

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

VOL. XXXI. No. 4

17th February 1961

THE VAISHYA-DHARMA

The performance of the duties of a man's own particular calling, although devoid of excellence, is better than doing the duty of another, however well performed; and he who fulfils the duties obligated by nature, does not incur sin. A man's own natural duty, even though stained with faults, ought not to be abandoned. For all human acts are involved in faults, as the fire is wrapped in smoke. The highest perfection of freedom from action is attained through renunciation by him who in all works has an unfettered mind and subdued heart.

—*The Bhagavad-Gita*

Business has been defined as “a lot of useless activities which we have created and now bow down to and worship.” This might provoke the query: “Is business incompatible with the living of the higher life?”

The function of turning raw materials into finished products and serving as a link between the producer and the consumer (which covers “business” by and large) is surely a necessary one in any but the most primitive form of human society. And what is necessary cannot be wrong. But as things are at present, the complex which we call the business world is a vortex of selfishness, and the man who tries to lead the life of a business man and practise Theosophical ethics in his vocation has a hard time. But this does not mean that it is impossible to do so; and, because the business man is essential to society, his function can and should be interpreted from a spiritual point of view. The application of Theosophy should not be confined to controlling and elevating the subjective processes of the *psyche* and bringing them under the influence of the *Nous*. Theosophy has to be made practical also by endeavouring to demonstrate the value of ethical and metaphysical principles in one's employment.

As in all reforms, the starting point is on the plane of motives. Things being as they are, the road to noticeable improvement in this field is a long one. But no harvest of physical effects can be expected unless seeds are sown and tended on the invisible planes of thought

and feeling. Whatever one's vocation, it can be imbued with a sacramental quality if looked at from a new, a spiritual angle of vision. So, if his Karma has placed him in the industrial or the commercial world, the student of Theosophy may take heart and work steadily for the uplift of that particular aspect of human activity, convinced that every dealing in the workaday world has an archetypal origin.

Whatever be our job, we find that what we do almost always falls short of what we wanted to do. Semiconsciously or consciously all decent people sense that there is a right, an ideal way of doing things, a way that cannot be reached as yet but which there is a constant urge to strive after. The real Ideal is the archetype. Archetypes are the patterns behind the material embodiments which we see. Plato was the first to bring to the West the teaching that the whole Universe is built in terms of the Divine Archetypal Ideas, and that all we see around us, both in Nature and in ourselves, are the endeavours of the Intelligences throughout Nature to copy those archetypal patterns, which, in right proportions and in relationship with one another, make the Whole a perfect picture.

No matter in what sphere of life we are — and those spheres were divided in Ancient India into four great types: the *Brahmana*, the *Kshatriya*, the *Vaishya* and the *Shudra* — there is the ideal pattern to follow. Great Spiritual Beings follow the pattern perfectly; the spheres of Nature below man, moved by the great Intelligence of Nature which we call instinct, do likewise. Between these two stands man. He is the possessor of free will and is learning not only to sense the great pattern but also consciously to build his life and work on that pattern. To whichever of the four classes of men he belongs, it is incumbent on him to find out what is the pattern to be followed.

Great aid will be derived in this work, by one who finds himself in the business world, from an examination of the rules which the Hindu *Vaishya* of old was given to observe at a time when the caste system was not the dead shell that it is today but was based on qualities and characteristics and not on mere birth. The production of wealth in an honest manner — without robbing or destroying Nature or exploiting fellow men — and the proper distribution of wealth for the benefit of all and the proper functioning of the social order were designated the *Vaishya-dharma*. Some of the rules that were incumbent on the *Vaishyas* in those days have been given in a short poem in the Tamil work, *Kumaresa Sathakam*:—

When framing a price policy for the sale of their goods, the motto of the *Vaishyas* should be to secure a very small profit. In fact, they should be frank enough to give out the actual cost price and the margin they have kept. They must always use kind words to their customers. In their own household dealings they must be very economical, so that on no ground should they be driven to the necessity of drawing from the business capital to meet private expenses. If dishonest people ap-

ply for credit, even if costly things are mortgaged, they should not extend credit facilities. On the other hand, if honest people call for any article on credit through a third party, on the strength of their word every credit facility should be given. In their accounts they should be very strict to the last pie. Never should they waste money. On sound articles of merchandise, they should spend any amount, knowing the intrinsic value of the goods dealt in.

Business is a field in which certain qualities and faculties which are fundamental to the harmonious running of the world can be cultivated. Brotherliness and co-operation, honesty and accuracy, service and sacrifice should be substituted for competition and rivalry, falsehood and fraud, ambition and greed. For the spiritualization of business the power of truth must prevail. The observance of moral and spiritual principles in business has become necessary in order to create fitter, worthier and better persons in society, in the nation and in the world. Business is a means to an end, not an end in itself. It allows of no compromise morally speaking. Man should not lose himself in business and degrade himself. Let him, on the contrary, raise himself by upholding and observing the ideal of service of the community.

Spiritual service of the race is related not to set programmes but to life itself—to the performance of *dharma* in the place in which Karma has placed us. Not by changing his vocation but by viewing it as a means to self-improvement and to the service of others does the business man transform every transaction into a veritable sacrament and make drudgery divine. Trade and industry bring comforts and conveniences to hearths and homes—or ought to do so. Bodies have to be fed and clothed; minds have to be trained and educated; hearts have to be enlightened; homes have to be furnished and beautified. The shopkeeper and the merchant should trade not only as a means of livelihood and to amass wealth but also to serve their fellow men. No doubt a labourer is worthy of his hire, but not of much more than his hire; and this applies to the commercial magnate as well as to the drudge. Gandhiji went so far as to say:—

If all men realized the obligation of service (as an eternal moral law), they would regard it as a sin to amass wealth; and then, there would be no inequalities of wealth and consequently no famine or starvation.

WHAT IS THEOSOPHY?

[The following letter by H. P. Blavatsky first appeared in French in *La Revue Spirite* (Paris) of November 1880. We are indebted for the translation to *The Complete Works of H. P. Blavatsky*, Vol. II.—Eds.]

To Monsieur Charles Fauvety,
President of the Society for Psychological Studies, Paris.

BOMBAY,
August 5, 188

Very Honoured Sir and President,

Your esteemed letter of June 25 is so serious and important that after mature deliberation, the Supreme Council of the Theosophical Society has directed me to answer you equally seriously, and upon all the points.

You tell us that the reason compelling you to decline the honour of joining us — with several other persons of your learned society — is "*Esotericism* set up as a principle" in our statutes?

Allow me to say that you are making a mistake.

It is true that a *wholly esoteric* section exists in our Society; but it is only a section, a very tiny part of the Society which would perhaps be best defined if I call it at the outset — not only the trunk of the Theosophical tree or its seed — because it is to that section that our whole Society owes its origin — but the vivifying sap that makes us live and flourish. Without this section, composed solely of Oriental adepts, the Theosophical Society, whose ramifications are beginning to cover the five regions of the globe, would be nothing but a dead and sterile body, a corpse without a soul. And yet the Theosophists who have been admitted up to this time could be reckoned on the fingers of one hand. Admission is not by asking. As for the rest of the Theosophists, with the exception of the passwords and signs that are changed at every expulsion of a bad and false brother — there are no secrets to preserve — nothing to conceal.

The following is what the *Rules* say on this subject:—

"XI. The Society includes three sections. The first is exclusive and composed of initiates in occult sciences or esoteric philosophy. Taking a profound interest in the business of the administration of our Society they are constantly in touch with the President-Founder, but — they remain unknown to the mass of the members. It is only those that themselves choose who receive the right to know them and to communicate with them.¹

"(g) But none of these members (thus favoured) shall have t

¹ Up to the present there are only *five* members or *Fellows* of the Third Section who have seen them or spoken with any of them; and no more than two who have received advice and some instruction in occult sciences; and we are 45,000! You may judge how easy it is to know or approach our "Brothers" of the First Section!

right to divulge the secrets of Occult Science which *may be communicated to them*. And before one can be put in touch, direct or indirect, with the adepts of the first section, he must take a most solemn pledge never to reveal what he shall learn or see; or employ his knowledge for personal and selfish motives, or even to refer to it, unless he receives permission to that effect from his Master himself."

All the rest is open to the day. But it is indeed true that our members have more privileges than persons who do not belong to our Society. Every Branch of the Society (and there are fifty-three) has its library containing books more or less rare, unpublished manuscripts, to which the public has no access. They hold weekly meetings and do not publish their business by shouting it from the housetops. But in this they do not show any greater feeling of exclusiveness or mystery than any other scientific society — in which scientific discussions are held or experiments made. If we do not admit visitors to our weekly assemblies, it is not because we have anything to hide, but simply in order not to be disturbed in our labours, and also to avoid the foolish talk and premature comments of the sceptics. Every time we have made an experiment and have succeeded in making a discovery in the occult forces, the fact is published, and more than once you will have read, in *The Theosophist*, the account of such or another phenomenon that we can reproduce at will, whether in physical, physiological, or psychological science.

Aside from that special branch of esoteric studies, our Society, as its name indicates, is nothing but the "Universal Brotherhood; the *Brotherhood of Humanity!*"

Our Society accomplishes what the Masonic societies promise but never perform. All *Brothers*, without distinction of *social position, race, or colour*, offer the hand of friendship to one another. The nobly born, proud, and wealthy lord who, if he were not a Theosophist, would hardly permit a poor Hindu or Chinese to pass the threshold of his ante-chamber, treats his poor and more humble brother as his equal.

Day and night, we work in common for the spiritual regeneration of morally blind individuals, as well as for the elevation of the fallen nations.

