

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE HIGHER INDIFFERENCE

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Overcome desire for sons which begets desire for wealth; overcome desire for wealth which begets desire for the world. This is the first step.

Overcome desire for learning which begets desire for solitude; overcome desire for solitude which begets desire for liberation. This is the second step.

Overcome desire for good life which begets desire for death; overcome desire for death which begets desire to LIVE. This is the third step.

ONE of the common illusions which the Theosophical student suffers from at an early stage of his career concerns his power of detachment. Learning that he has to be equal-minded to pleasure as to pain, that he must live in the world but not be of the world, his fancy wanders and he presumes that he has attained the higher carelessness. Space does not permit an enumeration of the many types of errors he commits because of this presumption. Let us consider a few ideas about the higher carelessness or indifference and the expressions of the true spiritual viewpoint of the consciousness permeated by that virtue.

Indifference to the world of myriad objects is sometimes shown by a lunatic obsessed by a single notion. Children show carelessness about money, which is valuable even to the Theosophical student; for without the Theosophical work cannot flourish. Servants are indifferent to the *objet d'art*, and they cannot understand the forceful wrath shown by their employers when breakages of “trinkets” occur. Almost in the

same category may be classed the indifference of the presumptuous student towards life's duties and even towards the work of his Lodge. Unless we have acquired discrimination and know how to value objects and ideas, things and beings, we cannot practise the higher indifference. The lunatic, the child, the servant, the ordinary man — and the student to begin with is but an ordinary man — all are living in a world of relativity where each accords different values to the world and the things of the world. Progressive awakenings imply a change in the power to evaluate the surrounding universe. On the Path of Forthgoing, *Pravritti*, the awakening of the lower manasic being involves him in the net of nature; he is but a marionette pulled by his own Karmic impulses — a believer in God and Fate, a helpless creature who does not know that he possesses a flexible Will, and so prone to be exploited by priest, politician and scientist. When, in the process of evolution, man glimpses that beyond the world of relativity is the world of absolute values, he has taken the first step on the Path of Return, *Nivritti*. But such a glimpse is not sufficient to transpose him to the world of Absolute Values; it must not be forgotten that he has within his constitution the deposits of the many lives lived on the Path of Forthgoing.

The Theosophical student learns about *Maya* and the mighty magic of *Prakriti* and forthwith fancies that his theoretical perception sets him free from the bondage of illusion and the glamour of matter. Feeling that the world of the flesh and that of the Soul can never meet, he tries to run away from the former, hardly noting that he is running into other more subtle aspects of that very world of the flesh. Indifference to the objects of the senses does not grow because we dislike those objects; higher carelessness does not mean that we can be careless and heedless in the living of our life. Such indifference and carelessness are false and create not a true devotee, but a selfish devotee, who, loathing the routine of life, does not in reality perform his appointed work. By disliking the routine of life which Karma has produced and by inclining towards something different, we are living in vain. When we go through the routine of life disliking it, we do not in reality go through it. Such *formal* going through the appointed work in life is not truly following the wheel of life and is not exhausting Karma. Why? Because through such inner dislike and outer formality we miss the development of Discrimination, *Viveka*, the first of the great powers or *Siddhis*.

The first step in the cultivation of the higher carelessness or indifference is to learn to evaluate afresh all objects and ideas, all things

and beings. As the goal of the Theosophist is not *Mukti* — liberation — but its renunciation for the service of mankind, the universe of matter has to be utilized. The correct usage of all things implies that we recognize the truth of the aphorism — Nature exists for the sake of the Soul.

When discrimination is employed in the use of Nature for the sake of the Soul we have begun to work with the Law of Karma. We cease to find fault with things as they are; we begin to take things philosophically. This does not mean doing things with a long-drawn face or with a feeling of martyrdom. Taking things philosophically means using our knowledge of the great philosophy to solve problems or perform actions and to be cheerful in the execution of such tasks. Our routine of life is not disliked; it is allowed to remain, but our inner attitude to it has changed. An excellent example of this right inner attitude reaches us in the following words of Robert Crosbie:

I hope he has found something to do, and that whatever it is he will determinedly settle down to do it as if it were the only thing to be done. I have found that doing what comes, with all my heart, mind and strength, in time brought me to another place and opportunity and always to a better advantage. I have seen in many the attitude, "I don't like this," or, "I must have something better," leads to perpetual change, dissatisfaction and poor results, invariably. On the other hand, I have seen those whom neither sickness nor any other cause could deter, nor diminish their courage and efforts, gain success, the reason being that no opportunity was overlooked and no effort too great for them. It was really an unconscious fulfilling of Karma on their part. I think students too often regard their personal existence and predilections as one thing, and their student life as another. It is not so. Both are interwoven and interblended at every point.

The false kind of indifference finds things wrong outside to be set right by the egotist within; the real higher carelessness proceeds from the carefree consciousness which is always attentive to the true interests of others. That higher indifference does not neglect the world and our duties to it, but using the great knowledge tries to put every evil to good, tries to make good better. It engenders an attitude of mind which *forgets* our estimation of ourselves, be it good or bad, and energizes us just to work on. Neither personal affection nor personal predilection, neither personal aversion nor personal bias is allowed to influence our consciousness.

The cultivation of this attitude leads us away from the callousness towards men and matters which is not indifference but selfishness; on the other hand, it leads us away from that species of philanthropy which is personal—not the soul giving to souls, but personality assisting personalities. This cultivation forces our attention to the needs (not the wants) of the life-atoms which inhere in our lower quaternary and thence to all the small plain duties which pertain to “life’s dull round.” The patience which suffers martyrdom in a passive mood is an abuse of patience. The resignation which abandons the fields of battle proves a curse. The calmness which is attained in a quiet corner but is not retained in the market-place is a corrosive. The cultivation of higher indifference recalls the idea that our Inner Ego is a part of the Great Spirit which is omnipresent.

What room is there for sorrow and what room for doubt in him who knows that the Self is One and that all things are the Self, only differing in degree?

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WILL is the exclusive possession of man on this our plane of consciousness. It divides him from the brute in whom instinctive desire only is active.

DESIRE, in its widest application, is the one creative force in the Universe. In this sense it is indistinguishable from Will; but we men never know desire under this form while we remain only men. Therefore Will and Desire are here considered as opposed.

Thus Will is the offspring of the Divine, the God in man; Desire the motive power of the animal life.

Most men live in and by desire, mistaking it for will. But he who would achieve must separate will from desire, and make his will the ruler; for desire is unstable, and ever changing, while will is steady and constant.

—*Lucifer*, October 1887

## THE GRAND EFFORT

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. That is the greatest commandment.” It comes first. The second is like it: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” Everything in the Law and the prophets hangs on these two commandments.

—*Matthew*, XXII, 37-40

O ye Bhikkhus and Arhats — be friendly to the race of men — our brothers! Know ye all that he who sacrifices not his *one* life to save the life of his fellow being, and he who hesitates to give up more than life — his *fair name and honour* — to save the fair name and honour of *the many*, is unworthy of the sin-destroying, immortal, transcendent Nirvana.

—LORD BUDDHA

THEOSOPHY has a wisdom of its own. Its cosmogenesis is stupendous in its cyclic sweep, while its anthropogenesis covers æons of time and speaks with a studied authority wondrous to behold. It comments on the Stanzas of the *Book of Dzyan* — a volume lost to historians and Orientalists. It speaks of a language which was rendered in cypher characters, ideographs, numerals and colours — which all formed a cryptographic alphabet. It quotes chapter and verse from religions, philosophies and sciences, new and old, and gives extracts from tomes scattered over the world's libraries. For the first time in our recorded history, it revealed the core of Truth which underlay all past religions — some known by fragments still extant, the others lost to modern history. Side by side with transcendental metaphysics, Theosophy presents precepts of ethics which are but the translation of metaphysical realities into formulæ for the governing of human behaviour. Goodness is shown as a demonstrable necessity, especially when placed against the background of a common origin and of a Brotherhood *in actu*.

