hours will be my time." He then gave to his wife certain directions regarding his books and other temporal matters, telling her also that she would not survive him very long (as, indeed, she did not), and, taking leave from his sons, he said, "Now I shall enter the paradise." He then asked his eldest son, whose loving looks seemed to keep Boehme's soul from severing the bonds of the body, to turn round, and, giving one deep sigh, his soul gave up the body to the earth to which it belonged, and entered into that higher state which is known to none except those who have experienced it themselves.

Jacob Boehme's enemy, the bigoted head-parson, Gregorius Richter, refused a decent burial to the corpse of the philosopher, and, as the City Council of Goerlitz, again in fear of the priest, were wavering and uncertain what to do, it was already decided to take the body for burial to a country place belonging to one of Boehme's friends, on which occasion, undoubtedly, a row would have taken place and the ceremony been disturbed by the populace, whose prejudices were aroused by the clergy; but at the appropriate time the Catholic Count Hannibal von Dronha arrived and ordered the body to be buried in a solemn manner and in the presence of two of the members of the City Council. This took place accordingly; but the parson pretended to be sick so as to avoid being obliged to hold the funeral sermon, and the clergyman who held the sermon in his place, although he himself had given absolution and the sacrament to Boehme shortly before the latter died, began his speech by expressing his great disgust at having been forced to do so by order of the Council.

Some friends of Boehme in Silesia sent a cross to be put on his grave; but it was soon destroyed by the hands of some bigot who imagined to please God by insulting the memory of a man who was obnoxious to the priests, but who had done more to bring to mankind a true knowledge of God than priestcraft ever did in modern or ancient times.

In his exterior appearance, Boehme was little, having a short,

thin beard, a feeble voice, and eyes of a greyish tint. He was deficient in physical strength; nevertheless, there is nothing known of his having ever had any other disease than the one that caused his death. But, if Jacob Boehme was small in body, he was a giant in intelligence and a powerful spirit. His hands could accomplish no greater works than to write and to make shoes; but the power of God having become manifest in that apparently insignificant organism and compound of natural and spiritual principles which represented the man Jacob Boehme, on this terrestrial globe, was strong enough to overthrow, and is still overthrowing, the most petrified and gigantic superstitions existing in his own and subsequent centuries. His "Spirit" is still battling with the powers of darkness, and the Light which was kindled in the soul of poor little Jacob Boehme is still illuminating the world, growing larger and brighter from day to day in proportion as mankind becomes more capable of beholding it, and of receiving and grasping his ideas. His spirit, or to speak more correctly, the Spirit of Truth as manifested through the writings of Jacob Boehme, is gradually bringing life into old dry-bone theology, killing clericalism and bigotry, superstition and ignorance, the giant monsters which have been devastating the world for ages past, and to whom more victims have been sacrificed than have died by the hands of the god of war, by pestilence and drugs. The thinking part of humanity is beginning to see that there is a vast difference between the true spirit of Christian religion and its external form in which it is represented to the vulgar mind. Even the better class of clergy—that is to say, those who are not fully absorbed in the dogmatic opinions which were engrafted into their minds in their schools, but who dare to seek for self-knowledge in God—know that a clinging to the external forms of religion prevents the mind from penetrating into their depths and grasping the spirit that produced these forms, and which is one and the same in all great religions; for the truth is universal, external and only one; it is the learned ones who take a multiple aspect of it, and regard it through manifold coloured glasses.

(To be concluded)

To teach is to learn twice.

—JOURBERT

THEOSOPHICAL DUTIES

Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and—let him hear the Law.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THEOSOPHY presents a consistent philosophy. Its cosmogony is stupendous in its scope and the evolutionary stages are set out in startling clarity. Proceeding to ethics, the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation are explained and their rationale demonstrated as precisely as any theorem of Euclid. Even to the average mind, Theosophy appears more profound than the sentiments aroused by the bell, book and candle of exoteric religions. Theosophy sees life, not as a struggle of one human unit against another, but as an opportunity for conducting a grave and momentous experiment in living.

In the context of the impersonality that Theosophy advocates, the concept of duty takes on a different aspect from that which prevails in either the philosophy or the ethics of the day. Theosophical discipline demands that the personal be eschewed and the selfish eradicated. That which is passional, that which promotes the interests of one group or one unit against those of another, has to be brushed aside—eliminated. In the context of such a philosophy, it often becomes puzzling for the student to chart out his duties for the living of a Theosophical life. It is evident that such duties have to be of universal application and must deal with the progression of the soul. Set out below are some duties suggested by ideas culled from a letter written in the early days by the Great Master of Wisdom:

(1) Before you attend to your own salvation, be self-sacrificing enough to search for all possible means by which the right path may be seen and chosen by those who are near to your circle of effort. Then seek to expand your circle of influence. It matters not if such effort seems to retard your own advancement.

(2) Bigotry and superstition are just as rampant among men of science as they are among men of religion. If the materialistic way of life has touched you, you too are contaminated and are thus a potential carrier of the infection. These poisonous weeds have to be first killed in yourself and then in others.

(3) You have to demonstrate in your own life the possibility that animal propensities can be curbed and overcome, and also

adduce proof by reasoned arguments that your case for the eradication of these propensities is just. People generally accept that it is wrong to be angry or to be jealous. Very few know the reason why. It is excellent discipline to tabulate your own reasons.

