

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

AL CHARITY	109
P.B. AS I KNEW HER	113
IE WISDOM-RELIGION—THEOSOPHY OF H. P. BLAVATSKY	117
IE HIDDEN MOTIVE	125
UTTARA SAMYAK SAMBODHI	130
ELP FOR HUMANITY	134
IE KALI YUGA	137
THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	140

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (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 psychological powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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REAL CHARITY

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DANA—Charity, *Tapas*—Austerity, *Yagna*—Sacrifice—these three types of deeds are mentioned in the *Bhagavad-Gita* as necessary to be performed, over and above duties which are obligatory, for they are "the purifiers of the wise." Charity is mentioned in most of the great scriptures of the world as one of the cardinal attributes, yet it is a virtue that is little understood and frequently misapplied.

Theosophists are attacked time and again for their neglect of social-uplift activities and practical charity. H. P. Blavatsky answered this charge in her article "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work," published as *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 31*. She points out there that it goes without saying that every individual who calls himself a Theosophist must be a practical philanthropist, and adds that "the direct effect of an appreciation of Theosophy is to make those charitable who were not so before," for "Theosophy creates the charity which afterwards, and of its own accord, makes itself manifest in works." It is because the Theosophical idea of charity is widely at variance with the common understanding of this great concept that Theosophists are charged with lack of enthusiasm and of action in this field.

"It takes a very wise man to do good works without danger of doing incalculable harm," wrote H.P.B., who also pointed out that "more mischief has been done by emotional charity than sentimentalists care to face." Action must be based upon sound principles; and so charity, while it should not be forsaken, has to be performed *rightly*, with knowledge.

H.P.B. has in more than one place warned against organized charity and the collective giving of money, "half of which sticks to the hands it passes through." A community which shifts the burden of responsibility for the care of its needy and under-privileged fellows to impersonal organizations and government agencies literally aggravates the social problem instead of solving it. There is an occult law behind the policy of Theosophists in following the Buddhist precepts: "Never let the shadow of thy neighbour (*a third person*) come between thyself and the object of thy bounty"; "Never give money to the needy, or food to the priest, who begs at thy door, *through thy servants*, lest thy money should diminish gratitude, and thy food turn to gall."

The Theosophical ideas of charity mean *personal* exertion for others; *personal* mercy and kindness; *personal* interest in the welfare of those who suffer; *personal* sympathy, forethought and assistance in their troubles or needs. We Theosophists do not believe in giving money (N.B., if we had it) through other people's hands or organizations. We believe in giving to the money a thousandfold greater power and effectiveness by our personal contact and sympathy with those who need it. We believe in relieving the starvation of the soul, as much if not more than the emptiness of the stomach; for gratitude does more good to the man who feels it, than to him for whom it is felt. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 242)

The Theosophical idea of charity rests on the maxim that prevention is better than cure. At our stage of evolution our consciousness is so centred on the physical plane and the physical amenities of life that generally we think of charity only in terms of food, clothing or financial aid, and do not care to look deeper into the plane of causes. And that is why we fail in our efforts to ameliorate the condition of the needy and set up causes which ultimately produce worse effects than those we try to combat. Too often an individual's material need is the result of a fundamental moral lack, of which he and the one who wants to help him are both unconscious. Therefore it is that real charity consists in bringing about the moral regeneration, not only of the poor and the so-called backward classes, but also of the well-to-do and the cultured, who are often far greater moral bankrupts and spiritual insolvents.

Mere physical charity, apart from the infusion of new influences and ennobling conceptions of life into the minds of the masses, is worthless. The highest charity is not the effort to remove surface effects but to strike at the root of evil by spreading the true ideas.

In the 17th discourse of the *Gita* are laid down the guiding principles of practical value on *Dana*, charity. Charity is divided into three types, according to the *gunas*, *i.e.*, according to the qualities that obtain in man:

Those gifts which are bestowed at the proper time to the proper person, and by men who are not desirous of a return, are of the *sattva* quality, good and of the nature of truth.

But that gift which is given with the expectation of a return from the beneficiary or with a view to spiritual benefit flowing therefrom or with reluctance, is of the *rajas* quality, bad and partaketh of untruth.

Gifts given out of place and season and to unworthy persons, without proper attention and scornfully, are of the *tamas* quality, wholly bad and of the nature of darkness. (XVII, 20-22)

The *sattva* type of charity is true Compassion. This charity discerns the soul-needs of humanity. Almsgiving is not restricted to the physical plane. There is an almsgiving of the Soul, which elevates the recipient and draws forth from him the best he is capable of. What greater charity can be bestowed upon suffering humanity than the right knowledge of the nature and purpose of life that leads to right action! The gradual assimilation by mankind of great spiritual truths will be the only effective panacea for misery and evil.

In all this the attitude of mind of the philanthropist is of paramount importance. He has not to let his left hand know what his right hand does; he should have no thought of reward or even of gratitude. He has simply to do all that he can and the best he knows how to raise the sufferer to a higher plane of thought and action, while he affords sufficient relief to give him a foothold. One of the Masters of Wisdom has said:

...in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness if in the mind of the philanthropist there lurks the shadow of desire for self-benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself.

So above all we have to forget our personality, for to perform charity "with the expectation of a return from the beneficiary or with a view to spiritual benefit flowing therefrom" is the way of the hypocrites, as Jesus shows in the Sermon on the Mount. And hypocrisy, H.P.B. has warned us, is an unpardonable sin.

One of the qualifications to be acquired by one who has resolved to tread the Path of Chelaship is given by H.P.B. as "unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings." These three form

a triangle as it were. Without unselfishness of purpose there cannot be universal charity and if charity is not universal we cannot have pity for all. Theosophy, emphasizing as it does the doctrine of universal brotherhood, inculcates universal love and charity for all mankind, without any distinctions whatsoever. Our charity, mental, moral or physical, must take into account the good of humanity as a whole. Stupendous as the task may seem, it can be gradually achieved by acquiring the knowledge of the art of acting from the point of view of what is best for the universe, and this we can do by having the identity of the spiritual origin of all deep-rooted in our hearts.

Charity is described as Love Immortal. Charity in thought, word or deed devoid of heart feeling is not real charity. It is the feeling of universal love, of infinite divine compassion, that builds universal charity.

The practical question which naturally arises is: Can it ever be possible for us, restricted as we are, to unfold such universal love and charity? There is great truth in the saying: "Charity begins at home." The home, the family and the bonds of true friendship are the channels through which charity unfolds naturally and spontaneously and gradually extends to wider spheres. It is by giving up the habit of fault-finding and condemnation and by inculcating such virtues as not speaking of the faults of others, leniency towards the shortcomings of one's neighbour, forgiveness of mutual offences, consideration of the wants of one poorer than oneself, and promotion of peace and good-will in the neighbourhood that one can develop compassion or charity for all humanity.

H.P.B. has called charity "the scope of all theosophical teachings, the synthesis of all and every virtue." Charity implies the possession of all the virtues, for they are all included in it. St. Paul, the Initiate, also gives prime importance to charity when he says:

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. (*I Corinthians*, XIII, 1-3)

H.P.B. AS I KNEW HER

[This memorial article, contributed by Annie Besant after H.P.B.'s passing, was originally published in *Lucifer*, June 1891.]

Endurance is the crowning quality,
And patience all the passion of great hearts.