Yet, although this vast body of knowledge was put forward for the world's consideration, it was not presented as a mere addition to its learning. The aim was not to proselytize but to instruct. Learning was not the goal but rather the means for a recognition of ultimates. Wisdom, purity and power were desirable only if they subserved the ideal of laying the foundations of a brotherhood in clean places and virtuous surroundings. With this end in view, for the last 20 years of her public earthly presence, Madame Blavatsky gave out hints on

the occult, referred to the Brotherhood of the Adepts and even started a school for chelas and lay-chelas. She and those whom she called her Masters gave to the world the rational explanation of things — from stars, planets and suns to atoms, molecules and men; from the unseen world of spooks and elementals to the regions of *Akasha*, *Daiviprakriti* and *Ain-Soph*. The world is still trying to grasp what they gave.

What, then, was it that made this revelation possible and even desirable in the last quarter of the 19th century? What was the objective which moved the Masters of Wisdom to permit the launching of the Theosophical Movement and the dissemination of a part of their long-hidden Teachings? The answer to these questions lay in the peculiar circumstances which the Western world was then facing. Towards the late fifties of the last century the world was in the midst of a crisis in psychism. In private homes, around sensitives and mediums, there came to be formed circles and séances where, conditions permitting, the dead apparently returned and gave messages which, because of a mass of long-forgotten details which they revealed, could not have originated save from the person who had died. Little items of personal value — nicknames, confidential and long-forgotten facts — stamped the messages with an authenticity which could not be disputed. An emotional and psychic upsurge overspread the continents and was drawing people away from Church and Science alike. The rationale of these phenomena was not known and the stirring up of emotions by the possibility of a mode of contact with long-lost but dearly loved friends and relatives created a craze which was impervious to reason.

Herein lay the greatest danger to vast multitudes of men. For, since these psychic manifestations dealt with the hidden but still the mortal aspects of the man — living or deceased — a real danger existed because of the contamination which would inevitably ensue by a proximity of and sometimes a control by the decaying astral reliquæ of dead men. Cases of obsession and possession began to multiply. People were in danger of losing their physical and psychic health while their attempt to turn these phenomena into avenues of personal gain, revenge and indulgence in sensuality was leading them on the highroad to unmitigated sorcery. Men's minds had to be weaned away as much from the superstitions of the churches and the bigotries of science as from the soul-killing virus of fanaticism and false knowledge which was being daily injected into thousands by the necromantic practices of spiritualism so-called. A knowledge which could give a rational elucidation of

the origin of things, the doctrine of emanations, the constitution of man both in life and after death was the only panacea which was likely to build a protective wall around humanity. If men were to be saved in the mass, they had to be led away from ignorance and false knowledge towards the beneficent, soul-satisfying philosophy of the Ancients. The Hermetic philosophy had to be reintroduced as a priceless heirloom long forgotten but still available for him who sought its benign influence. The brotherhood of men had to be demonstrated and along with it had to be proved the dangers which lay inherent in the exercise of any power which had for its object the satisfaction of personal ends and the attaining of glory for oneself alone. The sutra of sacrificial action had to be sounded before a world eager to risk the plunge into selfishness and materialism and the disastrous worship of the dead.

To achieve this objective of shielding mankind from misery and sorrows hitherto unfelt, a bold attempt to call humanity to order was planned by men who had reached the high estate of Adeptship, Initiation and Mahatmahood. To carry out their policy and plan, willing volunteers from among men had to be found. When these came forward, the great attempt was ready to be launched. Thus it came about that under directions received, there was formed on 17th November 1875, in the City of New York, the Theosophical Society with the noble title of "Brotherhood of Humanity." The central figure round which lesser satellites fell into orbit was Madame Blavatsky, who remained till her death in 1891 the sole accredited messenger from the great Brotherhood of White Adepts. Her task was to gather round her a nucleus of devoted Souls who could by dint of effort and sacrifices build on earth a replica in miniature of the great exalted Brotherhood. If such a focus could be built and nurtured on earth, it could provide the channel of instructions between the world of mortals and the world of immortals. It could help focus on our earth the knowledge and the Light from on high so as to provide in an ever-increasing manner a haven of refuge for tired and hungry souls. From the start, Madame Blavatsky had drawn attention to this important task.

To carry out this exalted purpose, the Society was divided into three distinct sections. First there was the Brotherhood of the Masters, the high Initiates, the Mahatmas who out of compassion were prepared to turn the 19th-century effort into a world movement. This section was represented on earth by their accredited messenger and amanuensis — H.P.B. The next section was that of Chelas who by right of special

service had earned the privilege to stand in the presence of the Masters. These, with the Lay Chelas, were to form the terrestrial nucleus of sacrificers who, putting service before self, were expected to labour for Universal Brotherhood and therefore for the good of humanity in the mass. The last section comprised those aspirants who from the outer world came into the circle of influence of the Society. If these latter were roused to altruism, they could be guided and helped by the members of the second section to reach that point of development which could qualify them as aspirants to lay-chelaship. The Theosophical Society was thus planned to be the Hall of Knowledge from which a constant flow of recruits could be expected to the second section. It was thus envisaged to be a training ground for altruists, a field of effort to promote and teach Brotherhood and sacrifice, charity and mutual tolerance for a disciplined and united effort at the upliftment of the race. Poverty, chastity and obedience were now being invested with a new dimension. Austerity became not merely an exercise towards a laboured purity but an aid to a nobler and therefore higher expertise in the fields of mind and soul.

During the early days of the Movement, one of the Masters of Wisdom speaking about Universal Brotherhood wrote: "The term 'Universal Brotherhood' is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us. . . . It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind: and it is the aspiration of the *true* adept." It was this paramount claim of humanity in the mass which was being recognized and endeavoured to be met by the establishment of the Theosophical Society. Few there were who lived up to this divine purpose. Some became avid of miraculous phenomena and hungered for the acquisition of powers; others came to seek their own individual salvation, while still others tried to arrogate to themselves powers and positions, leadership and acclaim. They thought, as many still think today, that their veiled motives were unfathomable even by the Mahatmas and that they could seek their own triumph over the fall or discomfiture of others. These failed for the simple reason that he who sets his face against his fellow men but creates antagonistic forces that will one day set up a vast turbulence within himself and make him learn through adversity and pain that the laws of brotherhood cannot be violated. What did this "Universal Brotherhood" — a strange phrase new in the 19th century and subsequently almost lost in the holocaust of two World Wars of the 20th — what did it signify in human action and in the behaviour of

man towards his past and his immediate present? Madame Blavatsky gave the answer in the Preface to *Isis Unveiled*, which, though it referred to her own literary effort, had a universal application in life. Here are some ideas culled from that Preface:

(1) Even justice must be done. Truth must be spoken without malice or prejudice.

(2) No mercy should be shown to enthroned error, nor reverence paid to usurped authority.

(3) Credit has to be given for achievements even though centuries may have withheld their recognition.

(4) Restitution has to be made of borrowed robes; calumniated but glorious reputations must be vindicated.