(4) In all ages, the ignorant masses have followed the lead of the intellectuals. When people in the mass have ceased to evaluate correctly the ideals of discipline, sacrifice and gratitude, know that the rot must have started with the intellectuals of the race. So, work to effect a change in the moral fibre of the so-called learned. Prepare yourself to meet the intellectual on his own ground and then bend his intellect towards the Light. You have the right to do this.

(5) When you have yourself lived Theosophy and benefited by it, it becomes your duty to canalize its waters to irrigate other fields. For this, preach and popularize a knowledge of Theosophy. In your grand aloofness, do not for a moment say: "If they desire Theosophy, let them come to me, my doors are open." The work of the missionary is best performed by a roving ambassadorship among the populace. It were foolish of you to expect that the field will come to your doorstep for the sowing of seeds. Remember that it is the missionary who is nearest to martyrdom.

(6) The Theosophical Society was chosen by the Initiates as the corner-stone—the foundation of the future religions of humanity. The edifice for which the Theosophical Society served as foundation has yet to be built. Will you be a layer of bricks and a carrier of stones? Have you attained the required proficiency?

(7) To achieve brotherhood among the many, an intermingling of the high and the low of society was decided upon. There was a time when the high looked down upon the low. The tables are turning and the low are now beginning to assume the high positions. But the sharp cleavage exists and motivates vast multitudes of men. Can you contrive to bring this conflict to a halt and promote a genuine friendly striving where both unite enthusiastically to reach a common goal?

(8) The combative natural instinct of man has led to tyrannies, enslavement and tortures, and may yet visit humanity with unheard-of cruelties unless it is restrained through the soothing influence of brotherhood and the practical application of the esoteric doctrines. If you would lend a helping hand, practise brotherhood first in your family and immediate environment.

(9) It is your duty to acquire enough knowledge to carry conviction to the many and to be able to demonstrate that the

fundamental doctrines of all religions are identical in their esoteric meaning. Study along this line is incumbent. It is one of the three objects of the Theosophical Movement.

(10) It is your duty that you efface the personal ego in order that the true Self be perceived. This Self has to be enthroned in a transcendental divine life.

(11) It is your duty to go on teaching the multitudes that this earthly existence is a burden and an illusion. What men call "the struggle for life" applies to this illusion only. The same "struggle" is non-existent on the moral planes of being.

(12) It is your duty to preach to the world the noble ideals of benevolence, philanthropy and reform. But take care that you live up to these ideals and do not make of them a mockery in your own life.

(13) Your mission sooner or later is to concern yourself with the care of the teeming millions and especially of their hereafter. Abandon your posture of a grand isolation. Enter upon your missionary duty with the zeal born of an unquenchable love.

(14) They are not fit to receive Knowledge who have no thought for the many. Beware lest you give of the hard-earned Knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, to such selfish seekers after Knowledge.

(15) Make it your mission in life to be born again and yet again for the benefit of mankind. You may have to subject yourself to misery, to imprisonment in flesh, to all the sorrows of life, so that out of your self-sacrifice you may become the means for the securing of salvation and bliss in the hereafter for a handful of men.

(16) In Theosophy lie the solutions of the great problems of the dual principles of right and wrong, of pain and pleasure, of egotism and altruism. Search for these solutions diligently, for they have the power to transform your life. Having secured your bounty, go you out among your brothers and help them to a like transformation. He who thinks he can preserve to himself the fruits of spiritual advancement labours under a serious error. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

THE FIELD OF STUDY

WHEN you read a book, a story of any kind, often you find on the flyleaf an apt quotation to summarize the author's idea of the contents. In some cases quotations are even put at the head of each chapter of the story. These are usually taken from great writers who have a gift of expressing a whole world of philosophy in a short verse or piece of prose.

The Theosophical Movement of our era set before it a motto, "There is no religion higher than Truth," which in a few words expresses what we offer to those who inquire into Theosophy. Its devotees, then, are those who seek Truth. When we discover this truth we shall know the highest principle in life, and the end of our seeking will be in seeing and knowing the whole story. It has to be divided into chapters or stages of study and each portion has its heading.

The first one states that there is a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood to be recognized, not bound by either sex or race differences, colour or class distinctions.

Then, secondly, students must make a comparative study of the chief religions, philosophies and sciences.

The third portion is the study of the laws and powers latent within man and nature.

Thus at once you have the key to what is the field of study for those who inquire within. As absorbing a story as you can wish to read in any lifetime, is Truth, which you are told is the highest thing to seek. There is an old saying, that he who aims at a star hits higher than he who aims at a tree. Thus we have set before us an ideal which is nothing short of perfection. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect," said one Teacher who knew the Truth.

This, then, is the way for the pilgrim in eternity, to see the highest in all, through all and around all. To have one's eyes opened to the truth, to see it through its veilings of form, colour, languages and differences of opinion, is to see that we all share one common basis, Matter, and are all one in Spirit. Thus one nature ensouls all. Universal elements feed all—air, water, fire and earth. This we see demonstrated in the world around us.