—LOWELL

ENDURANCE and patience have certainly been the crowning qualities of H.P.B. as I have known her during the last years of her life, and as I have heard of her from those fortunate enough to have known her for more years than I can count during her present life. The most salient of her characteristics was implied in these crowning qualities; it was that of strength, steady strength, unyielding as a rock. I have seen weaklings dash themselves up against her, and then whimper that she was hard; but I have also seen her face to face with a woman who had been her cruel enemy—but who was in distress and, as I uncharitably thought, *therefore* repentant—and every feature was radiant with a divine compassion, which only did not forgive because it would not admit that it had been outraged. The hardness which can be tender is the hardness which is needed in our mollient Western life, in which one is sick of the shams that pass for value, of the falseness that stabs with a smile, and betrays with a kiss. Unconventional, H.P.B. was always called, and the adjective was appropriate. She did not regard society conventions as natural laws, and she preferred frankness to compliment. Above all she had the sense of proportion, and that "rarest sense of all, common sense." She did not think that all natural piety was trampled under foot when a woman smoked cigarettes, nor that every bond which held society together was ruptured when some solecism in manners was committed. A traveller in many lands, she had seen social customs so various that one or another was to her as unimportant as wearing a hat, a turban, or a fez, and she laughed at all the crude insular British ideas that a man's merit depended on his agreement with our own notions. On the other hand, she was rigidity itself in the weightier matters of the law; and had it not been for the injury the writers were doing themselves by the foulnesses they flung at her, I could often have almost laughed at the very absurdity of the contrast between the fraudulent charlatan and profligate they pictured, and the H.P.B. I lived beside, with honour as sensitive as that of the "very gentil parfait knyghte," truth flawless

as a diamond, purity which had in it much of a child's candour mingled with the sternness which could hold it scatheless against attack. Apart from all questions of moral obligation, H.P.B. was far too proud a woman, in her personality, to tell a lie. Brought up amid the highest born of the Russian nobility, inheriting much of their haughty contempt for the people around them, she would not have condescended to justify herself by untruth; she did not sufficiently care for "what people would say" to stoop to any subterfuge to defend herself. Indeed some of the earlier slanders took their rise in this very recklessness of public opinion. And when to this was added the occult training that hardens the chela against all outside judgments, and placing him ever at the tribunal of his Higher Self renders him indifferent to all lesser condemnation, it will readily be seen that the motives to untruthfulness which move ordinary people were absent. And this is apart from the deeper facts of the case, of which it would be idle here to speak, and of which it must suffice to say that no high Occultist can dare to lie for personal gain or personal defence.

It used to be said that the devil paid his servants well in this life, in whatever fashion he might recover the debt in another; but verily if, as the pious say, she was one of his emissaries, the gold mines of Sheol must be giving out. For in these later days H.P.B. was a very poor woman, and I have known her hard pressed for a sovereign many a time. Then some devoted admirer would send her money, and away it went, to the Theosophical Society, to a distressed friend, to an old servant in want, to some family whose starvation I might have mentioned. It was a royally generous nature, that of H.P.B., always needing some channel into which it might flow over; money, clothes, jewels, anything she had, she flung it away with both hands to the first who was in want.

Looking at her generally, she was much more of a man than a woman. Outspoken, decided, prompt, strong-willed, genial, humorous, free from pettiness and without malignity, she was wholly different from the average female type. She judged always on large lines, with wide tolerance for diversities of character and of thought, indifferent to outward appearances if the inner man were just and true.

Personally, one of the greatest services she rendered me was placing at my service as an aid to self-knowledge her own deep insight into character. I have laughed to myself when I have heard folk say that "Madame Blavatsky must be a very bad judge of character, or she would

never have trusted people who afterwards betrayed her." They did not know that her rule was to give everyone his chance, and she never recked if in thus doing she ran risk of injury to herself. It was always herself she gave away to such persons—never the Society, nor any knowledge they could use to the injury of others. I watched the course of one such case, a young Judas who pretended friendship, who was admitted by her to stay in her house, who tried ineffectively to find out "secrets," and went away finally to attack her and try to betray. She talked to him freely enough, hindered him in none of his enquiries, tried to lead him the right way, but once or twice I caught those strange eyes of hers, of which so much has been said, looking him through with a deep pathetic gaze, turning away at last with a half-breathed sigh. But when anyone was really seeking that most difficult of all knowledge, self-knowledge, then she would use her rare power of insight, would warn of hidden dangers, point to concealed characteristics, unravel the tangled threads of half-understood or non-understood qualities and defects, and thus guide the student in his efforts to know himself, and to escape from the web of illusion. Over and over again, in my own case, she has led me straight to hidden motive, to concealed weakness, to covered pitfall, and any of her pupils who could bear her scrutiny and criticism without resentment might be sure of similar aid.

As teacher H.P.B. was inspiring and suggestive, not didactic. She could only teach effectively when the student was thoroughly in touch with her, and could fill with quick intuition the gaps she left in her outline. In such cases she would throw out thought after thought, with wonderful wealth of illustrations from the most widely separated sources, the thoughts often unrelated on the surface, but always found, on careful re-study afterwards, to be links thrown, as it were, into light of some unbroken chain. The intervening links had been left in shadow, and if the student could throw them also into light, by the use of his own intuition, it was well. But where the student's mind gave no response to hers, where her quick blows started no spark to leap forth in answer from the rock, to such H.P.B. remained always enigmatic, obscure, involved, lost in maze of metaphysics, and she proved as unsatisfactory to them as they were hopeless to her.

Of late, H.P.B. led a very secluded life; she would close her doors for days, sometimes for weeks, against those who were nearest to her, and we understand now how she was preparing all for the approaching

change. And to us who lived with her the change is less than many, perhaps, may suppose. Our nearness to her was not that of the bodily presence, it was that far closer tie which ever binds together teacher and pupil in the venerable philosophy which it was her mission to impart. To us, the mere fact that she has flung off the worn-out garment of her personality in no wise alters the relation between her and us; those of us who were with her in past lives have been separated physically before through "the change that men call death," and have found each other again on return to "life" on earth. What has been shall be, and in the true life no separation is possible. For many a year past, her life has been one long torture; she stood at the centre of a whirl of forces spiritual and psychic, exposed at the same time to the pressure of the material plane. Alone, with none who could wholly understand her, misunderstood, wronged, insulted, and even when loved mostly loved in a mistaken way, none except her peers can tell what a hell upon earth her life has been. That she is out of it, is matter for rejoicing, not for sorrowing for those who really loved *her*, not themselves in her. The work to which she gave her life is now ours to carry on; the forces behind it are not weakened because H. P. Blavatsky has departed. It is the work of the Brotherhood, not of any one individual, and while the Brotherhood lives and works neither doubt nor despair can touch their disciples. We have but to do our duty: success, as the world counts it, is a thing of no account.

—ANNIE BESANT

THOSE who call H.P.B. "a fraud" are much mistaken, they do not know her. I would be glad to give up everything I have in this world to become such a fraud, if anybody will come forward to teach me. Is it not sufficient for the Westerns to know that a proud Brahmin, who knows not how to bend his body before any mortal being in this world, except his superiors in relation or religion, joins his hands like a submissive child before the white *Yogini* of the West? Why so? because she is no longer a Mlecha woman; she has passed that stage; and every Hindu—the purest of the pure amongst the Brahmins—would be proud and delighted to call her Hindu and a mother—there is no doubt about it. India cannot forget her.

—RAI B. K. LAHERI

THE WISDOM-RELIGION

Theosophy of H. P. Blavatsky

AN ancient concept is enshrined in the historic word—Theosophy. In the popular mind, the term Theosophy is associated with queer beliefs, strange views and fantastic attitudes. And the public cannot be blamed much, for grotesque teachings have been put forward in the name of Theosophy. To know what Jesus taught one must go to the *Sermon on the Mount*. To know what Krishna taught one must read the *Bhagavad-Gita* and not just the numberless commentaries. So also if one desires to learn the presentation of Theosophy in modern times one must go to the original writings and to the original texts of the Founder of the Theosophical Movement—H. P. Blavatsky.

The word Theosophy was not invented by Madame Blavatsky; it has been in use, time and again, in the history of European culture. The founder of the Neo-Platonic movement, Ammonius Saccas, used it in the second and third centuries of the Christian era. From then onwards the word Theosophy has been in use, and so late as 1855 there appeared a volume in London which was described as an "Introduction to Theosophy"; and in the following year, 1856, another volume was published called "Theosophical Miscellanies." But more interesting than the story of the word is the story of the *idea* it enshrines. Though the word Theosophy is of Greek origin and means Divine Wisdom, the idea it represents is that of a body of knowledge—both very definite concepts. Bridging over a continent of time, we find that thousands of years before the Christian era the forefathers of the modern Hindus studied this system of knowledge on the sunny banks of the Ganga and in the shady forests of Aryavarta. The Sanskrit equivalent of the word Theosophy is *Brahma-Vidya*. *Theo* or *Brahma*, *Sophia* or *Vidya* combine to make—perfection of all knowledge. The culture of the entire ancient world points to the existence of a body of knowledge and a method of attaining it. In the Mysteries of Greece, these same facts were given an expression in dramatic form.