It is an irony of fate that within the Theosophical Society and the fragments into which it stood divided the same unbrotherly traits of error, deceit, calumny and pilferage (borrowed robes) became manifest as decade after decade saw brotherhood at lower and lower ebbs. But even during the darkest hours of human aberration the mantras of brotherhood and service were never wholly forgotten. If in the thick of the fight the standard fell, there were eager hands to seize it and keep it flying. The flame lit in 1875 has not been extinguished. It is still being tended by the loving hands of those who watch and serve and wait. They believe that if Brotherhood is established within themselves, that if the channel of communication between Manas and Buddhi has been kept clear of the debris of earthly desires, then help must surely come from friends, associates and workers who are linked together by the psychic bonds which exist between themselves and the Gurus to whose bidding they have devoted their lives. The darkness of the night is nearing its end. May the sun rise on a brighter morrow and on a humanity eager to receive its beneficence!

In the Higher Self alone can be seen the unity of all. In it alone is found the ultimate proof of a vast and all-embracing Brotherhood. In the Universal, the personal and the individual have to submerge their own felicity to find it return to them a thousandfold intensified in the common good of all mankind. The incarnation of H.P.B. and her stupendous sacrifices have not been in vain. Let her disciples unite and in their individual lives portray the living force that resides in Theosophy and the Theosophical Movement.

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## POINTS OF AGREEMENT IN ALL RELIGIONS\*

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MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: Let me read you a few verses from some of the ancient Scriptures of the world, from the old Indian books held sacred by the Brahmans of Hindustan:

What room for doubt and what room for sorrow is there in him who knows that all spiritual beings are the same in kind and only differ from each other in degree?

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all this is lighted.

Lead me from the unreal to the real!

Lead me from darkness to light!

Lead me from death to immortality!

Seeking for refuge, I go to that God who is the light of His own thoughts; He who first creates Brahman and delivers the Vedas to him; who is without parts, without actions, tranquil, without fault, the highest bridge to immortality, like a fire that has consumed its fuel. —*Mundaka Upanishad*

Such are some of the verses, out of many thousands, which are enshrined in the ancient Hindu scriptures beloved by those we have called "heathen"; those are the sentiments of the people we have called idolaters only.

As the representative of the Theosophical Movement I am glad to be here, and to be assigned to speak on what are the points of agreement in all religions. I am glad because Theosophy is to be found in all religions and all sciences. We, as members of the Theosophical Society, endorse to the fullest extent those remarks of your chairman in opening, when he said, in effect, that a theology which stayed in one spot without

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\* An address delivered on April 17th, 1894, before the Parliament of Religions at San Francisco, California, by William Q. Judge. The Midwinter Fair at San Francisco had annexed to it a Religious Parliament modelled after the first great one of 1893 at Chicago. Dr. J. D. Buck and William Q. Judge, the latter as General Secretary, American Section, were officially invited to address the Parliament at one of its sessions as representatives of the Theosophical Movement. Time was so short that all speakers were limited to thirty minutes each; for that reason the address is not as full as it would be had more time been granted. But the occasion once more showed the strength of the T.S. movement.

advancing was not a true theology, but that we had advanced to where theology should include a study of man. Such a study must embrace his various religions, both dead and living. And pushing that study into those regions we must conclude that man is greatly his own revealer, has revealed religion to himself, and therefore that all religions must include and contain truth; that no one religion is entitled to a patent or exclusive claim upon truth or revelation, or is the only one that God has given to man, or the only road along which man can walk to salvation. If this be not true, then your Religious Parliament is no Parliament but only a body of men admiring themselves and their religion. But the very existence of this Parliament proclaims the truth of what I have said, and shows the need which the Theosophical Society has for nineteen years been asserting, of a dutiful, careful and brotherly inquiry into all the religions of the world, for the purpose of discovering what the central truths are upon which each and every religion rests and what the original fountain from which they have come. This careful and tolerant inquiry is what we are here for today; for that the Theosophical Society stands and has stood; for toleration, for unity, for the final and irrevocable death of all dogmatism.

But if you say that religion must have been revealed, then surely God did not wait for several millions of years before giving it to those poor beings called men. He did not, surely, wait until He found one poor Semitic tribe to whom He might give it late in the life of the race. Hence He must have given it in the very beginning, and therefore all present religions must arise from one fount.

What are the great religions of the world and from whence have they come? They are Christianity, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Mohammedanism.

Brahmanism is the old and hoary religion of India, a grown-up, fully-developed system long before either Buddhism or Christianity was born. It extends back to the night of time, and throws the history of religion far, far beyond any place where modern investigators were once willing to place even the beginning of religious thought. Almost the ancient of ancients, it stands in far-off India, holding its holy Vedas in its hands, calmly waiting until the newer West shall find time out of the pursuit of material wealth to examine the treasures it contains.

Buddhism, the religion of Ceylon, of parts of China, of Burma and Japan and Tibet, comes after its parent Brahmanism. It is historically older than Christianity and contains the same ethics as the latter, the

same laws and the same examples, similar saints and identical fables and tales relating to Lord Buddha, the Saviour of Men. It embraces today, after some twenty-five hundred years of life, more people than any other religion, for two-thirds of the human family profess it.

Zoroastrianism also fades into the darkness of the past. It too teaches ethics such as we know. Much of its ritual and philosophy is not understood, but the law of brotherly love is not absent from it; it teaches justice and truth, charity and faith in God, together with immortality. In these it agrees with all, but it differs from Christianity in not admitting a vicarious salvation, which it says is not possible.

Christianity of today is modern Judaism, but the Christianity of Jesus is something different. He taught forgiveness, Moses taught retaliation, and that is the law today in Christian State and Church. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" is still the recognized rule, but Jesus taught the opposite. He fully agreed with Buddha, who, preaching 500 years before the birth of the Jewish reformer, said we must love one another and forgive our enemies. So modern Christianity is not the religion of Jesus, but Buddhism and the religion of Jesus accord with one another in calling for charity, complete tolerance, perfect non-resistance, absolute self-abnegation.

If we compare Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism together on the points of ritual, dogmas and doctrines, we find not only agreement but a marvellous similarity as well, which looks like an imitation on the part of the younger Christianity. Did the more modern copy the ancient? It would seem probable. And some of the early Christian Fathers were in the habit of saying, as we find in their writings, that Christianity brought nothing new into the world, that it existed from all time.

If we turn to ritual, so fully exemplified in the Roman Catholic Church, we find the same practices and even similar clothing and altar arrangements in Buddhism, while many of the prescribed rules for the altar and approaching or leaving it are mentioned very plainly in far more ancient directions governing the Brahman when acting as priest. This similarity was so wonderful in the truthful account given by the Catholic priest Abbé Huc that the alarmed Church first explained that the devil, knowing that Christianity was coming, went ahead and invented the whole thing for the Buddhists by a species of *ante facto* copying, so as to confound innocent Catholics therewith; and then they burned poor Abbé Huc's book. As to stations of the cross, now well

known to us, or the rosary, confession, convents, and the like, all these are in the older religion. The rosary was long and anciently used in Japan, where they had over one hundred and seventy-two sorts. And an examination of the mummies of old Egypt reveals rosaries placed with them in the grave, many varieties being used. Some of these I have seen. Could we call up the shades of Babylon's priests, we should doubtless find the same rituals there.

Turning to doctrines, that of salvation by faith is well known in Christianity. It was the cause of a stormy controversy in the time of St. James. But very strangely, perhaps, for many Christians, the doctrine is a very old Brahmanical one. They call it "The Bridge Doctrine," as it is the great Bridge. With them it does not mean a faith in some particular emanation of God, but God is its aim, God is the means and the way, and God the end of the faith; by complete faith in God, without an intermediary, God will save you. They also have a doctrine of salvation by faith in those great sons of God, Krishna, Rama and others; complete faith in either of those is for them a way to heaven, a bridge for crossing over all sins. Even those who were killed by Krishna, in the great war detailed in the *Mahabharata*, went straight to heaven because they looked at him, as the thief on the cross looking at Jesus went to Paradise. In Buddhism is the same doctrine of faith. The twelve great sects of Buddhism in Japan have one called the Sect of the Pure Land. This teaches that Amitabha vowed that anyone who called three times on his name would be born into his Pure Land of Bliss. He held that some men may be strong enough to prevail against the enemy, but that most men are not, and need some help from another. This help is found in the power of the vow of Amita Buddha, who will help all those who call on his name. The doctrine is a modified form of vicarious atonement, but it does not exclude the salvation by works which the Christian St. James gives out.