Forms change, even as our own body does from the wee babe, through youth, to old age. The seed of an annual plant changes from root, stem, leaf and flower again to seed, fulfilling a cycle of one life, through changing forms to its fulness of perfection. So we learn abstract truths through the lessons of tangible evolv-

ing life. Why does the seed contain the material and design for the new plant? Inquisitiveness is aroused by the question and Manas the thinker has commenced his journey towards the goal. Why does the earth hold diamonds, gold and wonderful jewels? Why do some fish travel far to lay their eggs, returning to their native rivers to die? Butterflies leave their eggs where the young that they will not see shall have food to hand. Why do birds travel across countries and know the way home the next season? Here you have your naturalist asking why. Then, in the same inquiring manner the scientist who studies anything from a speck of dust to a star, planet or sun; also your religionist who studies morals and the salvation of man. Then comes your true philosopher who, with a higher faculty of reason, begins to answer the inquiries of "why" by seasoned steps of logic, by understanding himself. "Man, know thyself" and then thou shalt understand the universe, is the philosopher's key. "As above, so below" is also a well-known saying. "Man is the microcosm of the macrocosm," therefore by understanding himself man will understand God. That is the Truth to know and to discover.

We, as students, have no simple task to know ourselves, the powers latent within and our relation to all life. To know that we are made in the workshop of this universe having a portion of all its departments by mystic alchemy blended in us, is part of the study set before us.

THE true Knight of the Way must perforce be both broad-shouldered and stout of heart; his burden is heavy and he has far to go. For Goodness is the burden he has taken upon himself; and must we not grant that it is a heavy one to bear? Only with death does this journey end: then must we not grant that he has far to go?

—*The Analects of Confucius*

THE COMPASSIONATE GOAL

ONE aspect of H.P.B.'s work was to show the vast difference between a Buddha of Compassion and a Buddha of Selfishness. She also drew the attention of her students to the steps leading to both. In a footnote in *The Voice of the Silence* we read:

A *Bodhisattva* is, in the hierarchy, less than a "perfect Buddha." In the exoteric parlance these two are very much confused. Yet the innate and right popular perception, owing to that self-sacrifice, has placed a *Bodhisattva* higher in its reverence than a Buddha.

The Theosophical Movement owes its existence to the Buddhas of Compassion, the *Bodhisattvas*, for They "don Nirmanakaya's humble robe" and "forgo eternal bliss for Self, to help on man's salvation." On the other hand, the Selfish Buddhas become but "an ideal Breath."

Once a *Dharmakaya*, an Adept or Buddha leaves behind every possible relation with, or thought for, this earth.

Caring nothing for the woes of mankind or to help it, but only for their own *bliss*, they enter Nirvana and—disappear from the sight and the hearts of men.

There is no doubt that the Theosophical Movement was intended to lead men to the Compassionate goal, for in the early literature of the Movement we find the following:

The true Theosophist is a philanthropist, "Not for himself but for the world he lives."

My reference to "philanthropy" was meant in its broadest sense, and to draw attention to the absolute need of the "doctrine of the heart" as opposed to that which is merely "of the eye."

How shall we find out towards which goal we are tending, for we are now sowing the seeds which will bear the fruit of liberation or of renunciation in the future? Self-examination in the light of the Higher Self and the Paramitas will be helpful. Do we feel we need (*i.e.*, must have) help, because we doubt our own strength? Are we full of fear and the consequent desire to escape justice at the hands of the Law? Doubt, fear, weakness, lack of moral stamina, make us useless to others; for our consciousness is turned on ourselves and our difficulties, and all our energy is expended on trying to get help to solve them. Can we find the necessary courage to bear our own troubles so that spiritual help may be given to others who need it more? Do we begin to feel that we can pass on help to others?

True it is that "the Light from the One Master, the one unfading golden light of Spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the Disciple from the very first"; and that "the fiery aura of the 'Hand' of Lhagpa [is] extended in protecting love over the heads of his ascetics." But there is a great difference between this steady help which feeds our higher nature, and the will-weakening, inner, personal cry for help in our self-made difficulties.

Are we fearful of helping others lest we help wrongly, and so refrain from being the instrument of Karma for good? Do we fear to help another because "it is his Karma that he should suffer"? Do we feel that life is hard enough as it is and that we have not the strength to work for others?

There are many other questions from *The Voice of the Silence* which we can ask ourselves. Do we renounce here and now all "personal" desires, feelings, thoughts? Do we "make of pride and self-regard bond-maidens to devotion"? Do we lay our "patience and submission to the Law, as a sweet flower at the feet of Shakya-Thubpa?" Do we begin to feel "mental woe unspeakable, woe for the living Dead, and helpless pity for the men of karmic sorrow"? Do we pour out our love and sympathy now, so that what we have of Alaya's "sweet running waters" does not "become a stagnant pond"?

Do we willingly spend precious time in teaching the simple aspects of the philosophy to those who know less than we do, when otherwise we might be increasing our own learning by more advanced study? Or, do we concentrate on attaining our own perfection? Do we strive to deliver the mind "from thralldom by the cessation of sin and faults," i.e., by inaction do we try to avoid effects, sitting apart from men and the world, hardening ourselves against the sorrows of others? Do we draw away from the world and feel the longing for freedom? Do we put our own house in order and care nothing for the suffering we cause others in the process? Do we centre our thought on ourselves, *our* Higher Self, *our* work, *our* struggle for perfection, and in so doing sow the seeds which will flower as "oblivion of the World and men for ever"?