This is a programme which you will perhaps hardly believe without reluctance; that you will be inclined to consider purely Utopian, yet the proofs are there. Read *The Theosophist* and the Reports of the Society and you will find many a letter written by Hindus, Ceylonese (or Singhalese), and Mohammedans to thank us for our efforts and to give us news of results obtained. A young Englishman, a magistrate, who is at present in the Central Provinces, R. Scott Esq., admits to us that since he became a member of our Society, he listens to the pleadings of the *natives* with much more attention than he had done till then. He no longer thinks, as formerly for some years, that, in every case or dispute between a European and a Hindu, *it is always the Hindu who must be wrong*; he is delighted to find so much education and

intelligence among the natives. He regards them now as men, as "Brothers," while before they were merely *dogs* or *niggers* in his eyes. The wife of a general, Mrs. Murray, who has lived in India for eighteen years, after her initiation, began to converse amiably with some educated Brahmanas of our Society and shook hands on leaving. "It was the first time in her life," she said, "that she had touched any Hindus or exchanged a word with them"!!! She had never spoken to a man of that race during the eighteen years she had passed in those surroundings; she was delighted to find so many highly cultured persons among these people! That is one of the fruits of Theosophy as "Universal Brotherhood." We include many English people among us, all of them employed by the Government. Do you think, Monsieur, that in a dozen years the effects of our Theosophical principles will not have brought some good to this people, hitherto so unjustly despised, suppressed, and ignored? Believe me, the Theosophical Society is a harp with more than one string; and there is not one of them that will not finish by vibrating sympathetically in response to our constant efforts. We have a place for everyone and for every aspiration. All depends on what you want to do. Are you Christian, Buddhist, Brahman, Jew, or Zoroastrian? You have only to affiliate with the Branch composed of the followers of the religion you profess. Are you a Spiritualist? Join the Spiritualistic branch. Freethinker? Become a member of the Lanka Theosophical Society, etc. Are you none of these, but only a thinker, a labourer in search of Truth, and nothing but the Truth; a historian, an ethnologist, a savant devoted to the physical sciences, an archæologist, a philologist, an antiquary? You will find among us most learned, most illustrious names. You will not work alone or isolated any longer. If a member of our Academy, of one of the Royal Societies recognized as "learned," you will have no further need to tremble in bringing to it any of your discoveries in the ridiculed sciences which are regarded as emanating from dreams and impossible hallucinations, because you will no longer need to appeal to it in order to prove that discovery. Where one "Royal Society" would show you the door, or make you look like a fool or a charlatan (as in the Crookes' case), you would find a dozen colleagues and true scientists who would support and help you, because they are members of the Theosophical Society like yourself, and have sworn to mutually help and teach one another. (Compare your *Religion Laïque*; is it not extinguished under the conspiracy of silence?)

To conclude this subject, our Society is entirely the opposite of every other society that exists. We do not permit in it the shadow of dogmatism, whether of religion or of science. Each in his own particular branch does and acts as it seems good to him, but no one thinks of imposing his ideas on others in our general meetings. A member who would say to his "Brother," of another religion: "Believe as I do or you will be damned," or who would try to make him believe that he alone possessed truth, or who should insult his beliefs, would be im-

mediately expelled from the Society. The Parent Society protects every belief, every private opinion, as it would protect the purse of one of its members. No one has the right to touch the sacred or private property of one of his Brothers, except with respect and with the authorization of the latter. This is why our Society works in harmony, and why, even quite recently, a delegation of nine members of whom two are Buddhists, two Freethinkers, one Christian, two Sun-worshippers (Parsis), and two Brahmanas, has been sent on a mission to Ceylon to defend the rights of the Buddhists (hitherto their implacable bitter enemies, mutually hating one another) to establish Buddhist Theosophical Societies, and to hold meetings and give addresses in favour of the religion of the latter.

I am sending you *The Theosophist*, from its first numbers, and we will send it to you regularly, requesting you and your society to accept it with our sincere and fraternal compliments. Read, I beg you, in the August number an article or two which I have marked. You will see therein what the *Ceylon Examiner*, a Christian paper, says of our Society, of its plans, and of the practical good it has done in the world. We are all human and easily able to make mistakes, and we have our opinions and our preferences as well as our tastes and different ways of seeing things. Let us, then, help each other mutually with the light we may have, and never dogmatize about anything, at least until a hypothesis has become an undeniable fact to the whole universe — such as the existence of the sun or the oceans. Why should we worry about the personal opinions of our members on the question of religion? Provided that a person is in sympathy with us, in general, on the principal points of the rules of our *Brotherhood*, that he is honest, pure, sincere, and ready to help his neighbour, what is it to us whether that person does it in the name of *Christ* or of *Buddha*! You have merely to reread the fine saying of Spinoza that you quote in *Religion Laïque* to understand that mutual tolerance, that indifference to secondary *names* and objects: “It is not at all necessary to know Christ . . . (we will add — nor Buddha, nor Zoroaster, nor Parabrahm) according to the flesh, but rather the *ideal* Christ, that is to say the eternal son of God, *that Divine Wisdom which manifests itself in everything* . . . because it is that alone which can carry us to the perfect state, by teaching us what is true and false, good or bad.” The Theosophical Society, then, does not derive its name from the Greek word *Theosophia*, composed of the two words “God” and “wisdom” taken in the dead letter, but rather in the spiritual sense of the term. It is the Society for searching into *Divine Wisdom*, occult or spiritual wisdom which, while hardly yielding itself either to the crucible of an entirely physical science, or to the investigation of the materialist, lies, however, at the foundation of everything, material or immaterial, because it is the *omega* or last word of creation, or rather of evolution of every form, of every idea, even the most abstract.

This *Divine Wisdom* has been discovered by Mr. Edison, the

Theosophist, in the eternity of sound, which never disappears, not even when its organ, the sheet of lead, disappears; and Robert Fludd, the great Rosicrucian, intercepted and interrogated it in the flame, in the fire, of which neither the essence nor the origin is yet known to official science, and which will never be known, at least unless it condescends to walk in the way traced by the Fire-Philosophers of the Middle Ages those "dreamers" and those "idiots," according to M. Littré. But is not that *Divine Wisdom* also found in the *harmony* of the spheres as well as in the harmony of races and men? As members of the great Universal Fraternity, the fraternity of sciences, religions and ideas, we *have nothing to hide*: we do everything in the open, because harmony can never become harmful, and it cannot be abused.

The few favoured persons among us who have or could have crossed the threshold of the occult sciences (that double-edged sword which *saves*, but also *kills*), have no right to expose these truths in open day nor to betray the great secret. That secret is not for us, Monsieur; it does not belong to our century; it is the heritage of the martyrs, of the philosophers and the saints of the great Past. If for one reason or another, the custodians of those secrets, who alone possess them, find it right that they should be well protected and never exposed to the risk of falling into the hands of the profane, the people who indulge themselves in discord and who despise every idea of harmony between the so-called "superior" races and those they treat as "inferior," to us belongs the choice of rejecting their conditions, or accepting them and defending those secrets "with our life."

You see clearly, then, that Esotericism is "erected as a principle" among us only for the purpose of gaining admission as neophytes in the Branch of the Yogis, the Sannyasis.

As I have had the honour of informing you, that Branch only reckons *five* members. Their names even are unknown to the rest of the Theosophists, who, with the exceptions of the signs and passwords, have nothing to hide, nothing to reveal, which may not be made public in our magazine.

And now, Monsieur, begging to be excused for my long letter, as well as for my bad French, a language that I am completely forgetting here — I have finished. I have explained everything to you, and I will request you to explain everything in your turn to your esteemed members, and to do with this letter whatever you wish. Accept, Monsieur le Président, the expression of my respectful compliments.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

Corresponding Secretary of the New York Theosophical Society

THE BASIS OF BROTHERHOOD

Because Deity is reflected in Man, therefore all men are brothers — this is the primal concept of the ancient Wisdom-Religion. The immanence of God implies the solidarity of men. If Deity is omnipresent, then It is present in the human constitution. Its omniscience endows each human mind-soul with the possibility of omniscience; and, because all men are potentially omniscient, therefore they are spiritually identical in nature and are brothers. This concept may be illustrated by the following quotations from the *Bhagavad-Gita*:—

All this universe is pervaded by me in my invisible form; all things exist in me, but I do not exist in them. Nor are all things in me; behold this my divine mystery: myself causing things to exist and supporting them all but dwelling not in them. Understand that all things are in me even as the mighty air which passes everywhere is in space. (IX. 4-6)

Here in my body now behold the whole universe animate and inanimate gathered here in one. (XI. 7)

That man and God are identical in their innermost nature is the central truth of the great Upanishads; and how man can realize for himself that truth of truths is the subject of their enquiry and exposition.

As from a blazing fire a thousand sparks of the same nature fly forth, so do creatures manifold come forth from THAT, and thither do they return. (*Mundakopanishad*, II. i. 1)

Smaller than the small, greater than the great, in the heart of each living being, reposes THAT. One free from desire, with his mind and the senses composed, sees the glory of THAT and becomes absolved from all grief. (*Kathopanishad*, I. ii. 20)

Let us proceed to apply these fundamental ideas to the everyday affairs of life:

This world of ours is at strife. The struggle for existence may well be described as the real and most prolific parent of most of our woes and sorrows and of all crime. Individuals and nations, tribes and races, fight to live and survive. Their philosophy of life, which is the outcome of their beliefs, is at variance with the tenets of the Spiritual Instructors. "Give," cried Christ; "Grab," exclaim his so-called followers today. "Resist not evil," quietly declared the Reformer; "Fight everyone else but your own inherent evil, and fight because that evil lives," is the unspoken rule of life of the modern man. "The greatest among you is he that serveth," Jesus preached. "How can we make others serve?" is the question that makes millions resort daily to a hundred ways and means, to a thousand devices and subterfuges.

The whole world is badly in need of a new law of society — the Law of Brotherhood. Not only brotherhood in speech or brotherhood in action, for the one may give birth to the sense of superiority and

manifest as patronage from the "high and mighty" to the lowly born, and the other may beget charity from the rich to the poor, and thus both tend to perpetuate differences. What is wanted is Brotherhood in life.

This can only be realized on a spiritual basis. Democracy is bound to fail when it endeavours to establish itself on the principle of human equality. The manifested universe is founded on the Law of Differentiation. If we try to create a stable society on a contrary law we are working against Nature and failure is bound to result. Human beings can never be equal — economically or intellectually or morally. Therefore we should try to rear the coming civilization on a plan which does not go counter to Nature and her fixed laws. Brotherhood can be, nay, must be realized because Brotherhood is a fact in Nature. Has it occurred to us that Nature is all the time endeavouring to manifest Brotherhood and that we are not aiding her in that supreme effort?

Nature is working to establish Brotherhood, not because of us but in spite of us. Some of us desire earnestly to see the principle of Brotherhood realized in individual and national life. Our difficulty, it would seem, is that we have not understood the laws which make Brotherhood the great fact in Nature and the final goal of evolution. Some of the "leaders" of the day remind one of those of whom the *Kathopanishad* speaks: "Living in ignorance but regarding themselves as wise, they go round and round, in many crooked ways, blind leading the blind."

In the ancient days this was recognized. Reformers in every walk of life, understanding the central truth of the Law of Brotherhood, applied it. They worked with Nature, in terms of her laws, and success attended their efforts. When they forgot to apply these laws, their societies and civilizations decayed and perished. This can be seen in the rise and fall of civilizations in China, Egypt, Persia, Arabia and time after time in India.

What are the central principles underlying the Law of Brotherhood?

First, that all men are brothers because of their spiritual nature. A ray of divinity is present in all human beings.

Second, that in the manifested universe the Law of Differentiation works; therefore is the human kingdom divided into male and female; black, yellow, brown and white; rulers and ruled; wise and ignorant; rich and poor; employers and employed; saints and criminals.

Third, that out of these two laws of spiritual identity and outer differentiation arises the third, the Law of Evolution or Progress of the Spiritual Man through the instrumentality and by the help of the many material forms created by the Law of Differentiation.