The most striking thing about all genuine Theosophists, of any clime and of any century, is this—they speak of this body of knowledge and the method of obtaining it as ancient. All of them, like the Chinese Confucius, call themselves "Transmitters," passing on that which they have learnt. They do not say, "Behold, I know"; they humbly whisper,

"Thus have I heard." The Buddha's well-known title is Tathagata—He who follows in the footsteps of his Predecessors. The most ancient of teachers known to us, the bards and sages who composed the hymns of the Vedas, say that they heard Devas and Rishis, Gods and Sages, chant these hymns, and they faithfully memorized them, repeated them, and finally recorded them.

This is the very first point we should thoroughly grasp—H.P. Blavatsky never claimed to have invented Theosophy. In her very first volume, *Isis Unveiled*, published in 1877, she said that this system of knowledge is very ancient, antedating the Vedas themselves, and that she learnt it from certain Oriental Adepts. In her last volume, *The Key to Theosophy*, published in 1889, she speaks of Theosophy being as old as thinking man himself. In her monumental work, *The Secret Doctrine*, she quotes the statement of St. John, applying it to herself: "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." Again, writing about the facts given out in *The Secret Doctrine*, she quotes the words of Montaigne: "Gentlemen, I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them." And she adds that we might cut up the string in shreds, but we will never be able to make away with the nosegay of facts.

Theosophy teaches that the course of human evolution, the meaning of historical events and the purpose underlying them, can be understood by a study of the law of cycles or periodicity. With the rolling of the Wheel which the Greeks called *Kuklos* and the Hindus named *Chakra*, the rise and fall of empires and civilizations and the emergence and subsidence of cultures take place. It is under the operation of that law that the body of knowledge known as Theosophy comes to life in the public world and dies down, to come to life again. Cycles are now a recognized fact; nowadays people speak of the cycle of trade boom and trade depression and unemployment, and so on; but the general impression still prevails that human progress has been in a straight line: we began in savagery and our 20th century is the most progressive era in the long and eventful story of evolution! Theosophy takes the view that savages and sages existed and laboured side by side in the past as they do in the present. The working of the law of cycles produces in the public world poets and dramatisits in one era—like the Elizabethan period in English history. Other eras produce other types of reformers and revolutionaries, like at the end of the 18th century in Europe, especially

revolutionaries, like at the end of the 18th century in Europe, especially in France, and in the United States of America. Similarly, there are periods in human history when teachers of Theosophy, promulgators of Divine Wisdom, labour and flourish, while there are dark ages when ignorance and superstition push them in the background of silence and secrecy. Compare, for example, the dark Middle Ages of Europe with the period of 600 to 500 B.C. That was a cycle of Theosophical glory: In faraway China, Lao Tzu and Confucius were teaching; in India, the Buddha was preaching; in Persia, one of the long line of Zoroasters was reforming his people; in Greece, Pythagoras and Plato were sowing the seeds of European culture. It is a fascinating study to trace, era by era and in country after country, the emergence and subsidence of Theosophy and Theosophists. All this has relevance to our subject because H. P. Blavatsky repeatedly emphasized that what she wrote and recorded and taught was the ancient, immemorial, constant and consistent body of knowledge, and that the method of obtaining it used by her was the same as that used by her illustrious predecessors—both the teaching and its teachers and learners being products of the law of cycles.

This body of knowledge is the Wisdom-Religion or *Bodhi-Dharma*. The word *Dharma*, which is translated as religion, also conveys the meaning of law, of order, of duty, of propriety. Theosophy, Divine Wisdom or Wisdom-Religion, is synthetic in character. It is the synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy. As Science, it is the knowledge of the laws of Nature; it denies miracle. The first axiom of this Science is that there is no miracle and that everything that happens is the result of Law—eternal, immutable, ever active. As Religion, it is a knowledge of this Law to be put into practice, to be applied in daily life and in every sphere of action. It dethrones belief and blind faith; it regards as useless all organized religions, and looks upon salaried priesthood as a pernicious institution. It enthrones the man who practises virtue according to knowledge and not belief, and crowns the sacrificer whose works become his worship. As Philosophy, it is the knowledge of the intimate interdependence of all beings and creatures in Nature, which Nature is a living, impartite Whole. As the Synthesis of Science, Religion and Philosophy, it is the mother-source and the fountainhead of all sciences, all religions and all philosophies. But Theosophy does not fail to expose the fictions and falsehoods in any sphere of life: the dogmatism of sciences, the superstition of religions, the wordy-wars of

speculative philosophies, it fully exposes. This synthesis of knowledge has three fundamentals, three cardinal principles, three axiomatic doctrines—offered as subjects of study and not of mere belief. These three are like the foundation of the Temple of Wisdom; on them the entire structure of Theosophy rests. These three give the student an insight and an understanding, first about the nature of God or Deity; second, about the laws inherent in Nature; and third, about the state and states of the human soul—a pilgrim on the road named Evolution. This very starting point of the study of Theosophy cuts across the modern view of knowledge; God, Law and Soul have to be studied as scientific facts, to be practised as religious exercises, and finally to be realized as philosophical experiences.

Vast as the ocean is this knowledge in which there are unplumbed depths; but it is meant for everyone, all the same. Each one can find his own level. Some, like little children, can merely play on its shores and pick up the shells the ocean throws out. Others can dive deep to seek and find pearls of great price. Yes, Theosophy is meant for *all*, and even a little of this knowledge weakens the hold the demon of fear has on us. Fear is the devil who obsesses us all, and the ocean of Theosophy is the baptismal fount to be used for exorcizing him. Each can obtain from Theosophy whatever is necessary and thus increase his understanding, deepen his insight, and solve his own problems.

Where shall we begin? Adopting the Theosophical method, let us begin with the universals and come down to particulars. Theosophy offers not only knowledge, but also a definite method of obtaining it. Just as modern science has its own method of observation and experimentation, just as modern philosophy adopts a particular method of logical reasoning even in its speculations, so also the ancient Wisdom-Religion has its own method. Proceeding from universals and cosmic ultimates, it descends to particulars. But it does not only employ the deductive method; having done that, it uses the inductive method and proceeds to examine the particulars and to link them up with their source in the universals. This linking up of visible forms of life and the universe of sensuous perception to their invisible counterparts, both psychic and spiritual, is the central principle of the method of Theosophists in obtaining knowledge. In this dual task, the laws of analogy and correspondence are freely but accurately used. The key is provided by the Hermetic axiom: "As above, so below." Thus,

argued that Theosophy can only be believed in, that its propositions cannot be proven. That is not so. The facts of Theosophy, like those of science, can be ascertained by exact methods; analogy and correspondence convince the intellect that Theosophical theories are consistent and enlightening, then, by application and exercise and practice, in the laboratory of the brain and the observatory of the heart, we find out that these theories are truths—sure truths, unbreakable truths, infallible truths, rooted in actual experience.

One might argue that this cannot be done by all. But that is equally true of the facts of physical science. Why should anyone insist that facts and laws of spiritual science should be experienced by all, when facts and laws of physical science are accepted and used without any test in experience? We accept and use hundreds of discoveries of modern science without knowing how they were arrived at. Likewise, those who are not professional spiritual scientists can well accept and use the findings and facts of those who have been or are. Results of accurate research, facts of the ancient science of the Spirit, are embodied in the recorded writings of H. P. Blavatsky. Let us look at some of them.

There are three basic ideas on which the entire structure of Theosophy rests :

- (a) Everything existing, exists from natural causes.
- (b) Virtue brings its own reward and vice and sin their own punishment.
- (c) The state of man in this world is probationary.

We might say that this trinity of propositions sums up the entire system of Theosophy. The first of these gives us the Theosophical conception of God or Deity. The second refers to the operation of the Law and Laws in Nature. The third is the root-idea permeating the entire scheme of human evolution. God, Law and Soul are words commonly used, but their real meaning, what they signify and what they imply, are not matters of general investigation. Theosophy insists that a study of these words will yield results, and that honest minds and earnest hearts will come to define God, Law and Soul in some such terms as are employed in this trinity of propositions.