Heaven and Hell are also common to Christianity, Buddhism and Brahmanism. The Brahman calls it Swarga; the Buddhist, Devachan; and we, Heaven. Its opposite is Naraka or Avitchi. But names apart, the descriptions are the same. Indeed, the hells of the Buddhists are very terrible, long in duration and awful in effect. The difference is that the heaven and hell of the Christian are eternal, while the others are not. The others come to an end when the forces which cause them are exhausted. In teaching of more than one heaven there is the same likeness, for St. Paul spoke of more than a single heaven to one of which he was rapt away, and the Buddhist tells of many, each being

a grade above or below some other. Brahman and Buddhist agree in saying that when heaven or hell is ended for the soul, it descends again to rebirth. And that was taught by the Jews. They held that the soul was originally pure, but sinned and had to wander through rebirth until purified and fit to return to its source.

In priesthood and priestcraft there is a perfect agreement among all religions, save that the Brahman instead of being ordained a priest is so by birth. Buddha's priesthood began with those who were his friends and disciples. After his death they met in council, and subsequently many councils were held, all being attended by priests. Similar questions arose among them as with the Christians, and identical splits occurred, so that now there are Northern and Southern Buddhism and the twelve sects of Japan. During the life of Buddha the old query of admitting women arose and caused much discussion. The power of the Brahman and Buddhist priests is considerable, and they demand as great privileges and rights as the Christian ones.

Hence we are bound to conclude that dogmatically and theologically these religions all agree. Christianity stands out, however, as peculiarly intolerant — and in using the word “intolerant” I but quote from some priestly utterances regarding the World's Fair Parliament — for it claims to be the only true religion that God has seen fit to reveal to man.

The great doctrine of a Saviour who is the son of God — God himself — is not an original one with Christianity. It is the same as the extremely ancient one of the Hindus called the doctrine of the Avatar. An Avatar is one who comes down to earth to save man. He is God incarnate. Such was Krishna, and such even the Hindus admit was Buddha, for he is one of the great ten Avatars. The similarity between Krishna or Cristna and Christ has been very often remarked. He came 5,000 years ago to save and benefit man, and his birth was in India, his teaching being Brahmanical. He, like Jesus, was hated by the ruler, Kansa, who desired to destroy him in advance, and who destroyed many sons of families in order to accomplish his end, but failed. Krishna warred with the powers of darkness whom he finally killed. The belief about him was that he was the incarnation of God. This is in accord with the ancient doctrine that periodically the Great Being assumes the form of man for the preservation of the just, the establishment of virtue and order, and the punishment of the wicked. By millions of men and women Krishna's praises are sung each day and reiterated at their festivals. Certainly it seems rather narrow and bigoted to assume

that but one tribe and one people are favoured by the appearance among them of an incarnation in greater measure of God.

Jesus taught a secret doctrine to his disciples. He said to them that he taught the common people in stories of a simple sort, but that the disciples could learn of the mysteries. And in the early age of Christianity that secret teaching was known. In Buddhism is the same thing, for Buddha began with one vehicle or doctrine, proceeded after to two, and then to a third. He also taught a secret doctrine that doubtless agreed with the Brahmans who had taught him at his father's court. He gave up the world, and later gave up eternal peace in Nirvana, so that he might save men. In this the story agrees with that of Jesus. And Buddha also resisted Mara, or the Devil, in the wilderness. Jesus teaches that we must be as perfect as the Father, and that the kingdom of heaven is within each. To be perfect as the Father we must be equal with him, and hence here we have the ancient doctrine taught of old by the Brahmins that each man is God and a part of God. This supports the unity of humanity as a spiritual whole, one of the greatest doctrines of the time prior to Christianity, and now also believed in Brahmanism.

That the universe is spiritual in essence, that man is a spirit and immortal, and that man may rise to perfection, are universal doctrines. Even particular doctrines are common to all the religions. Reincarnation is not alone in Hinduism or Buddhism. It was believed by the Jews, and not only believed by Jesus but he also taught it. For he said that John the Baptist was the reincarnation of Elias "who was for to come." Being a Jew he must have had the doctrines of the Jews, and this was one of them. And in *Revelation* we find the writer says: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." The words "no more" infer a prior time of going out.

The perfectibility of man destroys the doctrine of original sin, and it was taught by Jesus, as I said. Reincarnation is a necessity for the evolution of this perfection, and through it at last are produced those Saviours of the race of whom Jesus was one. He did not deny similar privileges to others, but said to his disciples that they could do even greater works than he did. So we find these great Sages and Saviours in all religions. There are Moses and Abraham and Solomon, all Sages. And we are bound to accept the Jewish idea that Moses and the rest were the reincarnations of former persons. Moses was in their opinion Abel, the son of Adam; and their Messiah was to be a reincarnation of Adam himself who had already come the second time in the person

of David. We take the Messiah and trace him up to David, but refuse, improperly, to accept the remainder of their theory.

Descending to every-day-life doctrines, we find that of Karma or that we must account and receive for every act. This is the great explainer of human life. It was taught by Jesus and Matthew and St. Paul. The latter explicitly said: "Brethren, be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

This is Karma of the Brahman and Buddhist, which teaches that each life is the outcome of a former life or lives, and that every man in his rebirths will have to account for every thought and receive measure for the measure given by him before.

In ethics all these religions are the same, and no new ethic is given by any. Jesus was the same as his predecessor Buddha, and both taught the law of love and forgiveness. A consideration of the religions of the past and of today from a Theosophical standpoint will support and confirm ethics. We therefore cannot introduce a new code, but we strive by looking into all religions to find a firm basis, not due to fear, favour, or injustice, for the ethics common to all. This is what Theosophy is for and what it will do. It is the reformer of religion, the unifier of diverse systems, the restorer of justice to our theory of the universe. It is our past, our present, and our future; it is our life, our death, and our immortality.

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MEN have grown cunning, clever, audacious, hypocritical and unprincipled. It is the rule despite the exceptions. We believe that there is a remedy, and but one. It is to seek back to the spring of honour, virtue, and religion — the WISDOM RELIGION of the archaic period — the source of all the world's subsequent religious systems. In that, religion and science were but convertible terms, and a religionist could no more be indifferent to science than a scientist could be anything else than religious. For the science of those days was what is now mistermed Occultism: mistermed, inasmuch as it left no obscure corner of nature unsearched, nor any hidden depth of human nature unfathomed. It was such science as makes the modern muddle that goes by the name seem by comparison little better than a sort of empiricism.

—*The Theosophist*, November 1881

# REINCARNATION: MAN THE CREATOR OF HIMSELF

## I

Is it enough for man to know that he exists? Is it enough to be formed a human being to enable him to deserve the appellation of MAN?

THE IDEA that a return to birth after death might be possible is becoming familiar to the world today, but apart from "wishful thinking" there is little knowledge current on this subject. A reasonable or logical approach to the subject is lacking and importance is being attached merely to the claimed memories of former incarnations on the part of some children. But what *is* memory? What is the brain? Where is the "person" between births? The questions not inquired into or not adequately answered by modern researchers are numerous.