Fourth, that Brotherhood exists in the spiritual world and that the ultimate goal of natural evolution is to establish the Kingdom of Brotherhood in this material universe of differentiation.

Fifth, that pain and sorrow are the outcome of obstructing the continuous efforts of Nature to proceed to its goal.

Sixth, that to try to establish Brotherhood in the material universe

is to energize the forces of differentiation and is therefore the way of pain and death; and that the true path is to establish the Kingdom of the Self, Atman, *i.e.*, to realize the unity of life which manifests, sustains and renovates the myriad forms of matter.

Seventh, that the twin doctrines of Duty and Sacrifice (*Dharma* and *Yagna*) are the pillars which support and uphold the Temple of Brotherhood belonging to the Kingdom of God.

Eighth, that this Kingdom is not to be entered by us in some far-away Heaven, in some far-off future, but has to be realized on earth and now, and the Temple of Brotherhood has to be raised by us here, by the fulfilment of duty as against the claiming of rights, by the sacrifice of the great, the rich, and the powerful, through their love for the small, the poor and the weak. Just as the Great Ones sacrifice Their freedom by incarnating in bodies of matter, just as They fulfil Themselves in this material universe in many ways by the performance of Their Duty (*Gita*, III. 22-24), so must we who are emanations of that Divine Principle, copying the Great Example, work according to the Laws of Duty and Sacrifice and build a Democracy in which every one is a King.

If, therefore, we try to establish Brotherhood in the Kingdom of matter — body and mind, wealth and trade — we are bound to fail; but if we endeavour to precipitate, in this manifested material universe, the Spiritual Brotherhood which exists, we will succeed.

This implies that we should think of man as a spiritual entity, unfolding his divine powers which are latent so that they may become patent. We are in the habit of thinking of man as a material entity, living and dying, learning and experiencing through thought and feeling and labour; by the strength of his body, the power of his emotions, the capacity of his mind, the vision of his moral nature, the perception of his reason. All these separately or collectively are taken by us to be the man. Therefore body fights against body, mind against mind, body against mind and mind against body; capacity fights against efficiency and reason against feeling; and so *ad infinitum*. "Who shall survive in the Great Struggle?" everyone asks, and each answers: "I." What is true of individuals is, alas, too true of groups of individuals, including nations.

Very different was the conception of the ancient world and the Wise Ones hold to it and work by it even today. They conceive Man as a spiritual entity, a spark of Divine Fire, a portion of God-Consciousness.

In him are embodied spiritual and divine powers. These are latent and evolution means the unfolding of these sleeping faculties. The one great central power that is unfolding in man is that of mastery over matter. We see differentiation because different beings are unfolding different capacities, different aspects of the one power — the power of mastering matter. To human beings, contact with matter means pain; identification with matter brings corruption, disease, decay, death. It is so be-

cause Natural Law is misunderstood and misapplied. But the long course of evolution is unfolding in man the power to gain mastery over matter and thus pass from the region of mortality to that of immortality, to become one with Divinity.

A rich man is learning, through the disillusionment that wealth brings, the glory of poverty; the pauper is acquiring through the majesty of suffering the gift of sacrifice; woman is gaining the strength of love through the trials of motherhood; man is developing the grace of gentleness through enduring the rough and tumble of life; ugliness of body leads us to look for the beauty of soul; adversity enriches life; poverty supports the bond of brotherliness — Divinity is everywhere fulfilling Itself through man. "The intelligent man knowing the formless Atman firmly established in perishable bodies does not grieve," says the *Kathopanishad*. "Of those things which deceive I am the dice, and splendour itself among splendid things," says Krishna in the *Gita*, adding, "My divine manifestations... are without end..."

It is this concept, that mortal men are growing into immortality with the help of their environment, in and through their environment that is very necessary today. We are what we are because through what we are and through that alone the establishment of the Kingdom of Brotherhood is possible, nay, certain.

The demand of men, therefore, should not be for rights to be claimed and obtained, but for duties to be performed. The fulfilment of *Dharma* or duty implies the understanding of our brothers and neighbours. At present our complaint is that we are not understood — the employer complains that he is misunderstood; the employee says he is misjudged; the politician, the preacher, the reformer, the *bourgeois*, the aristocrat, the anarchist, the Black man, the Brown, the Yellow and the White man — everyone cries and cries incessantly: "Don't misunderstand me." That is so because all of us want something from others, from without.

Let us affirm that we are what we are so that through our environment we may know ourselves to be divine, and then by the performance of our own duty, never forgetting that "it is better to do one's own duty... the duty of another is full of danger" (*Gita*, III. 35), we should do away with the terrors of the struggle for existence. But let us not forget that duty to others implies the knowing and understanding of those others. But we cannot know another, we cannot understand him, unless we love him; therefore the teaching: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." This implies our making ourselves one with our neighbour — with his joys and sorrows, his pains and sufferings. We are eager to make ourselves one with his joys and riches but not with his suffering and poverty. We claim kinship with the saints but are not eager to identify ourselves with the sinners. That is where the Law of Sacrifice has to be practised. (*Cf. Bhagavad-Gita*, III. 10-13)

Our motto should be: "Those who have must give." Then on those who have not will not try to grab. Giving, not only what we have

but what we are, is the expression of spiritual brotherhood. Therefore we must work for the reign of that socialism which gives and does not take. The Law of Sacrifice means that he who possesses gives to him who needs.

Brotherhood, therefore, is not to be established but has to be realized. We have not to create it, for it already exists; we have only to re-discover it. Its essence is within us; it is useless to look for it outside of us. Therefore we must seek and find the Laws of the Kingdom of God which are within us and apply them to the Kingdom of men in this world of empires and commonwealths and republics.

Man must take a new view of himself, and then he will be able to make a new world around him. He looks upon himself as a weakling, a mortal whom disease injures, decay attacks and death engulfs. The reality of Brotherhood does not touch him and therefore cannot inspire him to establish the Kingdom of Brotherhood. Let us teach him that he is an immortal whom fire cannot burn and water cannot drown, who is slowly but surely evolving into the stature of perfection. "As oil in seeds, as butter in cream, as water in springs, as fire in fire-sticks, so is that SELF [God] within the Self [Man]. Man will find God if he seeks for Him with Truth and Meditation." (*Shvetashvataropaniṣad*, I. 15)

Next, we must teach him to recognize himself as belonging to the human family, whose members are immortal and evolving; towards whom he has duties and who have duties towards him. As a citizen of the State he must be inspired to work for the improvement of the State; for this he must be made to realize that not only does he belong to the State but that also the State belongs to him. If mortal citizens are masters of the State they will impart to it their own mortality. Their immortality will enable them to create an immortal State. Towards that end let us endeavour to improve the State of today; which means that we should try to obtain conditions which help the soul more than the body; that we should remove causes which produce mind-disease, which in turn begets diseases of the senses and sense-organs, nerves and limbs; that we should establish an educational system that enlightens the man as a whole and not only his brain and body; that we should enable the State to afford equality of opportunity to all, so that each one is able to express his own innate nature and is not forced to eke out his livelihood, somehow, somewhere.

But all this implies enlightened rulers and administrators. It may rightly be said of our present-day "leaders": "They rule others; themselves they cannot rule." Rulers of the new era must be in a position to rule because they rule themselves in the first instance. This can only be achieved when the individuality controls and guides the personality, when the soul shines through the body, when the body is not a prison-house of the soul but the Temple of a Living God, when the mind is not a slave of the senses or the master of the soul, but when man is the actor using mind and brain, senses and sense-organs. "Know the

Self as the lord of the chariot; the body is the chariot; Pure Reason [Buddhi] is the driver and the mind is his rein; the senses are the horses; the objects which they perceive are the roads" (*Kathopanishad*, I. iii. 3-4). Then only will man cease to act as the protector of his own mortal self and worldly belongings, as a fighter facing the struggle for existence; and will act as an immortal whom nothing can destroy, and as a brother to all.

For the successful discharge of obligations and duties the supreme lesson of right activity must be imparted. To work as immortals we must work incessantly, skilfully, joyously, without attachment, regardless of the fruits of action. "Skill in action" is a different thing in the world today; in olden times it meant the recognition of the dignity of labour, the joy of execution, the beauty of expression, the consecration of work at the altar of human service, without expectation of any benefit to oneself. Such dispassionate workers alone can establish the true Brotherhood of Humanity.

Individuals make society. Society produces the State. Brothers can make Brotherhood; without the former we cannot build the latter. Where are the Brothers, those who will toil to save men's minds and bodies because they have saved their own souls? Brothers who will build the Society of Brotherhood and create the State where the Law of Brotherhood functions? Where are they? Let us ourselves resolve to be such Brothers.

We constantly speak of the inward presence of the divine in the human being, and all religions are an invitation to human beings to grow and change their nature; though our fineness may be limited, we are capable of intimate and unlimited developments. They tell us that human nature need not be what it happens to be at the present moment. There is a capacity for self-renewal in the human being. This assertion of the spirit in man is the hope of the world for the future. Have we not rid ourselves of many pestilences which devastated humanity, of cannibalism and head-hunting? There was a time when we thought that God would be pleased if we sacrificed children to the altar. We thought religion would progress and expand by massacres and inquisitions. We have grown out of all those ideas; so also, the idea that war is essential is something that we can outgrow. There is no doubt that if human nature asserts itself, that if the spirit in man is given scope, this greatest pestilence of all ages will also be driven out by human conquest.

—S. RADHAKRISHNAN

PURIFICATORY ACTIONS

Deeds of sacrifice, of mortification, and of charity are not to be abandoned, for they are proper to be performed, and are the purifiers of the wise.

—*The Bhagavad-Gita*, XVIII. 5

The deeds referred to seem to be a special group of actions, over and above the obligation which rests upon us all, at all times, to do the necessary actions which constitute our particular duty "to race and kin, to friend and foe." They are in the nature of self-initiated actions which, if performed in the right spirit and with due humility and offered on the altar of the Self, can bring us nearer to our goal of self-forgetting service of mankind.

What are the deeds of sacrifice, of mortification and of charity that should not be abandoned? Each category obviously could be dealt with at great length, but let us here consider briefly each of the three groups of purificatory actions, bearing in mind Krishna's warning in the following verse, which applies to them all—that "even those works are to be performed after having renounced all selfish interest in them and in their fruits."

YAGNA — SACRIFICE

Krishna had put forward earlier in His discourse with Arjuna, His devotee and His friend, a different concept of sacrifice from that prevailing among the orthodox followers of prescribed rites and ceremonies. He said that He accepted and enjoyed the offerings of the humble soul who in his worship with a pure heart offered a leaf, a flower, or fruit, or water unto Him. The emphasis, of course, is to be laid upon the purity of heart.