Everything existing, exists from natural causes. This proposition gives us the Theosophical conception of Deity or God. Theosophy says that God is not a person who has created the universe, but that God *is* the universe. Similarly, human soul is not created by God at the time of

the birth of the body; human soul is divine, both in essence and in substance. The state of the universe now is the direct and natural outcome of its previous state. So with the human soul. For the ordinary mind, not trained in metaphysical and philosophical thinking, it is very difficult to perceive that the universe is beginningless and endless in Time, that it is boundless and limitless in Space, that it is an endless spiral of perpetual Motion. Time, Space and Motion form the philosophical Trinity, anthropomorphized in the Hindu Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and humanized in the Christian Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Theosophy advocates that the examination and study of the nature of God should begin with the examination and study of the nature of the human soul. The very first idea that Krishna lays down in the *Bhagavad-Gita* is: "I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be." Krishna himself, the spiritual teacher who has realized his own immortality, says that never was he non-existent; he always was, and never will he cease to be in the endless future. But he says the same thing to his disciple and friend, Arjuna, who is struggling to do the right, to live the life of nobility, the life of the Soul. Nay more, Krishna says that all those princes who had gathered together on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, and many of them, like Duryodhana, were evil in motive, evil in design and evil in deeds—that they too always existed and always will exist. Apply that, each one to yourself. Whatever you may be, you have existed in the past and will continue to exist in the future. Here and now, whatever your state, within yourself the core of immortality is present. But do not run away with false ideas, for this word *immortality* is loosely used and wrongly understood. As human beings we are composed of Matter which is indestructible, of Intelligence which conserves itself, of Spirit which is immortal. Using the law of analogy and correspondence, Theosophy teaches that man is the microcosm, the small cosmos, who is an exact copy of God or Deity, the Macrocosm, the Great Cosmos. Why are there so many different kingdoms and species in Nature? Why is there such a difference between man and man? Theosophy answers by its second proposition. It says that the Universe is one, but composed of the many: Universe or God is a collectivity of beings, an assemblage of intelligences, and each being, each intelligence, is the direct product of itself in the past. Therefore—

Virtue brings its own reward and vice and sin their own punishment.

This second idea brings out the fact that God is Law. There are no laws of God: all laws operating in Nature spring from a single Law, and that Law is God itself—impersonal, immutable and implacable. This Law is the Law of Harmony and of Adjustment. Ever and ever it restores harmony; ever and ever it adjusts what is disarranged—in uttermost justice which is compassion and mercy itself. It is necessary to understand the primary idea that the entire universe unfolds, that the entire evolutionary process takes place, neither fortuitously as materialism would have us believe, nor by the guiding hand of an outside God as orthodox religions give out. From within outwards the course of Law runs, and its sway is omnipresent, adjusting every wrong so that right may result. It is the action of Law, moving from within without, that covers the debris of ugliness created by people with the green moss of beauty. It is the operation of the same Law which brings to every human being the power to overcome every weakness, every limitation, every ignorance. Theosophy teaches us how to co-operate with that Law, which works incessantly within each one of us. We can begin to co-operate by understanding the third of the propositions—

The state of man in this world is probationary. Probation implies the testing of conduct, of character. One of the good results of prison reform is the system of probation whereby criminals and offenders are given their liberty on a promise of good behaviour, under the supervision of persons acting as friends and advisers. We human beings break the Laws of Nature, most of the time unknowingly. But ignorance is not forgivable by the hand of Law. If a person breaks traffic rules and is taken up, his saying that he did not know will not save him. A child's ignorance about the nature of fire does not prompt the fire not to burn the child. The Law of Nature which extends to the moral plane and does not confine itself to this sensuous plane, acts in the same manner. It is our duty to study those aspects of the Law which affect us most. And the first thing Theosophy recommends is that we understand fully this third proposition—the state of man in this world is probationary. We are being tested by Life, the Great Mother. She does not change her course of action because we are in pain or in trouble, any more than our own mother who stood, firm and smiling, when in our efforts to learn to walk we flopped and fell down again and again! But probation has not only its tests; it has an educative value. Tests are of little use if we do not learn from them. And so we are being educated by the Great Teacher, Life, once again. "Of

teachers there are many," says *The Voice of the Silence*; but that Book of the Golden precepts also gives this instruction: "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 Teacher is within us, call him Atma or Krishna, Buddha or Christ, or by any other name. And as we stand the tests and trials of life, as we learn from them, we become more and more ready to learn from the long line of Immortal Teachers called the Chain of Masters—*Guruparampara*.

To sum up: We of the 20th century are heirs to a noble philosophy of life, which deals with the whole of man—not only with his body, not only with his mind, but also with his soul. That science and philosophy we must study, so that we may begin to apply the teachings in our daily living and thus adopt for ourselves the Religion of Responsibility, responsibility to ourselves and to all others. Thus only can the principle of Universal Brotherhood be practised. We also stressed that God is both Life and Law, and that none of us is born in sin and iniquity; each one of us is immortal in essence, a god in the making. In this earth-life, every sorrow felt brings the power to help. Every pain endured yields its own faculty. Every experience begets its own joy and beneficence. Each soul is a probationer, builder of his own prison, but also the breaker of his own fetters, transforming that prison into a temple, and those fetters into faculties. We saw that these elementary truths are not to be matters of belief but subjects of enquiry, study and application. Theosophy has many more truths, and more profound truths, in store for us. And behind Madame Blavatsky and the teachings she imparted stood her Teachers, Adepts of Wisdom, Masters of Compassion, Lords of Light. They will impart more knowledge only when we have used what is already obtained. They are Embodiments of Knowledge and Sacrifice; studying Their philosophy, sacrificing for and serving Their humanity, we shall obtain and retain our own Immortality. We shall realize what They have realized—that the crash of civilizations and the destruction of continents touch not the Immortal Spirit of Perfected Men; for:

Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
 Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
 Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever;
 Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems!

THE HIDDEN MOTIVE

The sceptical laugh at faith and pride themselves on its absence from their own minds. The truth is that faith is a great engine, an enormous power, which in fact can accomplish all things.

—*Light on the Path*

WIDE indeed is the gulf that separates the dedicated man from the man of ambition. The patriot and the educationist, the reformer and the mystic may each be dedicated to the principles that govern his walk in life. Each, in a greater or lesser measure, is an altruist so engrossed in his own work that he lets the world and its chaos pass him by without being drawn to it by either sympathy or antipathy. Thus may the mathematician and the poet be dedicated in their own selected spheres. They cling to the subject of their dedication to the exclusion of all else. The theme of their life runs through their days and years, is constantly purposeful and is devoid of the lure for gain. To them, all else is incidental, all else serves merely as the background drapery to their dramatic efforts.

Not so for the man of ambition. He works for a reward in the sense that it is effects that motivate his actions. The miser, the politician and the professional may by a determined and sustained effort reach the height of success. History has miscalled them "great" and adulation has been showered on them by the ordinary run of men. Their efforts and their motives were bereft of altruism, and to the thinker and the student they must remain mere butterflies pressed between the pages of history. Their efforts could bear no lasting good and are best forgotten. In the final analysis, each will have been found to have worked for himself and the selfishness of his motives becomes traceable within his endeavours. Though these may be acclaimed national heroes and even saviours, they were powerless to inject into their actions that which alone could transmute them into engines of beneficence. Selfishness of motive suffused their being and left them destitute of peace or contentment—disgruntled beings in the midst of worldly pomp and the affluence of wealth.

The line which separates dedication from ambition is thin yet well defined, though in the initial stages it may be that the person may delude himself and pass off his ambition as a specialized form of

devotion. The patriot, the educationist and the reformer are not necessarily devoted, though in confrontation with the miser and the politician their honesty of purpose may seem all too apparent. The patriot who in his heart sought only power and popularity; the educationist who used his noble profession to lead the minds of his charges to ignoble ends; the reformer who, suffering mass unpopularity, expected to rise through that torture to dizzy heights of fame—have each to be accounted ambitious. The poison drop of selfishness spreads through their being and makes it blank and bleak and incapable of reflecting truth or goodness or beauty.