Yet knowledge on this vital question must be available, for the idea of reincarnation is not new to this century. It belongs to many religions and philosophies of the past and was taught in the old Mystery Schools. For our era and generation it was brought to a focus, so to say, by Madame H. P. Blavatsky. She wrote towards the end of the last century that it was very necessary that we should learn about reincarnation and its twin doctrine, Karma, for it was only a knowledge of these two fundamental universal laws that would save our civilization from destruction. As the teachings she gave out were not, as she said, her own "personal speculations and theories," but what she herself had been taught "by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation," it is worth while to study what she has given us.

It should be obvious to us that ours is not the only civilization that has flourished on the earth, with its great scientists and philosophers, and it will not be the last. The wise man, therefore, seeks for the knowledge gained in the past in order to try to understand the present. That is to say, he realizes that he must extend his field of observation of life and also sharpen his faculties in order to perceive in that wider field. Most of our difficulties as regards knowledge arise from our non-realization that each one's field of observation and his faculties differ from those of others. All of us, therefore, have only partial knowledge even of the facts perceived, and our own knowledge will differ from that of others gained in their own field and by their own faculties. Not

understanding this, we hold fanatically to our own field and what it gives to us, denying that which others have gained in their field and through their capacities.

For example, science today suffers from self-imposed limitation of its field of experimentation. That field is matter, as we know matter, that which can be examined, analysed and observed with the senses or instruments of matter. This field should be extended to take in matter far more tenuous and fine, matter that cannot be cognized by either the senses or physical instruments, but which can be accepted through the use of reason, and proven by means of the finer senses and instruments pertaining to its own nature. In fact, this is the next step for science and would lead to a whole new field of observation, hints of which are evident in the efforts to prove existence after death and to understand so-called miracles or psychic phenomena. This field would lead it into the realm of religion, the unseen side of man and the universe.

Just as science bases its knowledge on what can be observed by the senses and physical instruments, religion bases its knowledge on "divine revelation." This revelation cannot be proved by the senses or physical instruments, hence the dichotomy between these two aspects of life. This dichotomy must give way to unity, for religion can no longer maintain the old dogmas in face of the facts discovered by science, and science must begin to use religion to help it to further its researches.

Swayed by science on the one hand and by religion on the other, stands man. He lives with the knowledge gained by science, and responds to or ignores the dictates of religion. He has to set up for himself a certain kind of morality and learn how to live with his fellow creatures. Hence the need for both science and religion to study philosophy, for philosophy is the science of living as taught by the philosophers who, through their own observation in the field of daily living with their fellows, and with themselves, have discovered the laws behind life.

Philosophers, more than scientists or religionists, have discovered that when they stretch their field of observation wide enough they find one central core of truth at the heart of all religions. The various religions are merely facets through which that core is seen. While one looks at his own facet and denies all other facets, there is diversity, but once we seek for the unity at the core, we can gain knowledge through all the facets.

The central pivot or core is unity. Nothing and no one is separate from that unity. Secondly, all life progresses towards the goal of realization of that unity. In religious terms, all leads to union with the Divine; in scientific terms, there is always the primary at the root of divergencies; in philosophic terms, the universal law of cause and effect works in all relationships of life.

Looking at our world today, we find that the religious dogmas that have reigned in the past are losing their grip and no longer influence man's moral attitude towards life, and the law of the jungle and of separation or isolation is beginning to rear its ugly head. Science, going the same way, gives us gadgets to make life easier, and explosives which can destroy us. The philosopher, who sees that man is the actor within his environment and must therefore learn the laws of community living in harmony with his fellows, has found the key to life. That key is the universality of law, and with this the inherent freedom of action which is man's birthright. But this freedom of action, divorced from the recognition of the essential unity and oneness of all, leads to chaos — the chaos which our civilization is entering today.

It is not so necessary to ask — "Does God exist?" but rather we should ask — "Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?" The core of all religious thought is the recognition that we are not merely flesh and blood, but that there is something, call it god or spirit, within us which has to be freed from the clutches of matter. Remove the old idea of a lawgiver and replace it by that of the immutable and impersonal law itself, which can never be changed, and we have the basis of the philosopher in his search for unity with the real within him. Since we deal with matter as well as spirit, science must find out all about matter in its different degrees in order that we may learn its laws and find what lies at its core.

We are in such bewilderment of thought that the old conception of many lives on earth is coming to the fore. Will it answer our problems?

Reincarnation... is a belief in a perpetual progress for each incarnating Ego, or divine soul, in an evolution from the outward into the inward, from the material to the Spiritual, arriving at the end of each stage at absolute unity with the divine Principle. From strength to strength, from the beauty and perfection of one plane to the greater beauty and perfection of another, with accessions of new glory, of fresh knowledge and power in each cycle, such is the destiny of every Ego, which thus becomes its own Saviour in each world and incarnation.

With the expansion of our idea of one life to the idea of many, many lives, it becomes necessary also to expand our idea of the earth and the universe. Our conception of the universe has today expanded in size and extended in age through the work of science in one or other field. We know, too, that great civilizations have been born, have risen to great heights, and have fallen, and this has happened again and again. We know that there are thousands of stars and planets yet undiscovered by our still imperfect instruments. We know that more planets than our earth are scenes of evolution. We are being forced to see that space is limitless, the container of all manifested objects, though itself unaffected by them. The same growth is seen in our concept of time, for as it recedes backward and apparently extends for ever forward, we can sense eternal duration in which measured time appears and disappears. The sky is no longer "the vault of heaven" but "the playground of numberless Universes incessantly manifesting and disappearing." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 16)

Between limitless Space and timeless Duration man stands bewildered. Only his inherent reason tells him that there must be an "eternal fitness of things." If what we see on our material plane of the earth is guided and ruled by law, then the vastness that we sense cannot be ruled by chaos or chance! Surely the growth of knowledge will in time help us.

Can it be, man asks, that at death we leave this world and vanish for ever while knowledge grows and the worlds go on rolling in space? Poets using their intuition have grasped these majestic ideas more picturesquely than we have, and their words are a help to our understanding. Shelley, for instance, wrote in *Hellas*:

Worlds on worlds are rolling ever  
 From creation to decay,  
 Like the bubbles on a river  
 Sparkling, bursting, borne away.  
 But they are still immortal  
 Who, through birth's orient portal  
 And death's dark chasm hurrying to and fro,  
 Clothe their unceasing flight  
 In the brief dust and light  
 Gathered around their chariots as they go;  
 New shapes they still may weave,  
 New gods, new laws receive. . . .

While poets may sing in this way, our own present vision is limited

to one life, and if all is matter then with the destruction of the body we cease to be! Yet, we cannot truly think of ourselves as non-existent, *i.e.*, out of existence. Out of earthly existence, yes, but not out of existence altogether. We cannot imagine that we can lose our identity, our power to think and to feel. We cannot imagine a state of nothingness. This alternative to the theory of reincarnation is even more difficult to believe!

To get our thinking straight we shall have to return to religion in its true sense. There is no time in recorded history or legend when there was no religion, for true religion is based on "man's faith in God and his own immortality." This "faith" is undying; it may vanish for a time, but it comes back, for it is innate in the human heart. "Oriental philosophy," H.P.B. wrote in the Preface to Vol. I of *Isis Unveiled*, "has room for no other faith than an absolute and immovable faith in the omnipotence of man's own immortal self." "Mankind has one innate, irrepressible craving . . . the yearning after the proofs of immortality." We must "prove the soul of man by its wondrous powers," and we have proved God. And if God, *i.e.*, Law, or Life, is immortal, so is man.