The offering of the greatest monetary value given with the motive of courting favour or of winning praise is rendered worthless as far as concerns spiritual benefit to the donor, whereas purity of heart and of intention invests the humblest offering with a value that to the worldly-minded would seem altogether disproportionate. Thus it is not primarily the size of the gifts that determines their real value to either the recipient or the donor. That is to be measured primarily by the heart quality that prompts them, which none but the donor himself can know. "There is," as a verse in *Proverbs* (xiii. 7) puts it, "that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches."

It is implied in the Third Chapter of the *Gita* that sacrificial action plays its part in helping the "wheel thus already set in motion to continue revolving." Sacrifice indeed is the law of life. Madame Blavatsky included in the first issue of her magazine *Lucifer* an unsigned filler that conveys this lesson, with its wider implications for each member of the human family:—

Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole. Each

cell in the living body must sacrifice itself to the perfection of the whole: when it is otherwise, disease and death enforce the lesson. (I. 7)

The negative definition of a Theosophist, ascribed by H.P.B. to Those who laid down as the first object of the original Theosophical Society the forming of the nucleus of a universal Brotherhood, bears directly upon readiness to sacrifice for others. It appears in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 31*, p. 12:—

HE WHO DOES NOT PRACTISE ALTRUISM: HE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO SHARE HIS LAST MORSEL WITH A WEAKER OR POORER THAN HIMSELF HE WHO NEGLECTS TO HELP HIS BROTHER MAN, OF WHATEVER RACE, NATION, OR CREED, WHENEVER AND WHEREVER HE MEETS SUFFERING AND WHO TURNS A DEAF EAR TO THE CRY OF HUMAN MISERY . . . IS NOT A THEOSOPHIST.

TAPAS — SACRIFICE

The word "*tapas*" is translated in *The Theosophical Glossary* as "abstraction, meditation," and "to perform *tapas*" as "to sit for contemplation," wherefore, it is added, "ascetics are often called *Tapasas*." But, since true contemplation is impossible without subduing of the lower passions, the word "mortification," by which Mr. Judge translates *tapas* in his rendition of the *Gita*, is very apposite in the context of purificatory actions. Krishna, however, describes the false ascetic who, while remaining inert, "restraining the senses and organs, yet ponders with his heart upon objects of sense," as "a false pietist or bewildered soul."

Austerities do have to be performed, but with the proper selfless motive and in due moderation. And they must not be performed vainly, gloriously or for show. The Christian teacher had something very pertinent to say on this in the Sermon on the Mount:—

. . . when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. . .

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret. . . (*Matt.*, VI. 16-18)

Self-restraint and mortification are both named in the Sixteenth Chapter of the *Gita* among the marks of him whose virtues are of godlike character. Students sometimes do not reflect when tempted by overindulgence of the appetite, for instance, how foolish it is to attempt to rein in and curb the desires with one hand while, wielding the whip of indulgence with the other, they urge on to greater speed the steeds that they are trying to control. "Do not believe," *The Voice of the Silence* warns, "that lust can ever be killed out if gratified and satiated." It is proverbial that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and how expect the will to be firm in a crisis if its dictates have been consistently overborne by those of desire of any type? That gl

tony is not the least serious of indulgences is indicated in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, on p. 113 of which gluttons find themselves in exceedingly undesirable company, after death.

Austerities of the right type and performed with the right selfless motive should aid the Inner Ego to get a better purchase on his vehicle of the personality and to focus his light through it, lending his grace to every action. A helpful practice, for example, is the observance of periodic silence of the senses and desires as well as of the tongue, to enable the voice of Nature or of our own higher nature to be heard. Lao-tse says that "by the practice of Inner Life stillness we can continually conquer all things."

DANA—CHARITY

If *Yagna* calls for action of the Will and *Tapas*, besides control of the senses, the passions and the desires, involves mental or heart resignation, *Dana*, which in its highest aspect is Compassion leading to the Great Renunciation, is a Buddhist expression. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians (XIII. 3-8) St. Paul makes it plain that charity is far other than the mere giving of gifts, which does not always involve the spontaneous outflow of that quality. The charity which he says "never faileth," "suffereth long, and is kind . . . envieth not . . . vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up . . . thinketh no evil . . . beareth all things . . . hopeth all things, endureth all things."

To feel this innermost conviction of universal brotherhood, this unity with all, is to express it spontaneously, wherever there is need one can relieve, pain one can assuage, ignorance one can enlighten. Then is one fired indeed to try to fit himself, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others. For, as Madame Blavatsky has written, "We believe in relieving the starvation of the soul, as much if not more than the emptiness of the stomach" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 242).

"The divine give, they demand that you also shall give before you can be of their kin" (*Light on the Path*, p. 66). The practice of this true *Dana* was beautifully described by the Buddha in these words from the *Majjhima Nikaya* (i. 194), translated by F. W. Woodward:—

When men speak evil of ye, thus must ye train yourselves: "Our heart shall be unwavering, no evil word will we send forth, but compassionate of others' welfare will we abide, of kindly heart without resentment: and that man who thus speaks will we suffuse with thoughts accompanied by love, and so abide: and, making that our standpoint, we will suffuse the whole world with loving thoughts, far-reaching, wide-spreading, boundless, free from hate, free from ill-will, and so abide." Thus, brethren, must ye train yourselves.

STUDIES IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

THIRD SERIES

VII.—THE LAW OF CYCLES

[Reprinted from *Theosophy*, Vol. XIII, pp. 320-326, for May 1925.—EDS.]

The illusory nature of time is the commonest of human experiences. The man in the street is aware of the fact that some hours of his life are longer than other hours; some fortnights pass like a day, while some moments seem an eternity. Reflection on these factors will enable the student to draw two conclusions — (1) beyond the illusion of time there is a Reality; (2) the illusion of time is caused by man himself. That which underlies every passing moment and endures for ever though millennium follow millennium cannot but be the One Reality. Says *The Secret Doctrine*:—

Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists in which the illusion can be produced; but “lies asleep.” The present is only a mathematical line which divides that part of eternal duration which we call the future, from that part which we call the past. Nothing on earth has real duration, for nothing remains without change — or the same — for the billionth part of a second; and the sensation we have of the actuality of the division of “time” known as the present, comes from the blurring of that momentary glimpse, or succession of glimpses, of things that our senses give us, as those things pass from the region of ideals which we call the future, to the region of memories that we name the past (I. 37)

Our ideas, in short, on duration and time are all derived from our sensations according to the laws of Association. Inextricably bound up with the relativity of human knowledge, they nevertheless can have no existence except in the experience of the individual ego, and perish when its evolutionary march dispels the Maya of phenomenal existence. What is Time, for instance, but the panoramic succession of our states of consciousness? In the words of a Master, “I feel irritated at having to use these three clumsy words — Past, Present, and Future — miserable concepts of the objective phases of the subjective whole they are about as ill-adapted for the purpose as an axe for fine carving.” (I. 43-44)

Time, like everything else in manifestation, is triune (*cf. The Secret Doctrine*, I. 19). The three aspects of Time are Past, Present and Future. The present hour, day, life, manvantara, is caused by the past and itself is the cause of the future cycles. The anticipation of the future makes us work in the present in terms of the memory of the past

Memory-gnyan is of the past; anticipation-ichcha is of the future; these two are linked by the active kriya-present. We think we are living in the past; we imagine we are living in the future; we believe we are living in the present — while as a matter of fact, we are living in the Eternal Now and know it not.

For, in the words of a Sage, known only to a few Occultists: "THE PRESENT IS THE CHILD OF THE PAST; THE FUTURE, THE BEGOTTEN OF THE PRESENT. AND YET, O PRESENT MOMENT! KNOWEST THOU NOT THAT THOU HAST NO PARENT, NOR CANST THOU HAVE A CHILD; THAT THOU ART EVER BEGETTING BUT THYSELF? BEFORE THOU HAST EVEN BEGUN TO SAY 'I AM THE PROGENY OF THE DEPARTED MOMENT, THE CHILD OF THE PAST,' THOU HAST BECOME THAT PAST ITSELF. BEFORE THOU UTTEREST THE LAST SYLLABLE, BEHOLD! THOU ART NO MORE THE PRESENT BUT VERILY THAT FUTURE. THUS, ARE THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE, THE EVER-LIVING TRINITY IN ONE — THE MAHAMAYA OF THE ABSOLUTE IS." (II. 446)

The illusion of time is within our own complex constitution. We ourselves are the makers of cycles — time-limits; the cycles of time run their course within ourselves; the circulation of blood in the human body is a cyclic process; the heart-beat and the pulse-beat are cyclic; cravings of the appetites and their satisfaction are cyclic; sickness and convalescence are cyclic; sleep and waking are cyclic; so are birth and death; prenatal life is cyclic; life on earth is cyclic — the four ashrama-stages, of (1) student-brahmacharya, (2) householder-grihastha, (3) contemplator-vanaprastha and (4) active altruist-sannyasin, were the device of the wise ancients who utilized the cyclic laws by making proper use of the four seasons of the human incarnation, which wise arrangement our civilization has set at nought. According to the teachings of the Esoteric Science, the commonly used definition for the age of man — "three score years and ten" — bespeaks an inner truth. The seventy years from one point of view indicate the perfect cycle for the development of the mahatmic being in seven decades in every new incarnation, which at a higher phase of development produces the unfoldment of the tenfold Dhyanic-avatara in cycles of seven years each. The same seventy-year cycle works for the present stage of human evolution thus: the period is divided into halves, one of birth and growth, the other of decay and death. Each half is further divided into five periods of seven years each: (1) Birth of the human body, (2) the taking charge of his body by the Egoic consciousness at the age of seven, (3) the kamic change which matures the boy or the girl at fourteen, (4) the manasic fecundation which makes twenty-one the age of discrimination, (5) the spiritual unfoldment resulting from experience and suffering from the earlier stages at twenty-eight. Then the return of the cycle, also in five periods but in the reverse order, during which effectual maturing can take place: thus between thirty-five and forty-two the unfolded spirituality (on the corresponding cycle of the first half,

i.e., between twenty-eight and thirty-five) is matured and perfected, and so on till the second childhood of innocence but not of ignorance, child-like but not childish, is shown forth between sixty-three and seventy. Just as the four stages of life are not observed by our civilization, just as there is caste-confusion in this Kali-yuga, so also is there dislocation, through ignorance, of the law above referred to, in our modern days, to the grave disadvantage of the individual and therefore to the race as a whole. In the light of what is said above, the student's attention is called to the extracts from *The Secret Doctrine* which now follow:—

When the Western Orientalists have mastered the real meaning of the Rig Vedic divisions of the World — the two-fold, three-fold, six and seven-fold, and especially the nine-fold division, the mystery of the cyclic divisions applied to heaven and earth, gods and men, will become clearer to them than it is now. . . . more than one physician has stood aghast at the periodical *septenary* return of the cycles in the rise and fall of various complaints, and naturalists have felt themselves at an utter loss to explain this law. (II. 622)

To demonstrate more clearly the seven in Nature, it may be added that not only does the number seven govern the periodicity of the phenomena of life, but that it is also found dominating the series of chemical elements, and equally paramount in the world of sound and in that of colour as revealed to us by the spectroscope. (II. 627)

Lest there be any misunderstanding, let it be noted that these periods are not arbitrary. There are children who are born before the nine-month period assigned to gestation is over, which means that for them the functions of that period are accomplished quicker. Similarly there are egos who take charge of their bodies before seven and others after; there are boys and girls who mature before or after fourteen and so on; men and women die before or live longer than their seventieth year. What is necessary for us to understand is the fact that each human incarnation is a cycle of ten stages, five on the ascending and five on the declining arc.