For the mystic and the disciple, ambition becomes a curse—a poison weed that chokes out growth; a scourge that will render him powerless to unite his mind to his soul. When the individual for the first time turns his face godwards, he does not by that mere act accomplish a metamorphosis—a change so radical as to cut his moorings in the past. His habits of thought still crowd around him. His old vices and weaknesses assume a more alluring form and tempt him to return to his old and familiar grounds of sensuous enjoyments. They may even assume the semblance of virtue and righteousness and under a new garb and pleasing appearance seek to wean him away from his unfamiliar ways. Greed, which is the urge to add continually to one's exclusive hoard, may now transform itself into the pleasing yet passionate desire to amass knowledge for oneself alone, to add to one's private treasury the gems of position, wealth (physical and spiritual) and power, and deny these to rightful aspirants or even to those who groan for the lack of these.

So with the other weaknesses. They transform themselves into forms which hide the ugliness within. But their bite is as lethal or even more so now than previously. *Kama* (Desire); *Krodha* (Anger), *Lobha* (Greed) are the three gates of Hell. Their attraction for the person does not lessen when for the first time he vows to come out of the herd of mortals. It increases. The craving that forgets the rights, the interests and the precedence of others; the anger that is twin brother to ambition and that moves relentlessly towards its goal over the shattered lives of countless victims; the greed that forces one to a lonely self-adoration till death puts an end to the sordidness of purpose—each of these if present makes the person unfit for progress. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

Beware lest thou should'st set a foot still soiled upon the ladder's lowest rung. Woe unto him who dares pollute one rung with miry feet. The foul and viscous mud will dry, become tenacious, then glue his feet unto the spot.

It is this hardening of the mud, this blatant assuming to oneself of the ambition to rise superior to one's fellows which has to be avoided at all cost, for in the stifling atmosphere created by selfishness, no devotion, no dedication can survive. In greater or lesser measure, each disciple comes within the reach and grip of either lust, greed or anger. The ensuing struggle will show the measure of his strength. Can he by the help of a dawning perception learn to pass safely through the unclean places to which he is led by Karma without inviting their taint and without leaving a part of his heart behind? It is this initial struggle, this success in bringing the heart back and placing it upon the spirit, that makes one a disciple and that will ultimately arouse the will to move towards dedication. Till then, no outward semblances, no donning of the robes of a *sannyasi* or a martyr, no going down on bended knees, no ringing of bells and burning of candles and incense, can turn a man of the world into a student of the perennial philosophy. Unless one has become in heart and soul a disciple, one cannot be accepted by those who are the teachers of disciples.

Students who have been fired by the truths of Theosophy have oft-times stopped and marked time, unable to pass on because some hidden motive, some clogging attachment roots them to a particular spot. Only if they knew it, they have become worshippers of the mortal, the evanescent and the perishable. When this phase of life comes, many a promising pupil abandons the attempt at a change in the fabric of his life and goes back to the joys and griefs of his earthly attractions. This continues to be so because reasoning, intellectual gymnastics and emotional upsurges serve only the passing moment. They are incapable of giving him guidance. They are no movers of the spiritual will. What, then, is lacking that may work the transformation? What gets added to character that makes the coward, brave; the debauchee, chaste; the renegade, a pillar of strength and a man of purpose? When the Soul really shakes off its stupor of the ages and awakens to action, it does not grope about with the accumulation of the dust of age-long incarnations. The undesirable is swept clean away with no regrets; the desirable if absent is searched

for, found, adopted and made an integral part of the being. Will the body, the mind and the psychic nature be able to absorb the new force, or will they reject the new afflatus as not consubstantial, and so rejecting, meet their own disintegration? The whole nature of the person is to be used wisely, is to be tuned to a particular pitch before the divine will can be invoked with safety. A miniature Brotherhood has to be set up between mind and heart, aspirations and feelings, piety and good health. This is achieved, not by charms and simples, but by the gentle yet continuous pressure of the divine will on each mortal part of the individual. The wine has to be poured into a bottle that is made fit and ready to receive it.

Dedication has many stations. The student becomes dedicated to his studies; the aspirant to his search of the known and the unknown; the disciple to his teacher, his instructions and his larger duties. But if at any stage the person remains content with his limited objective and seeks to plow his lonely furrow, he misses out the goal which had dawned upon his vision at the beginning of the path. Here, there can be no case of an assumed humility, no observance of a meek content. Any stoppage at intermediate stations becomes an error, a damper of the enthusiasm and a slackener of the will. True dedication leads to one goal only and to none other. The authors of the Upanishads put this in their own great language. Says the *Katha Upanishad*:

Brahman is the end of the journey. Brahman is the Supreme Goal. This Brahman, this Self, deep-hidden in all beings, is not revealed to all; but to the seers pure in heart, concentrated in mind, to them is it revealed.

Dedication is thus twofold—to the Brahman, the Self within, and also to Brahman, the Self which is deep-hidden in the Selves of all beings. Since that which is within and that which is without are One, there can arise no conflict of interest, no division of duties. He who truly and faithfully serves the one does his duty to both. In fact, the bliss of Brahman is unattainable unless devotion to the interests of others is entered upon to the exclusion of all else. The personal and even the individual have to be submerged into the ocean from which both did radiate. This, the only true objective, the forgetting of oneself in the larger dedication to the Race, has to become the theme and tempo of life. All else is lost sight of; all other sounds are refused

entry to a mind which is unwaveringly aimed at the goal. In the course of this attempt, the individual leaves all combativeness behind; his mind no longer discriminates between things that are pleasant and things that are unpleasant. The pettiness of human endeavours is left far, far behind and only the pure altruistic impulse remains as the breath of the divine life remains—a pulsation and a beating of the immortal Heart. Sacrifice, charity and austerity are no longer to be cultivated; powers and potencies are no longer to be sought after. These become what they indubitably are—the marks of dedication. Theirs is not a forced growth, not a laboured assumption of appearances. They flower because their seeds have found the right soil. They grow because their roots are now embedded in the True.

The *Taittiriya Upanishad* speaks of the supreme summation thus:

Let a man meditate upon Brahman as support and he will be supported. Let him meditate upon Brahman as greatness and he will be great. Let him meditate upon Brahman as mind and he will be endowed with intellectual power. Let him meditate upon Brahman as adoration and he will be adored. Let him worship Brahman and he will become Brahman.

He who is the Self in man and he who is the Self in the Sun, are one.

I KNOW no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavour. It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts. Every man is tasked to make his life, even in its details, worthy of the contemplation of his most elevated and critical hour.

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

ANUTTARA SAMYAK SAMBODHI

THE above title, meaning esoterically "the unsurpassingly merciful and enlightened heart," is applied in Buddhist philosophy to the "Perfect Ones, the "Jivanmuktas," collectively.

This has a very profound meaning that all but escapes the limited power of words. It is something deeply sacred and worthy of our most concentrated efforts to gain even a modicum of understanding as to its import. It is worthwhile to turn to *The Voice of the Silence* for a clue as to the real interpretation of these words. We read in this precious book of the "Guardian Wall": "Built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented, it shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow."

Most of us are aware that the mind can be enlightened by correct study and meditation. The seat of the higher mind is, occultly, the heart, and we are informed by H.P.B. in her article "Practical Occultism" that the aspirant's thoughts "must be predominantly fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being. It (the heart) must be full of the feeling of its non-separateness from the rest of beings as from all in Nature; otherwise no success can follow."

The concept conveyed by the words "unsurpassingly merciful" might seem beyond our ken at our present stage. It is because of an ignoring or misunderstanding of the invaluable nature of the development of compassion that so many of us fall by the wayside. The way to *true* enlightenment lies through the heart. It is the narrow, straight way that leads to life eternal—but few find it.