After this self-analysis, what do we find as the basic underlying thought-motive of life? Unless we find it to be "to live to benefit mankind," the "Secret Path" is not for us. But if we find that thought the irreducible basis of our "guna" or life's colour and note, then the Path of the Paramitas is ours. Bit by bit we must attune our minds and hearts to Humanity's great pain, and answer every cry of distress, for it is the cry of Humanity that

must reach the ear at that last stage and draw the escaping consciousness back to its vehicle of action. We have only to read the stories of the lives and the final sacrifice of such as the Buddha and Kwan-Yin to see that the choices made life after life resulted in that sensitivity to the cry of man which made it possible for Them to renounce Their well-earned Bliss and live and labour to help mankind.

We must begin trying to live and breathe in all, as all we perceive breathes in us; we must try to feel ourselves abiding in all things, and all things in Self. It is when we sense the inter-relationship between man and man, and man and the Self, that we become faintly conscious of Humanity's great pain and feel that pain as our own. Instead of withdrawing from the sufferings of others it is these and not our own that must make us weep: Our energy must be used to wipe away the tears and destroy their cause. We must become hard to our own sorrows or we shall never be gentle to others in theirs.

Full of Dana, charity, and love and tender mercy, we can approach the First Gate. All things seem possible when we are moved by Love, and the Path ahead seems wonderful, green and smooth and easy of approach. Full of hope we pass on. Which of us has not felt this when we first came into touch with Theosophy? Looking at the Goal, its radiance illumined all, and the thrill of joy was upon us as we started our journey. But every step we take, either in the advanced stages of the Path or in our ordinary life as students of Theosophy, leads us further from the world we have known, the world we have seen with our eyes and heard with our ears. The inner sense that brings understanding of what we see and hear has not yet developed and the loss of long familiar things before we have become accustomed to the new, causes Hope—which alone keeps our Will operating—to grow dim. It seems that we shall never reach the next stage; the goal itself becomes clouded over; doubt of ourselves and fear of the unaccustomed raise their heads. Rooted to the spot, blind and deaf to all save the inner sense which does not yet speak clearly, there is only one thing to do. We must practise Harmony, relying on Law. Things will not go wrong if we obey the Law we know, and we can wait for time to straighten them out.

Through the Third Portal we merge the other senses into the inner sense, that of the inner touch, and again in losing the outer we may lose our balance while the readjustment goes on. But we will not lose our balance if we practise Kshanti, patience sweet that nought can ruffle. Patience shows an appreciation of

the time factor. Causes take time to become effects, effects take time to work out, but the Law once in motion must be left to work itself out on the lower planes while in the mind we learn to evaluate correctly outer things. An effect dies at the moment of its birth in the outer world, for it is only its disintegrating corpse that causes us trouble. The life-germ or essence is fructified in terms of our reaction to it and it either turns into an active Kamarupa, forming skandhas of the future, or its essence is built into character.

With Patience, Harmony and Love, Viraga is born. With the right evaluation of outer things we no longer fear to lose them, neither do we live in them. The world we are leaving, which seemed so full, has to be seen to be empty; the world whose threshold we are on seems so empty, yet has to be seen as full. This reorientation has to be gone through in the mind, and as we have begun to lose the need for outer things so we must clear the mind of all impressions of the outer. Thoughts are powerful things and here we have to watch and make harmless "those children of our thoughts" which swarm round humankind. The mind must be filled with "Nature's Soul-Thought," and further on, when all thoughts are conquered, the mind must feel itself "All-Thought."

With dauntless energy we have to reach Dhyana, which leads us to "the realm of Sat eternal and its ceaseless contemplation," and to go on to Prajna, which makes of a man a God, "a Bodhi-sattva." The man is likened to "an alabaster vase, white and transparent." No earthly passions or pride of self remain. "Within there burns a steady golden fire, the flame of Prajna that radiates from Atma." He is that vase. Shall he, like the moth dazzled by the night-light, be dazzled by the gloriousness of that Golden Fire, and as the moth loses itself in the flame, shall he lose himself in the Light? Or by a supreme effort shall he radiate through the Alabaster Bowl the glory of the Light to all?

If the latter, then "all Nature thrills with joyous awe and feels subdued"; from the deep unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, all Nature's wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

JOY UNTO YE, O MEN OF MYALBA.

A PILGRIM HATH RETURNED BACK "FROM THE OTHER SHORE."

A NEW ARHAN IS BORN.

THE ONE SOURCE

IT is proof of the advancement of thought to have anyone openly seek for the true spirit of all religions, which is also their common source. Without this search humanity will not attain to the kingdom of true Brotherhood, nor will the individual attain the inner enlightenment so necessary for fulfilling the obligations of a citizen of a social order founded on Justice and flourishing in Peace.

We must realize not only that we need a "knowledge of mankind's many paths to God," but, further, that those many paths are but aspects of the One Path. If we need the strength inherent in each of the great religions to counteract the weaknesses in our own biases, we should come to learn that *all* religions are identical in essence. The great Prophets have reiterated the same truths as wisdom, all have given identical teachings; only the erroneous interpretations of men have given rise to differences of creeds and of faiths. The words of each great Prophet are but the echoes of the Grand Songs which fill the Akasha, and each but gives what suits the particular cycle to which He comes.