All this will clearly show, let us hope, that the Law of Cycles operates *within* man. Both cause and effect are psychological processes in the consciousness of the being and the period entailed forms a cycle in itself. Thus Kalpas are divided and sub-divided to the minutest divisions on the one hand, while on the other they multiply and expand till eternity itself is embraced. "Being is an endless cycle within the one absolute eternity, wherein move numberless inner cycles finite and conditioned." (I. 221)

These many cycles are interlaced, so that chemical changes in a molecule affect the physical cosmos as a whole and *vice versa*; the movements of the heavenly bodies have their reflections on earth and on the activity of the human *jiv-atmas*. In *Isis Unveiled* we are given a picture of the interlaced cycles which form the Great Circle:—

An Eastern artist has attempted to give pictorial expression to the Kabalistic doctrine of the cycles. The picture covers a whole inner wall of a subterranean temple in the neighbourhood of a great Buddhist pagoda, and is strikingly suggestive. Let us attempt to convey some idea of the design, as we recall it.

Imagine a given point in space as the primordial one; then with compasses draw a circle around this point; where the beginning and the end unite together, emanation and reabsorption meet. The circle itself is composed of innumerable smaller circles, like the rings of a bracelet, and each of these minor rings forms the belt of the goddess which represents that sphere. As the curve of the arc approaches the ultimate point of the semi-circle — the nadir of the grand cycle — at which is placed our planet by the mystical painter, the face of each successive goddess becomes more dark and hideous than European imagination is able to conceive. Every belt is covered with the representations of plants, animals, and human beings, belonging to the fauna, flora, and anthropology of that particular sphere. There is a certain distance between each of the spheres, purposely marked; for, after the accomplishment of the circles through various transmigrations, the soul is allowed a time of temporary nirvana, during which space of time the atma loses all remembrance of past sorrows. The intermediate ethereal space is filled with strange beings. Those between the highest ether and the earth below are the creatures of a "middle nature"; nature-spirits, or, as the kabalists term it sometimes, the elementary.

This picture is either a copy of the one described to posterity by Berossus, the priest of the temple of Belus, at Babylon, or the original. We leave it to the shrewdness of the modern archæologist to decide. (I. 348-49)

To enable us to understand the interrelationship between man and the solar universe in which he lives and of which he is a part, let us consider — without going into particulars — the correspondence between the movements of both.

Our earth as a planet of this solar system has three movements — it rotates on its own axis, completing it in 24 hours; it revolves around the sun, completing it in 365 days; it participates in the movement of the whole solar system as it goes through the sidereal cycle of a little over 25,800 years.

The diurnal cycle may be regarded as corresponding to the daily experiences of the lower personal self. The routine of waking and sleeping is, of all of them, the most fixed for the human body, which has to be fed, exercised, cleansed periodically. Habits may vary but the sleep and waking periods are almost the same for the same classes of human intelligences. The weeks of seven days, each forming the Lunar and the Solar months, affect the personality. Just as tides and ebbs of the ocean on earth are affected by the movements of the moon, so

is our lunar body affected by the lunar cycle. Then there are the lunar and the solar years, with their seasons. The yearly cycle may be regarded as corresponding with one incarnation of the Individual Ego, every new birth being analogous to a new year. Lastly there is the sidereal cycle which may be regarded as corresponding to the whole cycle of evolution of the human jivatma. These physical cycles are reflections of psychological cycles. In this connection we might profitably extract from *The Secret Doctrine* its reference to the knowledge of the ancient Egyptians on the subject:—

They had it; and it is on this “knowledge” that the programme of the MYSTERIES and of the series of Initiations was based: thence, the construction of the Pyramids, the everlasting record and the indestructible symbol of these Mysteries and Initiations on Earth, as the courses of the stars are in Heaven. The cycle of Initiation was a reproduction in miniature of that great series of Cosmic changes to which astronomers have given the name of tropical or sidereal year. Just as, at the close of the cycle of the sidereal year [25,868 years], the heavenly bodies return to the same relative positions as they occupied at its outset, so at the close of the cycle of Initiation the inner man has regained the pristine state of divine purity and knowledge from which he set out on his cycle of terrestrial incarnation.

Moses, an Initiate into the Egyptian Mystagogy, based the religious mysteries of the new nation which he created, upon the same abstract formula derived from this sidereal cycle, which he symbolized under the form and measurements of the tabernacle, that he is supposed to have constructed in the wilderness. On these data, the later Jewish High Priests constructed the allegory of Solomon’s Temple — a building which never had a real existence, any more than had King Solomon himself, who is simply, and as much a solar myth as is the still later Hiram Abif, of the Masons, as Ragon has well demonstrated. Thus, if the measurements of this allegorical temple, the symbol of the cycle of Initiation, coincide with those of the Great Pyramid, it is due to the fact that the former were derived from the latter through the Tabernacle of Moses. (I. 314-15)

How analogous this theory is to the law of planetary motion, which causes the individual orbs to rotate on their axes; the several systems to move around their respective suns; and the whole stellar host to follow a common path around a common centre! Life and death, light and darkness, day and night on the planet, as it turns about its axis and traverses the zodiacal circle representing the lesser and the greater cycles. Remember the Hermetic axiom: “As above, so below; as in heaven, so on earth.” (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 294)

Humanity is made up of individual units. If the Law of Cycles operates in reference to individuals, it equally works for groups: the tribe-races, family-races, sub-races, root-races, globe-rings, rounds

planetary-chains, solar-systems, sidereal-systems, are "the innumerable small circles" which compose the one Great Circle of the Universe referred to in that wondrous picture described in the extract from *Isis Unveiled* given above. From the same great book come the following:—

They divided the interminable periods of human existence on this planet into cycles, during each of which mankind gradually reached the culminating point of highest civilization and gradually relapsed into abject barbarism. (I. 5) . . . These cycles, according to the Chaldean philosophy, do not embrace all mankind at one and the same time. (I. 6)

Plato divides the intellectual progress of the universe during every cycle into fertile and barren periods. In the sublunary regions, the spheres of the various elements remain eternally in perfect harmony with the divine nature, he says; "but their parts," owing to a too close proximity to earth, and their commingling with the *earthly* (which is matter, and therefore the realm of evil), "are sometimes according, and sometimes contrary to (divine) nature." When those circulations . . . in the universal ether which contains in itself every element, take place in harmony with the divine spirit, our earth and everything pertaining to it enjoys a fertile period. . . . But during the barren periods . . . the spiritual sight of the majority of mankind is so blinded as to lose every notion of the superior powers of its own divine spirit. (I. 247)

Applying the law of correspondence-analogy we can conceive that the Karmic Cycle of the human kingdom on earth has its rotatory, revolutionary and sidereal sub-cycles, under which (*a*) one class of self-conscious intelligences is evolving by constant reincarnations; (*b*) a second class of beings, coming only on the crestwave of human civilizations, is the revivifier of the innate ideas which are to be embodied by the race as a whole, as cycles run their course; (*c*) a third class who are the great Avatara-Incarnations who strike the key-note of an opening Cycle of Construction on the eve of earthly, intellectual or ethical cataclysms resulting from the activity of the Cycle of Destruction. *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume I, quotes and comments (pp. 640-41) on the following very significant passage in *Isis Unveiled*:—

As our planet revolves once every year around the sun and at the same time turns once in every twenty-four hours upon its own axis, thus traversing minor circles within a larger one, so is the work of the smaller cyclic periods accomplished and recommenced, within the Great Saros.

The revolution of the physical world, according to the ancient doctrine, is attended by a like revolution in the world of intellect—the spiritual evolution of the world proceeding in cycles, like the physical one.

Thus we see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress. The great kingdoms and empires of the world,

after reaching the culmination of their greatness, descend again, in accordance with the same law by which they ascended; till, having reached the lowest point, humanity reasserts itself and mounts up once more, the height of its attainment being, by this law of ascending progression by cycles, somewhat higher than the point from which it had before descended.

The division of the history of mankind into Golden, Silver, Copper and Iron Ages, is not a fiction. We see the same thing in the literature of peoples. An age of great inspiration and unconscious productiveness is invariably followed by an age of criticism and consciousness. The one affords material for the analyzing and critical intellect of the other.

Thus, all those great characters who tower like giants in the history of mankind, like Buddha-Siddhartha, and Jesus, in the realm of spiritual, and Alexander the Macedonian and Napoleon the Great, in the realm of physical conquests, were but reflexed images of human types which had existed ten thousand years before, in the preceding decimillennium, reproduced by the mysterious powers controlling the destinies of our world. There is no prominent character in all the annals of sacred or profane history whose prototype we cannot find in the half-fictitious and half-real traditions of bygone religions and mythologies. As the star, glimmering at an immeasurable distance above our heads, in the boundless immensity of the sky, reflects itself in the smooth waters of a lake, so does the imagery of men of the antediluvian ages reflect itself in the periods we can embrace in an historical retrospect.

"As above, so it is below. That which has been, will return again. As in heaven, so on earth." (I. 34-35)

Two outstanding conclusions of this study on the Law of Cycles may be summed up thus: (1) We are the makers of cycles; through individual Karma we draw the circle of individual reincarnations; through collective action we draw the narrowing or expanding cycles of communal and national decline or rise; through spiritual Karma we slowly but steadily contact the Primal Circle — which is Nirvana when it is entered self-consciously, pralaya when entered unconsciously. (2) Each human being lives in the close embrace of Nature, moves in that Nature, and has to realize that his Being *is* Nature. Wheel within wheel, cycle within cycle, the One Life in manifestation is the Circle of Time in Abstract Space, which is Duration. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:—

Would'st thou become a Yogi of "Time's Circle"? Then, O Lanoo: Believe thou not that sitting in dark forests, in proud seclusion and apart from men; believe thou not that life on roots and plants, that thirst assuaged with snow from the great Range — believe thou not, O Devotee, that this will lead thee to the goal of final liberation.

Think not that breaking bone, that rending flesh and muscle, unites

thee to thy "silent Self." Think not that when the sins of thy gross form are conquered, O Victim of thy Shadows, thy duty is accomplished by nature and by man.