During our studies we often read of great heroes of the past whose lives were devoted to the spiritual "raising" of humanity and whose hearts were aflame with pure, divine love for all. We ourselves feel elevated by simply reading of their achievements—and a link is formed. We have touched the "unsurpassingly merciful" heart of these great beings, because in the depths of our own natures there is a Oneness and we have the ability to reach, to be in empathy with, their altruistic "heart." There are also great intellectuals who make admirable efforts to fathom the mysteries of life and death and who have some success. Unfortunately these individuals are so absorbed in their studies and meditations that they lose sight of everything around them, including the plight of their

fellow beings. The boundless love for all living things that pulsates within the heart of the Compassionate Ones is accessible only to those aspirants who have made Brotherhood and morality the guiding principles in their lives and who try to ensure that all else is subservient to those ideals. Love is a much maligned word and the actions of many so-called "Theosophical" and "Spiritual" leaders have given it a sophistic air. If only we had an inkling of the *real* meaning of love and its practical application, we would at last begin to understand something of the Divinity of mankind that has suffered so badly over the last few centuries as a result of dogmatism and hypocrisy. Even physically most emotions affect the heart in some way or other. The heart can be a guide. A term that is often in use is "heart warming," designating something that stirs in us a higher emotion, *e.g.*, an act of heroism or compassion. Deeper thought will bring us to the threshold of a great mystery, the intuitive awareness of something behind the outward show—an active "power," a real hierarchy of Compassionate Ones. We read in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 207) of "a wondrous Being, called the 'Initiator,' and after him a group of semi-divine and semi-human beings." This section of the book goes on to propound an extremely elevating truth concerning the "solitary Watcher" and the great sacrifice that He has made for us. It is a genuinely divine teaching that requires much meditation, contemplation and deep thought.

The spiritual exercise provided by dwelling on such illuminating passages in *The Secret Doctrine* and other works in their original form can lead us far along the path of inspired understanding. All the wealth in the Universe is not worth a fraction of the ideals contained within the truly sacred teachings given to mankind by genuine teachers like H.P.B. If we are unable to assimilate them, it is because of ignorance and a civilization built on delusive concepts.

Despite all of these setbacks, there still remains the fact that nothing can completely kill out our innate sense of oneness with our fellow human beings and even with lower life forms. Many have tried to smother the flame of divine love, but none have succeeded, although there have been serious onslaughts that have left humanity reeling (*e.g.*, two World Wars). There are unplumbed depths of beauty in the human heart. Even the streets of a busy city may be overflowing with feelings that can hardly be expressed. On the face of every person is written some great mystery and a still greater sadness. Certainly the "sleeping beauty"

awaits her prince to bestow on her the love that will reanimate the "corpse." Cynics may regard the city as a place full of only evil emanations, on all planes, but this is not so. H.P.B. told us time and time again that we should never despair of humanity, and that is one of her most important messages. On the streets of the city we may be touched by the Great Heart of the ordinary man and woman. Here we may come across the busker, the pavement artist, the religious fanatic, the shopper, the drunkard, the drug addict, the mugger, the poet, the philosopher, the family man, the politician and the lonely wanderer. It is a melting pot of all the various elements that go to make up society, and at its centre is hidden a true wonder. Behind the mask, the facade, is a "peace that passeth all understanding." Lucky are those of us who can sense it behind all the chaos on the surface. This beauty may flash momentarily through the eyes of some casual passer-by and perchance is translated into some desire for a will-o'-the-wisp of material pleasure. It will be lost for the while, but never quite destroyed.

Herein lies the great secret that defies the categorizing part of mankind's collective mind. There is a dissolving of separateness and an inner "coming together." If the illusion was transcended and we had the capacity to grasp the reality, as many of the world's great Masters of Truth have, then we should at last see the folly of wars and dissension. There would gradually come to pass an inability to cause intentional pain to even the most humble of this planet's creatures in thought, word or deed. Harmony would rush in to fill up the void caused by actions carried out in ignorance of the true dignity of man. We may be able to glean some clue as to our attitude to others in the words of a Master of Wisdom:

It is a true manhood when one boldly accepts one's share of the collective Karma of the group one works with, and does not permit oneself to be embittered, and to see others in blacker colours than reality, or to throw all blame upon some one "black sheep," a victim, specially selected. Such a true man as that we will ever protect and despite all his shortcomings, assist to develop the good he has in him. Such an one is sublimely *unselfish*; he sinks his personality in his cause, and takes no heed of discomforts or personal obloquy unjustly fastened upon him.

These words, written originally regarding the T.S., have a truly catholic appeal. "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness," it is said, and this is sound advice to us students of Theosophy. The

mystery of *Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi* is indeed a profound one. It is connected with that band of men who have refused their own well-earned rest and bliss to help on the spiritual evolution of mankind. But this is no cold, calculated choice. We are these men in a lesser degree, but we do not feel our Oneness as keenly as they do. The choice that is made by them is the fruition of lifetimes of "trials passing speech." They have battled through suffering of all kinds, mental, physical and moral, in order to gain some understanding of others, and they know the pangs of despair and emptiness, as well as the sting of repeated failure. Their personalities have been "killed." The power of the passions has been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will and the astral reduced to a cipher, as H.P.B. put it in "Occultism versus the Occult Arts" (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*). The sleeper has awakened and is at one with the Higher Self. This hierarchy of enlightened Beings understand us more than we understand ourselves because they have trodden the selfsame paths that we now are treading. We may scream and shout, rant and rave about the seeming injustices of life, but there are "Those Who Know" and are aware of the complex web woven by the "twin laws" of Karma and Reincarnation. At the very centre of this hierarchy, in the midst of the opening lotus, stimulated by the pure sunlight of Spirit, we find the "law of Love eternal" written of in *The Voice of the Silence*.

Here end all our tears; here all suffering has no hold. Here begin true bliss and true sacrifice.

EVERYONE is trying to accomplish something big, not realizing that life is made up of little things.

—F. A. CLARK

HELP FOR HUMANITY

THE power of the human individual has grown in every sphere except over himself. The fearful question confronts us—have our problems got beyond our control? Undoubtedly, we are passing through a phase where this may be so.

Men and women of our age who pride themselves on their learning need to humble themselves and seek the light of guidance and the warmth of compassion. The difficulty in the way of scholars, scientists and men of modern knowledge is their "trained" and "educated" minds, which move and dance on the polished floor of pragmatism miscalled practicality.

Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Shankara were truly practical men whose wisdom is available even today. The grand principles on which their teachings and doctrines are based are different from those of modern knowledge, which are the ones automatically adopted and followed by "leaders" in every sphere of modern civilization. Not only are they different; the principles of the Sages and the Prophets are the opposite of those of modern savants. The ethics implicit in the teaching, "resist not evil," cannot be accepted by those who believe that "might is right"—and our civilization holds on grimly to that belief.

Or take another precept: the Sages teach that the human being is not to be regarded as a political animal; that the soul is immortal and incarnates in a body to learn in this school of life. Our educational reformers proceed on the basis that the soul, begotten of the senses and the brain, is mortal; its education is undertaken on that basis, which, going contrary to the fact, causes the fruits of their endeavours to turn sour in the mouth.

Will our "leaders" adopt the doctrine of "resist not evil"? Will they proclaim that he who uses the sword will perish by the sword, and that therefore "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks"? Will they adopt the true teachings about the "soul" that needs to be educated and to be endowed with the light of true culture? Will they examine and adopt the doctrine of Reincarnation—successive lives on earth—for every human soul, and its complementary teaching which is the Law of Moral Retribution, by means of which the human soul progresses to perfection?

Then there is the principle of unity in the whole of Nature, expressing

itself as the Law of Brotherhood in the human kingdom. All the Sages have taught that unless in our individual lives, as well as in State matters where all citizens are affected, the Law of Brotherhood is practised and not only preached, neither peace nor prosperity will flourish.

Rivalry and competition are practised in politics, trade, social clubs, organized religions. In the name of religion, unbrotherliness leading to violence is the order of the day. In the name of justice, our civilization maintains primitive prisons and in many "civilized" countries capital punishment is upheld. In the name of sport, cruelty to animals is perpetrated. In the name of scientific research, vivisectors build chanel-houses called laboratories. Turn where we will, we see death and destruction, resulting from competition, rivalry, jealousy, vanity and pride—all the outcome of unbrotherliness.