But what is immortality? To us with our limited field of observation it seems to be a permanent sense of existence, conscious existence, in some form or another, for without the limitation of form individual consciousness, *i.e.*, awareness of surroundings external and internal, cannot be. Without the limitation of form consciousness fades or expands into the Whole.

God, too, is a symbol which has lost its meaning today. If God, or Life, is immortal, what kind of body or limitation does It have? Does It exist for eternity? We have now given up the idea that God has a physical body, however refined, in the image of man. Neither do we believe that at the dissolution of the earth all dead bodies will be resurrected in their former likeness and live for ever in heaven or hell. So, what kind of a body limits God?

Can any form limit Life itself, or the Universe *in toto*? We are forced by logical reasoning to the conclusion that the only limitation for God or Life is the Universe. But Universes come and go incessantly, and we are forced to see that they come into objectivity and go out of objectivity in Space, which is limitless. Even if we think of space as we know it, we sense that if every point of life in form, or limited by form, ceased to be, space would still remain. So would Life. That mys-

terious something, Life, pulsates through its own inherent nature, and universes come into being; and the continued pulsation takes them out of being, to be breathed out again in ever progressive form. The highest conception of God would therefore be a trinity — Life, Space, Matter — or rather the abstract idea of these three. All three are everywhere: God is everywhere, Life is everywhere, matter-forms are everywhere. But when all matter-forms fade, abstract Life remains throughout abstract Space.

We can therefore see that God, or Life, is immanent in all forms. The Christian says: "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." The whole of manifestation and non-manifestation is Life showing Itself in and through all forms or through none. Some forms hide It almost completely; some show It partially; some in full. Life, whether sentient, instinctual, intelligent, or spiritual, is God. The will to live is the power of the God within; that which enables us to dream, to aspire, to struggle for perfection, is God. "I and my Father are one," said Jesus.

If we can accept the Wholeness of God, then we have also to accept that God is omnipotent. If man is God, he, too, is omnipotent. It is the reflection in man of this truth that makes him have faith that there is nothing he cannot achieve, nothing he cannot do if he is given time. If he is God and immortal, even the time element presents no difficulty. However much he may wish to die, the wish is only temporary. He may destroy his body but he cannot destroy himself. Through his own efforts and self-analysis he can prove his own powers; he can soar up to realms where time and space do not operate as changing relationships, but where time becomes duration, without beginning or end, and space is seen as limitless instead of being bound by limitations.

Once this is realized, or accepted as a working hypothesis, then God becomes the spirit in man. Man becomes his own creator and destroyer. He is the master of his fate. Hence it is by proving man's own powers that he proves to himself that he is God. Since all men have the same powers in different degrees of unfoldment, all are God.

Science is coming nearer to admitting that life and intelligence are acting in and through every atom in the universe; so it should not be long before reverence for life begins to show itself as a result of research in this field.

*(To be concluded)*

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## THE LESSON OF THE ALABASTER BOWLS

THE NEWS went quickly round the village that a Wise Man had come to it and was sitting under the great banyan tree by the well, prepared to answer any questions that might be put to him before continuing on his journey to the mountains. Two friends, Nirmal and Pulak, left their work and approached him together, doubting, however, if they would dare to lift up their voices in front of the crowd that had assembled.

Nirmal was the first to venture. "What," he asked, "is the best time for meditation?" But before the Wise Man could answer him, Pulak, from sheer nervousness, broke in with his own inquiry: "Pray, tell me, sir, how can I make my mind one-pointed?"

"I will answer you both," said the Wise Man, "in part." And he gave to each an appropriate verse from the *Gita*, then bade them go home and think it over, which they did with a certain amount of disappointment. "Why did he say 'in part'?" they asked each other, but neither could guess the reason, and it was with a sense of lost opportunity that they returned to their dwellings and prepared for their night's rest.

But as they set out to work again early next morning, the Wise Man met them and presented each with a little alabaster bowl. "I go my way," he said, "for I am on pilgrimage, but I would not do so leaving my answer to your questions incomplete. Take these bowls, my sons, and keep them carefully. It may be that, when we meet again, they shall be filled with nectar."

He passed on, and the two friends gazed after him, mystified. How could two bowls be the final answer to their questions? They looked at them, and at each other, and shook their heads, and then, since the bowls were precious, they were obliged to turn back home and bestow them in a place of safety. "I will keep mine here," said Nirmal, as he stood in the common living-room, where his wife performed her household tasks and the children played and he himself spent his scanty hours of leisure. He put the bowl on a high shelf. "If it is in our midst," he said, "there is no danger of my forgetting it. I should not like to become indifferent to such a treasure. And it will be ready to hand when the Wise One returns."

Sure enough, as time went by, Nirmal's attention turned often to the alabaster bowl. He prized it greatly and dusted it regularly. It was

a constant joy to him, but what made it doubly precious was the thought that some day it might be filled with heavenly-sweet nectar.

Pulak likewise prized his bowl. It was so precious to him that he hid it away carefully in a secret place beneath the thatch and never even dared to take it out and look at it. "If it is meant to hold nectar," he said, "it must be kept for that. Its hour of fulfilment lies in the future. Meanwhile, knowing it is safe, I need not worry about it. I have cares in plenty without adding one more."

The monsoon came and went. At last, one night, when the full moon shone above the village, Nirmal heard a knock at his door, and on opening it found the Wise Man standing on the threshold. "Greetings, my son," said he benevolently. "I am come again, returning from my pilgrimage. Where is the alabaster bowl? Bring it forth and let us seek the house of Pulak."

Nirmal hastened to obey, and, carrying the bowl with the greatest care, he accompanied the Wise Man along the silent street to Pulak's door, which, unlike his own, was not opened until the sage had bestowed several loud knocks upon it. Pulak, however, received the same kindly greeting, likewise the same bidding to bring forth the alabaster bowl. He looked troubled at this, and hesitated. "Sir," he said, "that will take a little time."

"Is it not at hand?" asked the Wise Man in mild astonishment. "Yes, truly, but — but — nay, not precisely. That is to say —" Pulak was stammering — "'tis in a hiding-place. I was anxious above all things to keep it safe. 'Tis not far off, but I require a moment or two to get it."

"We shall wait," said the Wise Man gently, and he and Nirmal had to stand there in the quiet silvery moonlight for full ten minutes before Pulak reappeared with the bowl in his hands. "I have not had time to clean it," he said ruefully, and Nirmal saw that the bowl was full of dust and bits of straw and even spider-webs. Granted, it was not broken, or even chipped. But it was far from being fit to hold the heavenly-sweet nectar.

The Wise Man made no comment. He led the way to the banyan tree, the two friends following him. There he sat down and they stood before him, Pulak shamefaced, Nirmal regarding him with sympathy. "Recall your questions," said the Wise Man, fixing his earnest gaze upon them. "You, Nirmal, asked what is the best time for meditation. You, Pulak, asked how to make your mind one-pointed. The answers to both now lie in your alabaster bowls."

Nirmal and Pulak looked utterly perplexed. The Wise Man watched them for a moment, smiling gravely. "It seems," he said at last, "that I must explain it to you, as to children. Listen carefully, my sons. The alabaster bowls symbolize the mind's capacity for meditation. When that is exercised, and Divine Truth is perceived, the bowls are filled with nectar. But the bowls must be ever ready. They must not be set aside as though intended only for some rare occasion, which may or may not come. As Nirmal kept his in the common living-room, he was always aware of it, in work and play alike, and could command the use of it instantly when it was required of him; moreover, having been cared for, it could be brought forth unsullied. Pulak treated *his* bowl mistakenly, though his motive for doing so was good. He thought of it as meant for one high purpose only — to hold nectar — and, with that in view, put it aside, until, like all things unused, it gathered dust and was unfit to receive the nectar, should that be given him.