The blessed ones have scorned to do so. The Lion of the Law, the Lord of Mercy, perceiving the true cause of human woe, immediately forsook the sweet but selfish rest of quiet wilds. From Aranyaka He became the Teacher of mankind. After Julai had entered the Nirvana, He preached on mount and plain, and held discourses in the cities, to Devas, men and Gods.

Sow kindly acts and thou shalt reap their fruition. Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.

Thus saith the Sage.

Shalt thou abstain from action? Not so shall gain thy soul her freedom. To reach Nirvana one must reach Self-Knowledge, and Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child.

Have patience, Candidate, as one who fears no failure, courts no success. Fix thy Soul's gaze upon the star whose ray thou art, the flaming star that shines within the lightless depths of ever-being, the boundless fields of the Unknown. (pp. 30-32)¹

—B. P. WADIA

It is only a few more days, in this world, and each shall return to its own fountain; the blood-drop to the abysmal heart, and the water to the river, and the river to the shining sea; and the dewdrop which fell from heaven shall rise to heaven again, shaking off the dust grains which weighed it down, thawed from the earth frost which chained it here to herb and sward, upward and upward ever through stars and suns, through gods, and through the parents of the gods, purer and purer through successive lives, until it enters the Nothing, which is the All, and finds its home at last.

—HYPATIA

¹ Indian edition, pp. 32-34.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

How often we ask ourselves the question: "What is the purpose of life?" And how often we get the answer: "The purpose of life is to learn," or, "The purpose of life is to serve"? Quite so, but is the implication of these answers always understood? The purpose of life is most difficult to understand without the background given by the philosophy of Theosophy, which is the synthesis of the ancient knowledge that lies behind all the great religions and philosophies of the ages. It is because our mental background is limited today to the short period of known history, or of our own family, or of our own life, that we are hindered in our understanding of the question. And it is because with the enormous vista which the ancient knowledge gives us we can begin to span space and time and understand at least something of the conception of the limitless, enduring expanse and the limitless and undivided eternal, that we are enabled to know a little more of the "why" of things.

One of the things that will help us is to start with what we *know*, but with the background mentioned above. How shall we understand eternity and immortality except by looking within? And if we ask ourselves, "Can I imagine myself non-existent, reduced to nothingness?" we shall have to admit that this is impossible. We can imagine ourselves without a body, but never as non-existent, for the very thought of being non-existent proves that we *still are!* From this conception we can pass to others — of the limitless number of universes, of the limited number in any particular manifestation, of *pralaya* and *manvantara*, comparable to life and death, sleeping and waking.

Faced with the concept of eternity, we again ask: "WHY?" We cannot, of course, fully understand it with our finite minds, but we can know something by realizing that when we are experiencing terrible pain or are placed in tragic circumstances, when life does not seem worth while and when we long for oblivion, even then we know that this phase will pass away. And when the conditions which caused pain and misery no longer exist, we shall again experience *tanha*, the thirst for life. This thirst for life in form of some kind is a reflection of that which causes all manifestation. It is rooted in the desire to know oneself. It is the very nature of the Eternal to manifest Itself from time to time to know Itself.

The Secret Doctrine gives us a wonderful picture to help us to understand this:—

Just as milliards of bright sparks dance on the waters of an ocean above which one and the same moon is shining, so our evanescent personalities — the illusive envelopes of the immortal MONAD-EGO — twinkle and dance on the waves of Maya. (I. 237)

These myriads of sparks are also called "Pilgrims," and we have many references to these symbols which may help us to visualize the teaching. We read in the Stanzas of Dzyan:—

The spark hangs from the flame by the finest thread of Fohat. It journeys through the Seven Worlds of Maya [the seven globes of the planetary chain and the seven rounds]. It stops in the first (*Kingdom*), and is a metal and a stone; it passes into the second (*Kingdom*), and behold — a plant; the plant whirls through seven forms and becomes a sacred animal (*the first shadow of the physical man*).

From the combined attributes of these, Manu (*man*), the Thinker, is formed. (I. 238)

The "Spark" which "hangs from the flame" is "JIVA, the MONAD in conjunction with MANAS, or rather its aroma — that which remains from each personality, when worthy, and hangs from Atma-Buddhi, the Flame, by the thread of life."

Then we learn:—

Starting upon the long journey immaculate; descending more and more into sinful matter, and having connected himself with every atom in manifested *Space* — the *Pilgrim*, having struggled through and suffered in every form of life and being, is only at the bottom of the valley of matter, and half through his cycle, when he has identified himself with collective Humanity. . . . In order to progress upwards and homewards, the "God" has now to ascend the weary uphill Path of the Golgotha of Life. It is the martyrdom of self-conscious existence. . . . Like Visvakarman he has to sacrifice *himself to himself* in order to redeem all creatures, to resurrect from the many into the *One Life*. Then he ascends to heaven indeed. (I. 268)

We see one aspect of the purpose of life in the following extract:—

"The thread between the *silent watcher* and his *shadow* (man) becomes stronger" — with every reincarnation. . . . The Watcher, or the divine prototype, is at the upper rung of the ladder of being; the shadow, at the lower. (I. 265)

We have, therefore, eternal progress, which is not difficult to conceive of when we think of the eternity as the duration of the ONE.

It is also not too difficult to imagine that within that eternity manifestations, Universes, come into being and go out of being, are reincarnated or re-embodied again and again, so that perfection in any period of manifestation is not the acme of perfection, but there is an endless series of struggles for greater and greater perfection.

It is when we remember this that we can realize the truth of the statement that Man has never been without a Friend. Every manifestation has had a gradation of beings, from the Perfected Ones of prior manifestations or periods of evolution to the beings just struggling towards self-reflective consciousness or self-consciousness. We are given the great idea of the "Solitary Watcher" and of all Those other Spiritual Beings who, under His guidance, watch over, teach and protect mankind. We must not materialize this concept and think of a human

being, immensely great, but keep in mind that It is rather an "Influence," in whatever kind of form we may imagine. *The Secret Doctrine* tells us that

it is under the direct, silent guidance of this MAHA — (great) — GURU that all the other less divine Teachers and instructors of mankind became, from the first awakening of human consciousness, the guides of early Humanity. It is through these "Sons of God" that infant humanity got its first notions of all the arts and sciences, as well as of spiritual knowledge. . . . (I. 208)

Lest we materialize this concept let us remember that

the next great Manvantara will witness the men of our own life-cycle becoming the instructors and guides of a mankind whose Monads may now yet be imprisoned — semi-conscious — in the most intellectual of the animal kingdom, while their lower principles will be animating, perhaps, the highest specimens of the Vegetable world. (I. 267)

Does not a meditation on these ideas enrich our understanding of the purpose of life? Does it not show us that this purpose is service, so that we may have this idea of the service of all embedded in us strongly enough to enable us to be the Helpers of the new infant Humanity in a succeeding cycle of manifestation? And does not this idea show us that the purpose of life is to learn *how* to serve?

We have to keep in mind that we are on the return journey towards the One Flame; we must begin to learn that we are not separate from any point in space, from the criminal or the saint, but are all bound together, mutually helping one another — those our peers, those below us and Those above us in Their growth through evolution. Self-assertion, pride, selfishness, must give way to humility, not the "humility" of Uriah Heep, but that of one who knows, without pride, that he is but a passer-on, one among many giving expression to the One Life, a servant of Powers so much greater than he that it is in the spirit of reverence that he passes on Their Knowledge and Wisdom.

The way gets clearer as we go on, but as *we* get clearer we get less anxious as to the way ahead.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE FIRST TRUTH

The essential characteristic of the human heart is that its aspirations go for ever towards infinitude and an ever receding "God." It is because it is itself of the essence of that pure divinity that it cannot identify itself with lesser objects of worship than that which embraces and comprehends all. Its inner vision must touch all other hearts and the various expressions and outer manifestations of the indwelling eternal spirit. From that spirit, it derives Peace and Joy, because it feels in harmony with the secret Heart of Nature and knows of no Separateness.

The word "divinity" has a strange fascination over man's mind. Man is the Thinker, the Perceiver, the Experiencer. The study of metaphysics, or the study of the relationship between Man-spirit and God-spirit, becomes an impelling necessity. It is both a study and a search. Man's pilgrimage through life must have a meaning, an aim, a purpose. To abdicate the right to know is to acknowledge that there is no order, no purpose to life. This must ultimately lead to spiritual death. The flame of the Divine, of the One which is in all, as it is Life itself, is not conditioned or limited by forms as such. Spirit and Matter are not two independent realities but the two facets of one unique Whole. There is light in the blade of grass, in the instinct of the bird and in the searching heart of man. That divine Principle is eternal, immutable, omnipresent. Forms can be destroyed; Life always is.

There are no limitations to the Real Man, to the freedom of the human Spirit. "There is *That* which must ever remain unknown, because It is the Knower in every body. It cannot be known because *Its potentiality of knowing is Infinite.*" That divine spark which is in all human hearts needs infinitude to shine forth. To give scope to that inner greatness there must be Universal and Eternal Concepts. The Inner God in us finds expression through the medium of Eternal Truths. These eternal metaphysical concepts are like the messengers of the Inner God, and only the swift wings of the words in which they are clothed touch the slumbering consciousness of the personal man.

These concepts within the matrix of the Mind slowly take form and shape if properly nourished and sustained. That matrix of the Mind must be made virgin before it can give life to embryonic truths. Here, now, God has to be known by knowing what is not God. Then man will turn towards his Parent-Soul, will seek union with God-spirit. Through Love and Compassion are the Teachings of the Great Ones made our own. Through and by them man becomes a responsible being, the Architect of the Inner Temple, readjusting and moulding all the materials, viewing this Earth as the garden of the Gods.

Then comes to man the knowledge of the fraternity of Perfected Living Souls, who are the living witnesses of the Grand Scheme of the Universe. From mind to mind, from consciousness to consciousness,

a bridge spans, subtle but strong, built out of self-sacrificial deeds. Human beings have to live together; we all know how difficult this can sometimes be. Human happiness is the fruit of the correct relationship between man and Nature, between man and man, and between man and his Parent-Soul.

Our *dharma* as human beings is to understand life, to understand ourselves, and gain knowledge. It is indeed childish to study about life and death in order to gain powers over Nature and over our fellow men, while we are in fact part and parcel of the great whole ourselves. It is also foolish to try to get away from it—how can we? The only behaviour befitting our dignity as souls is to live for and as the Self of all. This is indeed the First Truth.

According to a report in *The New York Times*, since the beginning of this century the north pole has been moving toward Greenland a more than half a foot a year. The motion is attributed to a melting of the Greenland ice sheet. This shifting of the pole was reported by Dr. William Markowitz of the Naval Observatory in Washington. Such a drift had been suspected on the basis of earlier studies, but had never been established to the satisfaction of geophysicists.