The seeds which they sow sprout, but all too soon are throttled by the treacherous embrace of weeds—petty greeds, mean angers, small vanities, all put together and making possible the existence of priests, bigotry and intolerance. Tolerance will be a reality, not when we view all religions on an equal basis, but when we see them as One. A comparative study of religions is, therefore, not sufficient. We must proceed further to trace the evolution of each from the corruption experienced by its immediate predecessor, till the conviction is forced upon us that there must exist a body of Knowledge possessed by all the sage-prophets, which must be the One Source of indivisible Truth. Then only will any improvement on the physical plane take root and flower, and difficult social and political problems be solved, for the very basis of religious inspiration will have changed, engendering a correct attitude to life.

It is not enough to say that human beings have always had a religious impulse; we must ask, why? It is not enough to state that the most ancient extant scriptures of the world, the Vedas, already taught the eternal truths of life; we must compare the ideas which they hold with the current teachings given as science to our children in the schools, and among those teachings that the first men were savages, uncouth and untaught. The scientific concept of the origin of man is automatically done away with as

a result of our findings. Our mental outlook will change in consequence, and our new-found responsibility will reveal the necessity of attaining the Divinity within us.

Our physical actions are likewise coloured by this conception. For, man as a Spirit-being is capable of grasping pure truth in its entirety, an idea which seems far removed even from many of the foremost thinkers of today. Recognition of the unity of man's thought and his capacity to attain the One Truth changes our entire outlook.

In our midst, forces of enmity and of hatred are still rampant—veritable manifestations of personal ambition. Intolerance, whether religious, political or economic, still exists. Religious intolerance is the most nefarious because it crushes and imprisons the mind of man, restricting him to such a narrow groove that he can no longer grow. He becomes mentally and spiritually dead, for there is no life without growth.

Yet there is a persistent groping and searching for light. Unsatisfied, man is even now seeking for consolation in the teachings of the great religious leaders—his inner intuition prompting him to look for Knowledge not in scientific circles but in the sphere of mysticism and occultism.

The social and economic necessity of sympathetic communication between nations entails an understanding of the inmost religious and philosophical beliefs of the peoples concerned. More, in times of stress men's minds and hearts instinctively rise in revolt against the materialistic temper to which they justifiably charge much of social disaster and seek knowledge of the roots of life, the sources of their being; they search for truth regardless of where the search may lead.

From this thesis it is but one step to the realization that man can attain the sublime heights of a Christ or a Buddha. If it is true that the dark and tragic world actions are the result of individual deeds, then it is equally true that small deeds of charity, love and self-sacrifice benefit humanity. If enough men and women were to live in terms of the principles of the Eternal Philosophy—Sanatana Dharma (which signifies more than the Hindu religion as extant)—they could not only regenerate themselves, but through that self-reform could help to regenerate their country, and through their country, the whole of the human race.

It is man's greatest inspiration to realize that while retaining his humble position as an aspect, one fragment of an indivisible whole, yet he can fulfil his ultimate responsibility to his fellow

beings by following in the footsteps of the Great Inspirers. For each can say to himself:

Shun ignorance, and likewise shun illusion. Avert thy face from world deceptions: mistrust thy senses; they are false. But within thy body—the shrine of thy sensations—seek in the Impersonal for the “Eternal Man”; and having sought him out, look inward: thou art Buddha.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

THE Spirit of Christmas—what are its real manifestations?

The joy born of the knowledge that the wheel of the Good Law moves in rhythm by the force of Justice which is Mercy, and that both pain and pleasure are avenues to that knowledge.

The mental habit of putting oneself in the place of another, which is real sympathy, and thus extending the hand of fellowship to strengthen the bond of human brotherhood, which is superior to national patriotism, racial pride and social claims.

The enlightened contentment which uses every event in life to improve prospects and to beautify them so that the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world may shine more brightly in our own hearts and may shed its radiance all around.

To be gracious, so that the weak, the ignorant, the downtrodden as well as the strong, the learned and the high-handed may acquire some of the qualities that belong to the Spirit of Christmas.

We must learn ever to remember that:

... even the purest delight may pall,
 And power must fail, and the pride must fall,
 And the love of the dearest friends grow small—
 But the glory of the Lord is all in all.

The Glory, *Vibhuti*, of the Lord is in each man, each woman, each child, and the Anointed Ones have exclaimed in every age:

“I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings.”

INNER CONVERSION

AS every student of Theosophy knows, our bodies are composed of millions of little "lives" that are drawn into our organism, stay there for a longer or shorter period and leave us again impressed with the mark of our characteristics. Having left us they seek harbourage in another body, being attracted to an organism consubstantial with themselves. Those emanating from the gluttonous, for instance, will combine with others that are gaining experience in the bodies of men or animals of a gluttonous nature; those stamped with kindness will join up with the kindly, and so on, like always seeking like.