"Therefore the answer to the first question is this: there is *no* time that is not 'best' for meditation; and to the second: the mind becomes one-pointed through mindfulness — that is to say, through attentiveness, non-forgetting, and awareness.

"My sons, go home now," the Sage concluded, "and put these qualities into practice, having learnt the Lesson of the Alabaster Bowls."

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THE PHANTASY is an impediment to our intellectual conceptions; and hence, when we are agitated by the inspiring influence of the Divinity, if the phantasy intervenes, the enthusiastic energy ceases: for enthusiasm and the ecstasy are contrary to each other. Should it be asked whether the soul is able to energize without the phantasy, we reply that its perception of universals proves that it is able. It has perceptions, therefore, independent of the phantasy; at the same time, however, the phantasy attends in its energies, just as a storm pursues him who sails on the sea.

—OLYMPIODORUS

# STUDIES IN "LIGHT ON THE PATH"

## IV

Hear what the Voices of the Silence say —  
All joys are yours if you put forth your claim.  
Once let the spiritual laws be understood,  
Material things must answer and obey.

Out of the silence that is peace a resonant voice shall arise. And this voice will say, It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow. And knowing this voice to be the silence itself thou wilt obey.

WHAT is that "resonant voice"? And what is "the silence that is peace"? Where does it come from? To find out exactly what it is, and when the "resonant voice" arises within the disciple to tell him that the time has now come for sowing, or teaching, and why it must be obeyed, we must revert to the closing portion of Fragment I of *Light on the Path*. The numbered rules represent progressive steps in the life of a disciple, and therefore one naturally flows into the other to form a pattern.

In the last numbered Rule, *i.e.*, Rule 21, it is said that "not till the whole personality of the man is dissolved and melted" — *not* destroyed — "not until the whole nature has yielded and become subject unto its higher self, can the bloom open." In other words, until he has plunged "into the mysterious and glorious depths" of his own inmost being, until he has fought and won the first great battle, that of bringing the personality under control, purifying and cleansing it, so that the warrior, eternal truth, becomes the guide, the admonisher and the teacher, and is above all listened to and obeyed — not until this has happened can there be silence and peace. Until all this has been accomplished, there can be no moment of real calm or real peace. This moment is like the dawn, as also the twilight, when all nature for an instant seems to hold its breath. As in nature, so, too, in the life of the disciple it can only be for a moment that there is calmness; over and over again the battle must be fought and won. In the life of a disciple, however, from that instant when eternal truth has found a place within him, the fight is from a different point of view. Now the disciple is fighting for truth. It is in the moment of "silence that is peace" that he hears the "resonant voice" of truth. Because he is now a listener, he uses his newly acquired hearing; his ears are now sensitive to the inner world, to his own inner nature.

A disciple must develop other qualities: he must be able to stand; he must gain confidence and place his trust in eternal truth, must hear its voice within himself and know that it is eternal, it is sure. He is able to hear, able to see the truth because the doors and windows of the personality have been thrown open. He is able to speak, *i.e.*, he has attained the power to help others with a voice which no longer wounds — a gift which comes only to the disciple of power and knowledge. When the personality is controlled and the lower desires which gave it strength have been killed out, there remains only one desire ruling his life — that of helping others. In reality, the disciple has become a man, because he has had a glimpse of what can come to him if he is able to fight and win in future battles. The time has now come to enter the Hall of Wisdom, where learning becomes possible. The "dark garments of illusion" are gone, "the voice of flesh" stifled, so that the disciple is able to "see" and "hear" in this Hall of Wisdom "where the light of truth shines with unfading glory."

It is from this time onwards that the fight begins in earnest. What are the things he will have to fight? Doubt, which makes his step unsteady; fear, which "kills the will and stays all action"; temptations and all the mental changes and thought sensations which "creep unasked within the Soul's bright shrine." The disciple can no longer identify himself with his egotism, pride and selfish ambitions. It is as if he has forced his way into a guarded enclosure, and has from that moment to fight and conquer — or die. "It is, once for all, 'To be, or Not to be'; to conquer, means ADEPTSHIP; to fail, an ignoble Martyrdom." He is called upon to face not only "all the latent evil propensities of his nature, but, in addition, the whole volume of maleficent power accumulated by the community and nation to which he belongs."

On this path of discipleship, it has been said,

the strong man will know utter weakness; the just man will know how to act unjustly; the pure will learn impurity; the proud will know all humiliation, and the loyal will explore the heart of Judas within himself. But for compensation the weak will learn strength; the unjust will learn to be just at the cost of life and of his own immortality if need be; the self-depreciating will learn the confidence which needs no pride; the impure will be smelted out until all the slag is gone, and Judas will embrace the stake for the sake of a plighted word. For such is the nature of evolution; and under attempted chelaship the course becomes timeless; minutes become aeons, and years moments.

It must be remembered that the disciple has to struggle not only against his vicious tendencies, but against exaggerated virtues as well. This aspect of the struggle is often overlooked.

At this stage of his fight, no Master can interfere, because it is a struggle between the disciple's will and his lower nature, and Karma does not permit his Master to interfere until the result is known.

Mr. Judge in *Letters That Have Helped Me* refers to this struggle:

Let the warrior fight, the gentle yet fierce Krishna, who, when he finds thee as his disciple and his friend, will tell thee the truth and lighten up the darkness with the lamp of spiritual knowledge.

In other words, the disciple is restoring truth to its rightful place, and in so doing he is also learning why and how he should fight. It is for this reason that the Epic Song of Life comes from the Warrior within. The disciple is advised:

Listen to the song of life. . . . Listen to it first in your own heart. At first you may say, It is not there; when I search I find only discord. Look deeper. If again you are disappointed, pause and look deeper again. There is a natural melody, an obscure fount in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced — but it is there.

This Epic Song of Life tells the disciple that there is a melody in the universe, and there is the lesson of harmony to be learned from it. Most important of all, he is a part of that harmony. The knowledge of this will enable him to stand firm and unyielding as a rock. While it is true that only a few notes of the song reach him, yet they are enough to show him that so long as he obeys the warrior, "not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself, and his spoken words were the utterance of thy secret desires," using and applying his teachings to fight the foe and overthrow him, the disciple will be enabled to discern the beauty, the philosophy and the peace of the hitherto martial strains of the Epic of the Soul. What shall he do?

Store in your memory the melody you hear. Learn from it the lesson of harmony. . . . Only fragments of the great song come to your ears while yet you are but man. But if you listen to it, remember it faithfully, so that none which has reached you is lost, and endeavour to learn from it the meaning of the mystery which surrounds you. . . . you will by degrees be able to read the larger word of life.

Recognizing that he is a part of the harmony of the universe, the disciple also perceives that there exists that Law of Laws which rules the Universe and which is itself Eternal Harmony, Divine Compassion. This can never be destroyed; it eternally is; and as the disciple finds his way deeper and deeper into that inner world where harmony and compassion reign, he finds them in his own heart. "At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope, and love." Faith and hope are partial aspects of love; there can be no fulfilment of love without faith and hope, as all three go together. Compassion is the law of "Love Eternal," so in reality it is compassion which is at the base of the disciple's nature, and which makes him feel within himself the need and the desire to "live to benefit mankind." Only with this attitude is it possible for him to study intelligently the hearts of others. He realizes that they too are a part of the harmony of the universe, even as he is. To know the universe, it is necessary to study the hearts of men, and the disciple must realize this if he is indeed to live so as to benefit mankind. He must know what the universe consists of, and it is impossible for him to speak or to render help until this knowledge has been acquired. That is why the rules concerning harmony, compassion, and the development of the heart quality all come before the rule pertaining to speech — "Attain to knowledge and you will attain to speech."