Its detection has been complicated by the precession of the earth's axis, which moves the poles in 30-foot circles every 14 months. It has now been shown, according to Dr. Markowitz, that the entire circle of the pole's precession moved about 30 feet toward Greenland during the first half of this century.

Dr. Walter H. Munk of the University of California at La Jolla said that any substantial loss of Greenland ice would remove weight from an off-centre point on the earth's surface and distribute it uniformly over the globe as ocean water. The consequent reduction in the centrifugal force exerted by Greenland on the spinning earth would then stimulate a drift of the pole in that direction.

As it happens, Theosophists did not have to wait for modern science to make the discovery. As far back as 1888 H. P. Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine*:—

Astronomers may pooh-pooh the idea of a periodical change in the behaviour of the globe's axis... nevertheless... there is a secular change in the inclination of the earth's axis, and its appointed time is recorded in one of the great Secret Cycles. (II. 726)

The shifting of the poles at regular cyclic intervals, she has further stated, causes "the displacement of the Oceans, the submersion of the polar lands, and the consequent *upheaval* of new continents in the equatorial regions, and *vice versa*." (II. 360)

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF MIND

On the subject of mind, which is an instrument of the soul, Eastern psychology takes a position that is very precise. Western psychology takes a different view of mind because its definition of mind as a principle in the human constitution is entirely different. When we speak of the reconstruction of mind from the point of view of Theosophy (which is the point of view of Eastern psychology) we speak of something definite and precise that has been analyzed, not of something that is vague.

To study any subject we need to take up the position of an honest inquirer who puts aside all his predilections, all the inferences drawn from so-called exact knowledge, and begins to test by human experience. Unless we apply this test to the subject of mind, we will not be able to come to any definite conclusion. When we do so, we immediately come up against the limitations of human experience. Everyone wants to and does go by what he calls his convictions. Hence, when we speak of human experience as a test, as a measure, we naturally speak of that which has been verified over and over again.

Human experience in reference to the mind, as it is known in modern culture and civilization, is a limited experience. The science of psychology as it is known in the West today is, comparatively speaking, a new science and, therefore, its observations, experiments and collection of facts, though interesting, are not sufficient to draw inferences from. How very inadequate and unsatisfactory the position of the modern science of psychology is can be seen from the fact that those who have been experimenting in this field have not asked the simple question: "May there not have been people in the great civilizations of the past who were psychologists?" The conceit of the modern mind is colossal. It is thought that psychology is a new science and that the ancients did not know of it.

The ancients knew of it very definitely; their tabulations of facts are there and need to be studied. Why ought we to study the problems of the mind? Because they are the cause of most of our troubles. There is a great deal of talk about the reconstruction of the world. What needs reconstruction at the present moment is not the world but the way we look at it.

There is nothing the matter with the world. All the elements, the earth, the air, the water, the fire, carry on their activities harmoniously. Even while wars rage, Nature goes on with her work. Therefore, what we mean by the reconstruction of the world is a reconstruction of our attitude towards the world. And our attitude to the world takes shape in what we call our mind.

The Upanishadic philosophers knew that the world at which one person looks is a totally different world from the one at which another person is looking, and that the impressions which one gets and the inferences which he draws are different from the impressions which another gets and the inferences which he draws. We think that the universe is changing because the change is in us. So, if we want to reconstruct any-

thing, we must reconstruct that in us which changes. That view, once grasped, will bring us the clear conviction that each one of us is living in a universe that he makes. We think that our neighbour is living in the same universe as we live in, and this belief is productive of conflict. What is the cause of war save that different people see things differently, hear things differently? It is the minds of men that produce all the havoc in the world and it is therefore the mind that needs reconstruction perpetually.

Now, how are we going to reconstruct it? By first trying to understand what mind is and how it acts.

The mind receives impressions from without and makes possible expressions from within. The impressions that come to us come *via* the five senses, the *jnana-indriyas*. Sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch are the channels through which knowledge of the great world without is received. The work of expression, on the other hand, is made possible through the five organs of action, the *karma-indriyas* — hands, feet, speech, the organs of procreation and of excretion. Expression proceeds from within without. Impression comes from without within. Mind is the link between the two.

What does the mind do? It responds to the impressions received from without. We see or hear a thing and our mind responds to that impression. It modifies itself according to the impressions from without, just as water takes the shape of the receptacle into which it is poured. The faculty of cognition enables the mind to know the real meaning and significance of the impressions in terms of its own inherent knowledge. If it is not able to understand their meaning, it becomes a slave to the impressions.

After receiving and evaluating the impressions, the mind expresses itself. It takes the form that the impressions have created and, if it feels satisfied, it remains there. If it feels pain, it tries to get out of it. Pleasure and pain — in other words, our feelings — connect impressions with expressions.

The object of concentration is to prevent the impressions from modifying our thinking principle. It should hold firm when the impressions come and be a silent spectator of the panorama that passes before its eyes.

To put itself in the position of a spectator of the impressions that come from without, the mind needs to be reconstructed. We may reconstruct it superficially — and modern education does that — but the real method of reconstruction is to alter its foundation. This implies training the mind not to become a slave to impressions, not to rush into the moulds that matter makes from outside. Colour makes an impression through the eyes. Sound, music, make an impression through the ears and so on with the other senses. Not to be enslaved by them, but to energize and ensoul them, is our object.

We need to practise meditation to reconstruct the mind. Meditation does not mean taking a set posture at a set time. A study of *The Voice of the Silence* and of Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms* will help considerably in the practice of meditation. It is said in *The Voice of the*

Silence that "the mind is the great Slayer of the Real." A little further on we are told that we live and die in the Hall of Ignorance. What does it mean? What do we do there? How did we gain our ignorance? By letting the mind become a slave to the emotions. We gain the lower knowledge, become more and more involved in sense activities, more and more enslaved by sense impressions. The Hall of Ignorance is the hall in which we use our senses, in which we first see the light. For what brings us to knowledge? Recognition of the fact that we are ignorant. That is the first step in the attainment of wisdom.

Proceed from that to the next. To get away from the hall of the senses and sense impressions, we are told: "Let not thy mind mistake the fires of lust that burn therein for the sunlight of life." The mind makes the mistake of being led by sense inclinations and goes further and further away from the soul. The Wise Ones, it is said, "tarry not in pleasure-grounds of senses."

Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* give us the practical method: "Concentration, or Yoga, is the hindering of the modifications of the thinking principle." Here we get the very first step for reconstructing our minds. We may read scores of volumes on psychology; we may probe, by the process of psychoanalysis, our subconscious minds; but ultimately we shall come to this concept which Patanjali has given.

Let us not go after the phenomenal phases of things but try to look for the philosophical basis of things. The philosophical basis is there in what we have considered above. By studying *The Voice of the Silence* and Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms* we will be able to understand more clearly, more accurately, what the mind is and what we can do with it. If we give thought to the matter we shall see that the evolution of the mind consists in coming out of the kingdom in which the mind is a slave to impressions into the kingdom where the mind becomes an instrument for the expression of the soul. And then we see, not with our eyes, but through our eyes. We do not hear with our ears, but through our ears. We do not speak with our vocal organs, but speak through them. We recognize the power within differently and hence the world becomes a different world. The language of the soul, symbolism, and the language of ideas, ideographs, come into play. That is the work that lies before us in evolution.

The mind creates (within itself) numerous ideas. The understanding settles which is which. The heart discriminates which is agreeable and which disagreeable. These are the three forces that impel to acts.

—*The Mahabharata*

EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

Meditation falls into two compartments: (a) self-examination — the lower self surveyed by the light of the Higher and (this is important) of the Divine Science. Calm judgment tells us what is wrong and evil, what right and good; but judgment in the light of the Divine Science reveals what we lack of spirituality, of the sage-light. A periodic review-survey is very necessary. Then, (b) a memorizing of a great heart-idea, a silent repetition of it, a reflection on it. This brings to us indirectly the influence of our Higher Triad. The remembrance of *both* these, hour by hour, as we are busy in the routine of duties and recreations, reveals the power of the meditation. Thus, your understanding and interpretation of the *Gita* verse about putting the mind upon the Spirit are correct. As you will agree, the process is easy to understand but very difficult to put into practice deliberately and actively, and yet it has to be done if we want to fulfil our purpose and mission as thinkers.

To make daily meditation more thorough you need to devote to it a longer period. The lengthening of period is right and genuine when we have not to watch — “Now is my period over,” or, “Five minutes still to go.” When such thoughts obtrude we are still under the influence of the lower. That from the point of view of the thinker. What proper objects or subjects are there? A concrete image like that of the Guru H.P.B. or of her colleague W.Q.J.? Or an abstract subject-verse like “All is impermanent in man except the pure bright essence of Alaya,” etc.? In either case the instruction is: “Withhold thy mind from all external objects, all external sights” other than the image or the verse. Further, “Withhold internal images” (feelings mainly). Why? “Lest on thy Soul-light a dark shadow they should cast.” When the thinker (*Antahkarana*) can keep himself untarnished by desires of the selfish self, when he is not influenced by the lower “light,” the Light of the Higher begins to come to him and gradually, slowly, the *Antahkaranic* thinker begins to act as Higher Manas and impresses the image or the verse with Its Higher Light. So, persist in Self-centredness. Close sense activity and also fancy. Concentrate on the divinity of Higher Manas and *aspire* to Buddhi. Result — become devoted in altruism during all the waking hours. A steady watchfulness is necessary. Spontaneity is the test.

It is this process which is the positive pole, the review or self-examination being the negative pole.

Self-examination does often have a depressing effect. But, when we see ourselves as full of weaknesses, who is the seer? Now that very word “seer” is so casually used that its real connotation often escapes us. The Sanskrit term “Rishi” means, literally, “Seer” — He who sees, who has attained to the spiritual and Buddhi-sight. Now self-

examination must be both conscious and cautious. Self is the Seer, *i.e.*, Buddhi-Manas, the Spiritual Soul, the Thinker with the light of the moral power. His object of sight is the lower self. After self-examination who gets fearful and depressed? Once again, freed from the benign influence of the Buddhi-Manas it is the expressions of Kama-Manas that, so to speak, talk among themselves — “What are we going to do with this attempt to separate us?” Now what is the remedy? No self-examination should end with the noting and noticing of the foibles and frailties of the lower. One last act in the ritual of self-examination should be performed: the higher, Buddhi-Manas, must be gentle to the lower, like a mother who has chided the son or the daughter after which she must be soothing and encouraging to the son or the daughter to do better. The lower Manas, likewise, *can* do better. That aspect of the lower must be emphasized, *viz.*, the learner. Kama-Manas is the pupil and the learner; one aspect of it — *Antahkarana* — is to become the chela of the great Guru. So do not fear or be depressed after a good self-examination. We have to raise the self by the Self, says the *Gita*. And whose thoughts are 100 per cent pure? Does not the same *Gita* say that every act is charged with faultiness?