It therefore comes as a surprise to many to read in W. Q. Judge's article entitled "The Persian Students' Doctrine" (reprinted in *The Heart Doctrine*) that the stream of atoms emanating from the Sage, "full of his virtue, his hopes, aspirations, and the impress of his knowledge and power," not only "flowed out to other Sages, to disciples, to the good in every land," but "even fell upon the unjust and the ferocious," with the result that "thoughts of virtue, of peace, of harmony grew up where those streams flowed." How, one wonders, can these "virtuous" atoms be attracted to and find a field of expression in the organism of the vicious man? This seems at first sight quite contrary to the law of affinity referred to above.

Presumably this is once more a question of man's dual nature. There is the personality and there is the Inner Ruler. As applied to the former the law of affinity is quite easy to understand. The good or the bad man emits good or bad "lives" as the case may be and these seek incarnation in the personal aspect of good or bad men, and so on. But in the case of the Sage's atoms it is no less, though not so obviously, a case of seeking like: the wise man's spiritual atoms are drawn to spiritual men but they also find a congenial home in the spiritual core that is to be found even in vicious persons. In the heart of every creature dwells Ishwara, the Great Lord, who responds to such influence as is carried by the atoms which bear the impress of the Wise.

Perhaps this strengthening power of the Inner God is one of the factors involved in the redemption of those—fortunately very exceptional—cases where men are deliberately concentrating, life after life, on selfish and earthly interests to the point where they are losing contact with their spiritual aspect. We are taught that a left-oriented man can be saved even after he has gone some way down the all-too-easy decline—whether inadvertently

or of deliberate choice; that a knowledge of the "Name" or "Word," as it is called, may re-establish upon the right-hand path the erstwhile traveller down the road that leads to destruction. "Conversion" then takes place and a kind of behaviour follows which is entirely new to the observer and is not to be traced to the known character or past actions of the subject. A paragraph by Robert Crosbie in *The Friendly Philosopher* (p. 152) seems to cast light on this mysterious problem:

A *Siddha-Purusha* (perfect man) is like an archaeologist who removes the dust and lays open an old well which has been covered up by ages of disuse. The *Avatara*, on the other hand, is like an engineer who sinks a new well in a place where there was no water before. Great men give salvation to those only who have the waters of piety hidden in themselves, but the *Avatara* saves him too whose heart is devoid of love and dry as a desert.

Now, since the first, I mean natural genius, plays a greater part than all the others, here too, although it is rather a gift than an acquired quality, we should still do our utmost to train our minds into sympathy with what is noble and, as it were, impregnate them again and again with lofty inspiration. "How?" you will ask. Well, elsewhere I have written something like this: "Sublimity is the true ring of a noble mind." And so even without being spoken the bare idea often of itself wins admiration for its inherent genius. . . .

It is impossible that those whose thoughts and habits all their lives long are petty and servile should flash out anything wonderful, worthy of immortal life. No, a great style is the natural outcome of weighty thoughts, and sublime sayings naturally fall to men of spirit. . . . The nobler faculties of the soul decay, and wither, and lose all the fire of emulation, when men neglect the cultivation of their immortal parts, and suffer the mortal and worthless to engross all their care and admiration.

—LONGINUS

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“Relativity and quantum physics both imply the need to look on the world as an undivided whole in which all parts of the universe, including the observer and his instruments, merge and unite in one totality.”

Thus David Bohm. Scientists today are declaring what intuitive thinkers have always believed, that everything in the universe is held together in an “unbroken wholeness.” The opening article in *World Goodwill Newsletter* (1988, No. 2) states that the once idealistic notion of oneness is being shown today to have a solid basis in fact:

The idea of unity is very much alive in our times. It is inspiring people to want to build an outer world that reflects their inner sense of wholeness. In ecology, in politics, in religion, in psychology and all the other disciplines, new schools of thought are emerging that emphasize the interrelatedness and the interdependence of life. . . .

The great masters of physics of this century—people like Einstein, Bohr, Planck and Heisenberg—looked deep into the heart of matter in search of the ultimate building blocks of the material world, the separate parts from which everything is made. What they discovered, however, was that the material world is not made up of separate “things” at all. As the physicist Fritjof Capra says, modern physics “shows that we cannot decompose the world into independently existing smallest units. As we penetrate into matter, nature does not show us any isolated basic building blocks, but rather appears as a complicated web of relations between the various parts of a unified whole. . . . subatomic particles—and therefore, ultimately, all parts of the universe—cannot be understood as isolated entities but must be defined through their interrelations.” Perhaps the most significant level of oneness that has been observed by the physicists is the curious relation that is known to exist between consciousness and the energy fields of matter. . . .

It’s not just physics that has brought previously unknown depths of unity into the realm of the known. The science of ecology has demonstrated the extraordinary complexity of interactions that bind all units of life together into one network of relationship. And on the interface between biology, chemistry and physics there is a sense of excitement among a group of scientists who are trying to discover the laws that govern the way in which different parts of nature, such as cells and organisms, “are put together and function as integrated wholes.” They are looking at life, enquiring into

the way life organizes itself, the way life is creative and appears to evolve in accord with some plan or "cosmic blueprint." . . .