The sins and misdemeanours of governments and societies are traceable to the human individual; his egotism reflects itself in national patriotism, national pride, national competition; his vanity manifests in clubs and in a score of other places; his greed affects the balance of trade in international markets; his lust builds brothels; and so on and on. Remedy? Not legislation and penal codes and rules of prohibition, unless these reflect, clearly and firmly, the principles which the Sages and Seers have taught. But how can such legislation, codes and rules be formulated by leaders of this modern "civilization"? Therefore some individuals, however few, should be intelligent in humbling themselves, intelligent in seeking the light of guidance that the heart draws out from the seat of mercy.

The only way in which the affairs of life may be brought into their proper relation and harmony is by an understanding of our own nature, and fulfilling it. That course would make a heaven of this civilization, compared with what it is now....

We are all bound up in one great tie; we cannot separate ourselves from each other, nor from any other being. The high beings above us who have passed through the stages which we are now passing through are just as closely related to us—and more so—than we are to each other; for They desire to help us in every way, if we would only allow Them. Saviour after Saviour has come to the earth for our benefit, but no one can give us any more benefit than to point to the truths that have been given all down the ages. We must take

advantage of that knowledge and advance out of the state in which we have placed ourselves. No Saviour can save us. No God can protect us. No devil can torment us. For both the God and the devil are within. The devil is the misunderstanding of our nature. The God is that place in ourselves that we come to know and realize and see reflected in the eyes of every living being. It is the God in us which demands *self-advancement, self-induced and self-devised exertions, and the full acceptance of responsibility.* (*The Friendly Philosopher*, pp. 299-300)

These are the words of a modern philosopher, a friendly philosopher, a lover of his fellows. Robert Crosbie is one of those few who humbly sought guidance and mercy and was blessed with the Light of Life, the Wisdom of genuine Theosophy.

As a fruit-tree is more valuable than any one of its fruits singly, or even than all its fruits of a single season, so the noblest object of reflection is the mind itself, by which we reflect. And as the blossoms, the green and ripe fruit of an orange-tree are more beautiful to behold when on the tree, and seen as one with it, than the same growth detached and seen successively, after their importation into another country and different climate; so it is with the manifold objects of reflection, when they are considered principally in reference to the reflective power, and as part and parcel of the same. No object, of whatsoever value our passions may represent it, but becomes foreign to us as soon as it is altogether unconnected with our intellectual, moral, and spiritual life. To be ours, it must be referred to the mind, either as a motive, or consequence, or symptom.

—SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

THE KALI YUGA

[This article by W. Q. Judge was first published in *The Path* for November 1894.]

A CORRESPONDENT is confused on this subject from the statement in *What is Theosophy* by Mr. Old, that we are in the midst of the Iron or Black Age. Doubtless his sentence, which is on page 28 of the book, is misleading, because "kali" means "black," and hence it would seem that he meant we are now in the middle of Kali Yuga, but reading further it is seen that he refers only to the first part of the Age. Kali Yuga is in length 432,000 years according to the old Indian calculation, and we are now coming to the end of its first five thousand years, that preliminary period being reckoned from the death of Krishna. In passing it may be justly thought that this five-thousand-year period is the origin of the idea of the Hebrews that the world is about that age, just as the Greeks in the time of Solon imagined that all things had to count from their former great cataclysm, but which the Egyptian priests showed to Solon was incorrect, for, as they said, "There had been many great cataclysms before that."

In *The Secret Doctrine* is to be found this: "The fourth sub-race was in Kali Yuga when destroyed." This is not amenable to objection on the ground that we who are not that race are in Kali, for each race goes through the various Ages for itself; hence the former races, both primary and sub-, go through all the four periods from the Golden to the Black.

It must follow from this, and such is the oldest teaching on the subject, that at one and the same time races may be on the earth running each for itself through one or other of the periods. Some might be in the Golden Age and others in the Black. At present it is admitted that the Aryans are in the Kali Age, but certain childlike races are not so. Within the present five-thousand-year period we know that races have absolutely finished their Kali Yuga and gone out of existence. This happened to that which ruled a part of the American continent, and hence for them in particular their Kali Yuga must have begun earlier than ours did. The Hottentots also disappeared during our memory. This method of considering the subject will clear it up, leaving only to be settled for each race the period which they are in, or the beginning and ending of it. And, as said, for the Aryans the great Kali Yuga began five thousand (odd) years ago.

To find out when the great Kali Yuga for the major race, including all its sub-races, began would be impossible, as there are no means, and H.P.B., the only one for the present who had access to those who held the records, said precise figures on those heads would not be given out. But she and also those behind her who gave her so much information laid it down, as in accord with the philosophy of nature given out, that a division into four was the order for evolution in respect to the life of races, and hence that each great race, whatever its number in the whole seven, would be compelled to go through the four periods from the Satya to Kali, while at the same time the minor races had the same division, only that each part would be shorter than those pertaining to the great race as a whole. For that reason it seems plain that the figures for the various Ages (or Yugas) are only such as relate to and govern the sub- or minor races.

The overlapping of races as to their particular Yuga (or Age) can be easily seen in history. When the whites came to America the Indians were in their stone age in some places, using stone hammers, spears, knives, and arrows. Even in cultured South America the priests used stone knives for use at the sacrifices. We, however, had gone far beyond that. The Red Indian of North America would have remained wholly in the stone age had we not altered it to some extent while we proceeded as instruments for his annihilation. Therefore in our own period we have examples of two races being in different Ages while living at the same time on the globe.

The foregoing is the general scheme outlined in *The Secret Doctrine*, where there are numerous pages showing that when a new race, whether a sub- or a major one, comes in it does so while many of the old race still exist, the one gradually rising in development while the other falls. They shade into one another as night does into day, until at last either night or day predominates. This period of shading is allowed for in regard to the Ages, and in the Brahmanical calculation we find that they add twilights and dawns, since preceding a new Age there must be the dawn, as following it will come the twilight. The twilight of the one will be the dawn of the other.

Using the Zodiac for the purpose of considering the question of the Ages, we find that, roughly speaking, the time taken by the sun to go round the whole circle is 25,800 years, as shown by the retrograde movement of equinoctial points. This is the type for the yearly circle, which makes the four seasons, and the four seasons in their turn

symbolize the four Ages. Their length will be in proportion to the greater swing of the sun. Among the seasons the winter corresponds to the Kali Age, for then all is turned hard and cold, just as in the Black Age, the light of the Spiritual Sun being dimmed, the hardness and coldness of materiality appear in the moral life. Now if the sidereal period be divided by four, we have the figures 6450 years, or the five-thousand-year period with the requisite twilight or dawn added. And it was taught by the Egyptians that with every quarter of the circle of the Sun's great path there were changes caused physically by the alteration of the poles, and spiritually there must be changes due to the inner development of the human race as an entirety. While the materialistic philosopher thinks the changes would be due to the movement of the poles, the teaching from the Lodge is that the spiritual inner changes cause the physical ones through the appropriate means; in this case those means are in the movements of the great heavenly bodies. This is because the whole Cosmos is on the same grand plan, with all its parts working together, each in its own way.

For the present, students will have to be satisfied with the general statement that we are in Kali Yuga. The characteristics of the present time show it clearly enough, for while physical civilization is high the spiritual side of it is low and dark, and selfishness is the prevailing order. None of us can really pretend to know more than this, for while we have the Brahmanical calculation and the words of *The Secret Doctrine*, yet that is taking the word of another, plausible, of course, and also concordant with all other parts of the system, but still not of our own knowledge. The beginning of this Age and the time of its ending are dark to us; but the general theory, sufficient for our present needs, is perfectly clear, and as good an assumption as any of those indulged in by science—certainly better than the incredible ideas of the theologian. Of one thing we are getting more and more proof each day, and that is of the immense period during which man has been on the earth, and, with that admitted, all the great cyclic lengths given by the ancient and modern Theosophists of weight are entitled to credence.

We can also get great comfort from the theory given out at various times, that in Kali Yuga a small effort goes farther for results than the same when made in a better Age. In the other Ages the rates of all things are slower than in this; hence, evil now seems quick; but in the same way good is also much quicker in effect and reach than in a slower time.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Scientists attending a recent meeting of the American Geophysical Union have put forward a new theory of continental drift. This theory holds that fragments of continents have joined together to form a giant super-continent many times over the last 4,000 million years. (*Science Express*, December 4, 1990)

In 1910, German geologist Alfred Wegener proposed the existence of Pangaea, a super-continent that included Eurasia, Africa and the Americas. Wegener and other scientists of the time believed that the breaking up of such a single giant land mass took place only once, about 200 million years ago, into the six major continents that we know today. According to the latest theory, continents repeatedly break up and re-form in different combinations, eventually assembling into a single great land mass.