There are always dual forces at work: the personal and the Manasic. Detecting our error is one thing; seeking the remedy is the second. The lower mind's brooding and speculating upon its foibles and frailties is easy to it in an hour of its separation from Kama. But for it true reflection is difficult — reflection implies the reflecting Manas's impress and influence. This is exhilarating, not depressing. The link between depression and exhilaration is the study of that particular teaching which deals with the nature of our error and tells us how to get over it. Not only too much anxiety but *any* anxiety about self-progress is harmful.

As to self-examination in reference to the past and the present, it always is truly a gain to act rightly now, in the day-to-day duties, work and recreations. Application is in the present and gives us a touch of the Eternal Now. More, it cleanses the past and brightens up the future. Memory is always there, like food when waste matter is eliminated. Ordinary men and women suffer from indigestion and constipation of the psychic nature. Elimination is poor. Why? No self-examination, no recognition of what is wrong and how to eliminate it. So, “Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences” is a real psychological exercise. “From Me come memory and also the loss of memory,” says Krishna. Memory is a vital subject and there are mysterious aspects connected with it. In *Isis* some good hints are to be found.

Memory is dual. There is the Astral Light memory and there is the Akashic memory. Memory is our foe and our friend. It is the common weapon of the two selves in man. The higher memory must attack the lower, *i.e.*, our higher tendencies and knowledge must improve the

skandhas till the higher impresses itself on the personal man who then regains the memory of the past lives as Judge recommends.

Mental attention intensifies itself as our heart brings to our tasks our affection for them. Which disciple has not the difficulty of Arjuna? But it will not take lives for you to be centred in the Divine Discipline. In a few years you will find substantial improvement. Keep the company of the Inner Ruler, now and again. Lean on great ideas every time you finish one job and take up another. A couple of minutes of remembering and repeating a single verse of the *Voice* or the *Gita* strengthens and renovates the whole constitution.

On the subject of concentration something was said to you before and I do not think that much can be added till you have begun in right earnest to get your own lower mind steady enough to catch the light of your soul. The brain has to be made porous to the influences of the higher mind. Attentive working at everything that comes to us in the shape of duty is one kind of concentration. But to come together to a focal point the brain has to become quiet, the desires, either of the body or of the mind, have to subside and the mind has to be opened to receive the light of the inner nature. This has to be attempted if you want to get beyond the finite. The exoteric approach to which you refer will not give you satisfaction, I am afraid. People go to Church and try to approach "Our Father which art in heaven," but they do not succeed because the psychology about the person who utters the prayer and the nature of the Father in heaven are not properly understood.

He who learns the rules of wisdom, without conforming to them in his life, is like a man who laboured in his fields, but did not sow.

—SA'DI

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The need for fostering national unity and integration and for fighting all fissiparous and separatist tendencies was the main theme debated at the recently-held 66th session of the Indian National Congress. The resolution on integration passed at the session reads in part:—

Under cover of political and social activities, the old evils of communalism, casteism, provincialism and linguism have appeared again in some measure. These evils come in the way of the progress of integration, which is essential for the building up of this great country, and encourage certain fissiparous tendencies. Economic progress is hindered and the sense of unity is lessened.

The Congress views with great concern these unhealthy tendencies and is firmly of opinion that they must be combated in every way. Communalism, which has in the past done so much injury to the nation, is again coming into evidence and taking advantage of the democratic apparatus to undermine this unity and to encourage reactionary tendencies. Provincialism and linguism have also injured the cause for which the Congress stands. Caste, although losing its basic force, is beginning to function in a new political garb.

If these tendencies are allowed to flourish, then India's progress will be gravely retarded and even freedom will be imperilled. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that every effort should be made to remove these evils and always to keep in view the unity and integrity of the nation. Adequate progress can only be based on a national scale, embracing all communities and States. (*The Times of India*, January 4th)

The resolution makes no attempt to analyze the causes of the evils which it denounces. That the separatist tendency in the country is most unhealthy and that the progress and prosperity of the people depend on national unity is evident to every right-thinking man. But people will not give up their narrow prejudices and cultivate a national outlook simply because they are asked to do so. The only unassailable basis for union among any group of human beings is "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching." What aim do we set ourselves as a nation? Towards what purpose are we striving? What teachings animate us — those of Krishna and of Buddha and of Gandhi, or those of the communal-minded elements, the advocates of casteism, the fanatics of linguism and provincialism? If the latter, then the problem of national integration needs must defy solution.

The Tenth Triennial Conference of the War Resisters' International which met at Gandhigram (South India) from December 21st to 27th, 1960, provided a panoramic view of the efforts at peacemaking in

various parts of the world. The gathering included many men and women who have been prominent workers, in their respective countries and also in the international field, in the cause of peace and in "direct actions" against war preparations and against social injustices.

The general subject for discussion was "Peace making" and was dealt with under the headings of "Sarvodaya," "Non-violent Direct Action" and "*Shanti Sena*." The statement which was unanimously endorsed at the Plenary Session of the Conference is published in *Bhoodan* for January 7th.

Under the head "Sarvodaya" the Conference discussed the Bhoodan movement in India, the development work carried on by Danilo Dolci in Sicily, the attitude of pacifists to the question of national defence, the nature of the socio-economic order; etc., and the following conclusions were reached:—

Pacifists must actively associate themselves with methods which validly express Truth and Love and must dissociate themselves from what is evil. Therefore, those committed to non-violence must never give any moral support to the conventional methods of defence, or any other action in which they would think it wrong to participate as individuals. . . .

The Conference is convinced that both the capitalist conception of private ownership and the communist conception of state ownership of the means of production and distribution are insufficient where the ideal of non-violence is concerned. It emphasizes the need for decentralizing political and economic power in the achievement of a non-violent society.

The Conference endorsed the principles and practices of Non-violent Direct Action, which it agreed should be defined as "any action which does not involve violence, undertaken by individuals or groups against a social or international evil or for the purpose of resolving conflicts." Non-violent agitation may be a necessary step in the removal of international or social evils, the final aim being to develop goodwill and understanding between all concerned. Such action could involve defiance of the law or established custom, non-co-operation and individual protest. Participants in such action must be prepared for suffering and sacrifice.

The Conference recorded its conviction that "where reason and conscience lead any individual to a renunciation of war and a refusal of military service of any kind, the right to freedom of conscience and the right to hold opinions without interference involved the necessity for the recognition of the right of conscientious objection to all war and war preparation in every country."

The idea of an International *Shanti Sena* or World Peace Brigade was endorsed, and the establishment of such a body, which should be independent of the United Nations and all governments, was considered to be a matter of urgency. Practical constructive work was envisaged as being an integral part of the activities of the World Peace Brigade.

Shri Siddharaj Dhadda, Editor of *Bhoodan*, commenting on the proceedings of the Conference, states that

one came away from the Conference with a sense of relief that in this world full of wise and sane people whose "practical wisdom" has brought it upon the brink of a catastrophe and whose sanity is making possible the criminal squandering of the earth's valuable and even irreplaceable resources for bringing into existence weapons of destruction which they themselves profess and hope and prey may not be used, there are a few "cranks" in this world who not only dream of a new and peaceful society upon this earth but are working every moment of their lives to bring it near. It is only such "insanity" that is the hope of the world.

The rights of the child have been solemnly proclaimed by the United Nations. (See *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 119.) An official, international text lists the principles on which these rights are based. Georges Fradier, in his "Thoughts on the Declaration of Children's Rights" (*Unesco Features*, December 9th, 1960), considers these principles to be "the outcome of an extraordinary revolution which even today we do not fully understand."

For thousands of years, he states, the child was without rights, like the slave, because, like the slave, he had not yet won his freedom. We believe in the rights of the child because we believe in the right to life, bestowed without distinction upon all human beings. Not only do parents no longer abandon the children they consider undesirable, as used to be done at one time, but infants are saved at all costs, even if they are born cripples. The rights of the weak are also recognized.

Mr. Fradier points out that reformers like St. Vincent de Paul, Robert Owen, Jane Addams and others were not so much demanding the rights of the child as proclaiming the duties of the adult, the duties of parents, of society or of the State. It is useless to keep on harping about rights without recognizing the duties which can guarantee them. "The declaration of the rights of the child," Mr. Fradier states,

is supported both by the political or humanitarian work of reformers, and by the scientific work of psychologists. That is why it imposes two types of duties. First, in relation to the child as a distinct being, irreplaceable and all the more valuable because he exists only for a few years. Secondly, towards the child as a future adult, "the father of man," to quote an ancient expression. We are required to make an almost superhuman effort to understand the child and to educate him, without destroying him, while at the same time fitting him to take his place in tomorrow's society (not in the society of yesterday or today, the only ones we really know).

The child comes into the world a weak, helpless baby; but has in him all the potencies of perfection. The one fundamental right of

the child, from which all other rights spring, is to realize those potencies, so far as they can be realized within the limits of one earth-life.

Nature's rhythms have been recorded by nearly every people, and so have become embodied into their cultural patterns. Currently biologists are exploring the biological rhythms of many species, and the different interpretations that have emerged from these studies are reported in *What's New* (No. 219) under the title "Exploring Nature's Rhythms." The article states that

the persistent patterns of activity among Earth's inhabitants, such as movements of plants, emergence of flies from the pupal cases, colour changes of the crab, rat activity, and wakefulness in man — to cite a few in evolutionary order — are testimonies to the way of life in plant, animal and man. . . .

One school of thought states that these biological rhythms are governed by the geophysical influences of the organism's environment. In other words, these rhythms are timed by an exogenous cosmic "clock." The other school contends that these rhythms are governed autonomously, as part of the biological organization of the organism. The timing is maintained by an inner biological "clock." . . .

[Some] scientists maintain that the natural 24-hour rhythms (or monthly and yearly ones) observed in most living things are regulated by movements in the solar system; that is, the relative position of the earth, sun and moon, and any variation from these natural rhythms such as deviations caused by light and temperature, are just expression of the organism's capacity to adapt to its environment. . . .

Other biologists in this field interpret rhythmic patterns differently. They see them as a consequence of an intrinsic timing device. C. E. Ehrest at Argonne National Laboratory was able to demonstrate that the intrinsic biological system of rhythms must be subcellular. . . .

Many of the processes of the human body demonstrate a rhythmic pattern. Anyone dealing with the physiology of man will soon recognize many fluctuations of activity, heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, body temperature, oxygen consumption and carbon dioxide production, blood constituents, water loss, excretion of solids, visceral activity and endocrine production. These fluctuations must be borne in mind when interpreting results of almost every physiological and biochemical test.

Rhythm appears to characterize every life process. It expresses itself in harmony — harmony of sound, colour and form. It is accuracy in space, punctuality in time and purity in causation. It is the beauty of colour, form and sound. According to the Second Fundamental Proposition of Theosophy, rhythm is an absolutely fundamental law of all manifested existence.