Knowledge about wholeness becomes an effective tool for transformation only when it is fused with the vision and the ethics of wholeness. When that happens, powerful energies of goodwill are unleashed—energies that can change the very structure of civilization. And this is exactly what is beginning to happen now. Take, for example, the growing dialogue between science and the religious and esoteric traditions. Since Fritjof Capra's book, *The Tao of Physics*, was published in 1975, a number of scientists have begun to write and speak about their view that science is revealing patterns of unity in the world which seem to reinforce and be in perfect harmony with the teachings of the ageless wisdom. . . . This powerful blending of an intuitive, esoteric vision of oneness with a scientific knowledge about the way in which oneness operates in the world is transforming the values that guide the human race. There is no clearer evidence of this than the global ecology movement and the emerging sense of personal responsibility for the well-being of all life on earth.

Within the last decade or so signs have been appearing of a profound change of attitude within the scientific community. A symptom of this change is a willingness to include the fact of consciousness as a legitimate area of scientific inquiry. The Nobel Prize winner, Roger Sperry, writes:

Current concepts of the mind-brain relation involve a direct break with the long-established materialist and behaviourist doctrine that has dominated neuroscience for many decades. Instead of renouncing or ignoring consciousness, the new interpretation gives full recognition to the primacy of inner conscious awareness as a causal reality.

This view of consciousness as a cause and not an effect, states *World Goodwill Newsletter* (1988, No. 2), has been advanced by other prominent scientists, including the neurophysiologist, Sir John Eccles, the quantum physicist, David Bohm, and the biologist, Rupert Sheldrake.

A similar rejection of mechanistic or reductionist models is also under way in other branches of science. In particular, the theory of Darwinian evolution through random genetic change is being challenged. The idea that "Inert Matter, Senseless Force and Blind

Chance" can give rise to the intricacy and co-ordination of organic forms is now being found inadequate. Instead it is being suggested that there are laws of creation inherent in the evolutionary process which are analogous to those governing inorganic matter. The biologist, Conrad Waddington, has theorized that there exist innate evolutionary potentials which are triggered off when conditions become favourable. It has also been suggested that there may be "a deeper mathematical process" underlying the development of life forms.

Approaching the problem of forms from another angle, the Nobel Prize winner, Ilya Prigogine, has advanced the idea that self-organizing open systems predominate in the universe. Such an idea, he writes, "leads to a new view of matter in which matter is no longer the passive substance described in the mechanistic world but is associated with spontaneous activity. This change is so profound that...we can really speak about a new dialogue of man with nature."...

The new scientific paradigm has a number of features in common with esoteric teachings. For example, the ideas that purpose and consciousness are causal factors acting within more concrete systems, that matter possesses an innate capacity to organize itself, that there is a hierarchy of levels each of which possesses distinctive qualities, are all familiar in esotericism. So too is the idea of evolutionary design. But perhaps the most significant point of contact lies in the idea of an immanent organizing principle of life in matter....

The crisis of modern science also comes from a realization that the realm of quality can no longer be left out of account. The incessant quest of human beings for value, meaning and beauty, the very fact of consciousness, can no longer be ignored as irrelevant to science. This means that the "Berlin Wall" traditionally dividing the sciences from the humanities must be dismantled. When this occurs, and the work has already started, we may expect a new integration of the subjective and objective worlds, of the humanities and science, and of significance and measurement. The outlines of a new mystic science, or scientific mysticism, are already visible.

The greatest structures of the ancient world were built using principles of sacred architecture. The pyramids, the Parthenon and Stonehenge are examples; and sacred structures are not lacking in India. Today a small group of architects is trying to

emulate those principles in their work. In an article in *Omni* (May 1988), Jamake Highwater writes of his visit to the Lindisfarne Mountain Retreat in Colorado, U.S.A., and the impressive architecture of its recently constructed chapel, used as a "sanctuary for philosophical meditation."

It was once believed that "structure on the physical level is integral with structure on the metaphysical level." Highwater writes of his discussions with authorities on sacred architecture and the related subject of geometry. "Every geometry can become mystical when the formulas are correct." He concludes:

There is little doubt, however, that structures based on principles of sacred architecture do, for whatever reasons, move people. They sense the sacredness of the place. They may not be sure what's going on, but they are affected by it. . . .

We're not yet sure how to instill our structures with meaning. Indeed we may be better at recognizing the sacred in a rock than at fabricating structures that produce an atmosphere of sacredness. Perhaps that is why we revert to systems of mathematics and geometry in our efforts to construct our holy places.

The meaning we see in the world is probably more a reflection of ourselves than of some fixed and final truth. As Loren Eiseley put it in his book *The Firmament of Time*, "Man's quest for certainty is, in the last analysis, a quest for meaning. But the meaning lies buried within himself rather than in the void he has vainly searched for portents since antiquity." . . .

All of the structures built by humankind are expressions of who we are, for all reflect the mentality of the people who produced them. Each of us projects upon the world the ideal—the model paradise—that embodies our vision of ourselves and the cosmos. That vision changes from time to time and from place to place. If it is not eternal, it is nonetheless significant as a metaphor of our minds. Accordingly, the temple is sacred because we envision it to be sacred. But is that sacredness found in nature, or is it something we bestow upon the world as an act of faith and imagination? Perhaps we will never know.