David Rowley, a geologist at the University of Chicago, said that India drifted northeast from the coast of Africa before smashing into the coast of Asia, the continuing collision leading to the formation of the Himalayas. India's southwestern coast would be right along the coast of Madagascar, with both of them together fitting against Africa in the Somalia area. They fit geometrically and geologically and are part and parcel of the same piece which has dispersed over the last 180 million years, Rowley said.

Geophysical evidence suggests that over the past 3,800 million years continents have time and again compressed, rotated, drifted, split apart and collided with various other land masses. According to Rowley, there is a large gap between one collision and another break-up sequence. During the intervening period, parts of the continental crust can come together to form a super-continent.

A group of French scientists say that India's northward pressure continues to distort Asia, forcing Tibet rapidly toward the east and resulting in the Altyn-Tagh fault, which runs for about 2,200 km north of Kunlun mountains in Western China, according to a report in *Science*.

The evidence for the breakup of the last super-continent, Pangaea, can be found on the floors of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian oceans, say experts. According to Rowley, if the age of the ocean floor can be dated, it will help in determining the history of the motion of continents. Also, from the magnetic orientation of ancient rocks, scientists can find out

where those rocks were originally located before coming together.

What has Theosophy to say about the periodic drifting apart and re-formation of continents? Have all the great geological changes been produced solely by ordinary and known physical forces? Were not rather these forces "but the tools and final means for the accomplishment of certain purposes, acting periodically, and apparently mechanically, through an inward impulse mixed up with, but beyond their material nature"? "There is a purpose in every important act of Nature," continues *The Secret Doctrine*, "whose acts are all cyclic and periodical. But spiritual Forces having been usually confused with the purely physical, the former are denied by, and therefore, have to remain unknown to Science, because left unexamined." (I, 640)

Studies with various groups of people have consistently revealed that social relationships affect mortality rates. Researchers have found that being with other people significantly increases life expectancy, while those who are single, have few friends or relatives and shun community organizations have more than twice the mortality rate of others. Investigators are presently engaged in figuring out why social involvement promotes health and well-being. (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., December 1990)

The late Hans Selye, a pioneer in modern stress research, thought that helping others evoked their gratitude and affection, and the resulting warmth somehow protected one from stress. Scientists are now saying that the warm feeling may come from endorphins, the brain's natural tranquilizers. They are also finding that good deeds may benefit the immune system, which is intimately related to the mind. Some researchers believe that the risk of heart disease is dramatically affected by our attitude towards other people. Hostility, they contend, definitely multiplies the risk; it blocks the coronary arteries and raises the blood pressure. Doctors, therefore, encourage patients to do things for others, instead of isolating themselves.

Other studies reveal the healing power of forgiveness. Trying to get even with those who have hurt us only leads to a vicious circle of retaliation. Abandoning the impulse to strike back might seem passive to some, but genuine forgiveness is a positive act that requires "enormous spiritual strength." "In the long run," says psychotherapist Donald Hope,

"forgiveness is the best choice for the forgiver—and the forgiven." And according to New York psychiatrist Avodah Offit, "Forgiveness is a crucial milestone in the therapeutic process." As the *Reader's Digest* article states :

Therapists point out that the inability to forgive can gnaw at us—depriving us of sleep, upsetting digestion, even causing high blood-pressure. But when we forgive, we often experience a gigantic turnaround, a cleansing that could be called rebirth....The most important ingredient in forgiveness is love.

"Forgive, forgive and largely forget." "Cast no one out of your heart." These sayings of Mr. Judge have a mantram value. Forgiveness, doing good, altruism, compassion, have more than a therapeutic effect. They are necessary to our very being as immortal souls evolving together. "Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal."

Recent mortality studies by David Phillips, a sociologist at the University of California at San Diego, lend credence to a long-held belief: that people can postpone their death until after some important symbolic event. (*Discover*, August 1990)

An instance cited is that of Thomas Jefferson, who, as he lay on his deathbed, reportedly awoke on July 3, 1826, and asked his doctor, "Is it the Fourth?" The doctor answered, "It soon will be." The next day, having clung to life to see the fiftieth birthday of the country he had helped to found, Jefferson slipped away. His time of death was no coincidence, says Phillips. Studies involving various religious and cultural groups show that death rates plunge before a holiday or festival particularly meaningful to the people belonging to those groups, and shoot up afterwards.

Phillips concludes that the intense desire to see through an important event spurs some people to go on living. At the very least, he thinks, his findings warrant taking a closer look at biochemical changes in sick people just before and just after important occasions. "Such occasions can be religious, personal, or political," he says. "But in many cases," he suspects, "the person may just be waiting to see people to say good-bye."

Everywhere humans have gone, they have wiped out whole species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish and other forms of life. Indeed, they continue to do so on every continent and island they inhabit, except now they act with a technology and a capacity for destruction far greater than that of their forebears. Many, scientists and non-scientists alike, find the increased threat to other species alarming. They fear that a wave of extinction has been set in motion that will ultimately undermine the quality, and perhaps even the possibility, of human life.

What is the truth of our situation? Is the mass extinction crisis a hysterical fantasy, a real risk for the future, or a proven event that is already well under way? What difference does the loss of species make to us humans? These questions are answered by Jared Diamond, professor of physiology at the UCLA School of Medicine (*Discover*, April 1990). Published lists of extinct and endangered species are gross underestimates, he writes. It is likely that more than half of the estimated 30 million of the world's existing species will be extinct or endangered by the middle of the next century.

There are people who dismiss the significance of these extinctions. So what if a few million beetle species disappear, they ask.

The answer is simply that, like all species, we depend on others for our existence. We need them to produce the oxygen we breathe, absorb the carbon dioxide we exhale, decompose our sewage, provide our food, and maintain the fertility of our soil.

Then couldn't we just preserve those species we need and let others become extinct? Of course not, because the species we need also depend on other species. The ecological chain of dominoes is much too complex for us to have figured out which dominoes we can dispense with. For instance, if you were the president of a timber company trying to figure out which species you could afford to let become extinct, you would have to answer these questions: Which ten tree species produce most of the world's paper pulp? For each of those ten species, which are the ten bird species that eat most of its insect pests, the ten insect species that spread most of its seeds? Which other species do these birds, insects, and animals depend on?...

Am I saying, then, that our future is hopeless? Not at all. We are the ones who are creating the problem, so it's completely in our power to solve it. There are many realistic ways we can avoid extinctions, such as by preserving natural habitats and limiting

human population growth. But we will have to do more than we are doing now. If, on the other hand, we continue behaving as we have in the past, the devastation will also continue. The only uncertainty is whether we will halt the juggernaut or whether it will halt us.

Commenting on the unification of East and West Germany and the speed with which it was effected, the Japanese newspaper, *The Seikyo Shimbun*, stresses the international significance of the event, in its editorial on October 3, 1990:

It would seem more reasonable to view the unification from a larger international framework of man's search for coexistence and not simply as a revival of a "mighty Germany" of the past, which would be a threat to world peace and security. It can be said that the birth of a unified Germany represents the beginning of globalization and of the era of the people with Europe as the stage....

Furthermore, the concept of a borderless world is gaining ground. With the exception of Romania, the democratic reform of Eastern European countries was realized without bloodshed because the people's will could not be checked. Is that not a strong testimony to the coming of the era of the people?....

Every human being has the right to live in a humane manner. This conviction has unleashed the will of the people, creating a tide that cannot be stemmed and that engulfs everything in its path, as the extraordinary events in the Soviet Union and the nations of Eastern Europe demonstrate.

Advances in science and technology have propelled us into an age when national boundaries are coming down and information flows rapidly and pervasively throughout the world. The power of the people and the spread of democracy have the potential to become—sooner or later—the mainstream of human history. Indeed, it has to become the mainstream.

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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.