Not all would agree with Highwater when he says that "we seem to have come to architecture rather late" in our evolutionary progress. If we go back in time, the earliest civilizations we touch reveal to us a knowledge of architecture which is amazing. The mistaken belief still persists that civilization began in savagery and progressed gradually till it reached the present "enlightened" era. We need to adopt instead the idea that at the

dawn of human evolution divine Teachers and Instructors lived among men and taught infant humanity all the arts and sciences, including architecture. Says *The Secret Doctrine*:

Let those who doubt this statement. . . turn to such works as those of Vitruvius Pollio of the Augustan age, on architecture, for instance, in which all the rules of proportion are those *taught anciently at initiations*, if he would acquaint himself with the truly divine art, and understand the *deep esoteric significance hidden in every rule and law of proportion*. No man descended from a Palaeolithic cave-dweller could ever evolve such a science unaided, even in millenniums of thought and intellectual evolution. . . . "It is owing to the divine perfection of those architectural proportions that the Ancients could build those wonders of all the subsequent ages, their Fanes, Pyramids, Cave-Temples, Cromlechs, Cairns, Altars, proving they had the powers of machinery and a knowledge of mechanics to which modern skill is like a child's play, and which that *skill* refers to itself as the 'works of hundred-handed giants.'" (See "*Book of God*," Kenealy.) Modern architects may not altogether have neglected those rules, but they have super-added enough empirical innovations to destroy those just proportions. It is Vitruvius who gave to posterity the rules of construction of the Grecian temples erected to the immortal gods; and the ten books of Marcus Vitruvius Pollio on Architecture, of one, in short, *who was an initiate*, can only be studied esoterically. The Druidical circles, the Dolmen, the Temples of India, Egypt and Greece, the Towers and the 127 towns in Europe which were found "Cyclopean in origin" by the French Institute, are all the work of initiated Priest-Architects, the descendants of those primarily taught by the "Sons of God," justly called "The Builders." (I, 208-9 fn.)

"The attitude of 'so little time' suffocates the human spirit," says Martin Marty, theology professor at the University of Chicago and author of many books, in his article "Make Yourself Available!" (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., November 1988)

Because they act as if life were eternal, the great ventilators of the human spirit always feel that they *have time to be available to others*. . . . What miracles that simple act of being available can work! All of us remember, almost as moments of grace, occasions when people have released our spirits just by lending us a sympa-

thetic half-hour. . . . Each of us should make available to others not what we own, but what we *are*. . . .

Philosopher Gabriel Marcel noted that often people who are burdened with egos, money or degrees allow no one else to enter their inner worlds. They close themselves off. He called this *crispation*, to describe people who become crisped like dry autumn leaves.

Nothing "crispates" the soul faster than the delusion that it is too late. This delusion permeates our culture. . . . "*There is no time!*" we rail, and turn our back on others and thereby on the future.

It takes a sense of eternity to make one realize that there is time, time to be available and to create. It begins in choice. I shall *make* time! I will not be closed off and crisped.

New insight in "Losing and Winning" is presented in social psychologist Gilbert Brim's article under that title in the September *Psychology Today*. As a researcher on human development, Brim has been trying to answer the question: How to manage the ups and downs of life with utmost skill, retaining happiness and self-regard in our lengthened life spans? His own work, and that of many other researchers, is outlined in the article:

Young or old, we want to be challenged. Challenge and autonomy are among the key aspects of work that satisfy, as thousands of studies of job satisfaction have shown. And as psychologist Judith Rodin and others have found, growth and mastery are central to older people's sense of well-being—even to their survival. . . .

The drive for growth and mastery is powerful but curiously bounded. We take up projects that are exciting, demanding, filled with achievements and occasional failures, but do so selectively. We choose challenges that are difficult enough to perplex and test our powers yet not so tough that we're likely to face severe or frequent failure. . . .

That process of arranging and managing our lives to keep the right balance between achievement and capacity is, I believe, one of the most important, fascinating and overlooked aspects of adult development. . . .

Putting it another way, I believe we are constantly resetting our goals throughout our lives in response to what we see as our wins and losses. When we succeed in meeting some goals, we replace

them with other, more challenging ones; when we fail, we lower our sights somewhat. This continual adjustment process, which I call the "management of achievement gaps," is, I believe, central to adult life and a key to how we maintain our self-esteem as circumstances change. . . .

People are designed to be able to weather all kinds of beatings by life and still come up smiling. We have an arsenal of ways of dealing with failure and success that keep us on an even keel. The evidence is clear: Apart from major life-wrecking catastrophes, the system works.

Favourable results of laboratory studies of the effect of music on plants are encouraging some growers to apply the principle in practice. A Japanese farmer claims that playing Bach, Beethoven, Mozart and Chopin has made his vegetables richer in texture, brighter in colour and fuller in taste. (*Daily Telegraph*)

Yoshito Ohashi installed loudspeakers in his greenhouses near Osaka last year and nurtured his lettuces, tomatoes and melons with classical music for several hours every day. He is delighted with the result. "Music is one way to let the vegetables know I care," he explained. His customers agree that his vegetables taste better and are healthier.

Few people laugh any more about plants responding well when spoken to and treated with love. As for the response of plants to music, this has been observed and recorded since ancient times. No longer can one afford to dismiss ancient references to this effect as fanciful, with so much scientific evidence on hand. H.P.B. made a prophetic pronouncement when she stated in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 514): "Future experimenters will reap the honour of demonstrating that musical tones have a wonderful effect upon the growth of vegetation."

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE 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 however 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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