It is only when he has detected within his own heart the natural melody which is there, that he will realize that there is "an obscure fount in every human heart." All are fragments of the Divine, and it is this knowledge which will enable the disciple to speak to others as they should be spoken to, soul to soul. Thus he has taken the first step — "to live to benefit mankind."

He has come from the Kingdom of the Dead to the Kingdom of the Quickened, on his way upward to the Kingdom of the Living.

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THE FEELING of responsibility is the first step towards selflessness.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

## OF SPIRIT AND MATTER

MULAPRAKRITI or Root Substance may be regarded as related to our small system or to the entire manifested universe. In both senses, the concept is a narrow one, for the term is simply a guide for the very limited idea that even the highest human intellect can have of what in the First Fundamental of Theosophy or the "Secret Doctrine" is referred to as Abstract Space — its complement being Abstract Motion. Neither is other than relative, that is to say, related to understanding, and cannot be said to refer to the Absolute, on which speculation is useless.

If the manifested universe is in question, it might be and has been asked, what is the position at the end of a period when substance has reached its highest level of evolution and has been, so to speak, re-absorbed into its parent? Has Cosmic Substance evolved into Cosmic Ideation, leaving a void where formerly was *Mulaprakriti*? Has Abstract Space become Abstract Motion?

In this sense, *Mulaprakriti* may be referred to as in the Note on p. 239, Volume II, of *The Secret Doctrine*: "...pre-existent eternal substance, or matter, of course, which substance, according to our teachings, is boundless ever-existing space." And in another passage: "Spirit is matter *on the seventh plane*; matter is Spirit — on the lowest point of its cyclic activity; and both — are MAYA" (*S.D.*, I. 633) — Maya or illusion in the Hindu philosophy referring to anything that is subject to change.

The many references in *The Secret Doctrine* invariably emphasize that in manifestation Spirit and Matter are one, inseparable, though in differing relationships to each other, in their degree of partnership, as it were. For instance, the Occultist "maintains that Spirit and Matter are two FACETS of the unknowable UNITY..." (I. 543). And speaking of our world and the light of consciousness, H.P.B. says: "This ROOT of mental SELF is also the root of physical *Self*, for this light is the permutation, in our manifested world, of *Mulaprakriti*." (I. 430)

A study of the Second Fundamental, which points to a never-ending spiral of evolution under LAW, opens up the mental horizon to a point where one can see that spirit and matter must indeed be relative and that an apparent height of spirituality may now form the substance or working formative material of immeasurably higher and finer beings and world than our own. A thought-provoking passage in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 632-33) draws one's attention to a general view of this side of the question.

Self-consciousness gained under Law, as defined in the Third Fundamental, and inferring what to the ordinary individual would seem to be incredible experience and knowledge, is only one step towards the ever-receding SELF and an Over-Soul that is itself relative. And so one comes to *The Secret Doctrine's* metaphysical statement:

... all that lives and breathes evolves from the emanations of the ONE *Immutable* — Parabrahm=Mulaprakriti, the eternal one-root. The former of these is, so to say, the aspect of the central point turned inward into regions quite inaccessible to human intellect, and is absolute abstraction; whereas, in its aspect as *Mulaprakriti* — the eternal root of all — it gives one some hazy comprehension at least of the Mystery of Being. (I. 340)

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Learning depends on practice, intellect on former deeds; wealth follows exertion, and success, good fortune.

Even if the the sun should rise in the west, even if the lotus should bloom on the peaks of the mountains, even if Meru should shake, even if fire should feel cold — the words of the good will surely never fail.

There is pain in acquiring wealth, pain in preserving what has been acquired, pain in its loss, and pain in expenditure — why have such a receptacle of sorrow?

Perceiving the transitory world to be like a mirage, one should associate with the good for the sake of virtue, and for the sake of happiness.

In sandal trees there are serpents. In the waters with lotuses there are also alligators. There are no unobstructed pleasures.

Knowledge is the most precious treasure of all things, because it can never be given away, nor stolen, nor consumed.

There is no village — how can there be a boundary? There is no learning — how can there be fame? There is no wisdom — how can there be salvation? There is no faith — how can there be understanding?

—SANSKRIT PROVERBS

## “POINT OUT THE ‘WAY’ ”

STUDY, application and promulgation of the genuine teachings of Theosophy as given out by Madame Blavatsky constitute the triple foundation for the work of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Every true student of Theosophy who feels for the Cause of the great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion has to keep in his mind and heart this threefold task which he has to carry out for the moral and spiritual upliftment of humanity. In order to get acquainted with the principles for which Theosophy stands, study is essential, and this necessarily includes reflection on the subject studied. Study brings about a change of ideas, a new attitude of mind and heart, leading to the application of the principles in however small a measure. It is easy to know about them, but when it comes to actual practice, one realizes the difficulty. If, however, one persists diligently, one will gradually succeed. Then, an inner awakening in the individual brings into play the third aspect of the trinity — promulgation. The student comes to recognize his own responsibility of sharing with others what he has learnt, and of helping the work through example and precept. Study by itself, without application, would remain barren; and application would be fruitless without promulgation. The pure waters of the Wisdom-Religion must ever flow on to make the mental and moral soil of human nature more fertile.

“Point out the ‘Way’ ” is one of the most valuable instructions of *The Voice of the Silence*, the “Book of the Golden Precepts,” meant for the daily use of Lanoos (disciples), and dedicated to “the Few” — those few who want to study, apply and promulgate. *The Voice of the Silence* is of great help to one who wishes to live the life, not in a haphazard way, not in terms of self-gratification, but in the way prescribed by the Sages.

Point out the “Way” — however dimly, and lost among the host — as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

This particular verse follows a significant statement on humility which it is necessary to keep in mind. In the spiritual life, each aspirant is at a different stage from all others. If we are not able to shine like the dazzling noon-day sun upon the snow-capped mount of purity eternal, then we can be like the evening star, which sheds its light, dimly though it be. Humility must always be observed when pointing out the “Way.” The world is enveloped in moral and spiritual darkness, and

therefore it is essential to keep the light of truth burning, in however small a degree. As the star-studded firmament dispels physical darkness and lights up the way of solitary wayfarers, helping them to reach their destination, so the light of truth helps one on the moral and spiritual planes. The student-practitioner has to emulate, in however humble a manner, those glorious figures down the ages who have pointed out the "Way" and who are eager and anxious always to have new recruits for their army of peace. They need those who can equip themselves for the great task of keeping alive their teachings, which are forgotten and lost cycle after cycle and have to be resuscitated. Masters need companions. Each one has to discipline himself to become a bridge between the snowy caps of purity eternal and the stir and din of the market-place. Such a bridge was Mr. Judge.

The word "Way," it should be noted, is in quotes. It is a special kind of a way — the inner way which can be trodden without moving to east or west, north or south. It is an uphill climb from the mire of lies terrestrial to the glorious heights of the Nirvanic light, and in the end it transforms man into a super-man. Though one has to walk that path through one's own self-effort, there are other pilgrim-souls on the way, and we have the assurance that all the great teachers have travelled the same way. It is a difficult way, but we have been warned, by those who have gone ahead, of obstacles to be avoided and limitations to be conquered. So, with patience and perseverance, step by step, the goal can be attained. Unless one feels for the Cause of the Masters, unless one attunes oneself to humanity's great pain and suffering, unless one has the wherewithal to relieve that suffering, one is not ready to point out the "Way."

So many discoveries are made, but scientific and technological advancement cannot remove the sorrows and miseries of the world. The great teachers, being true scientists and psychologists of the highest order, are able to heal and cure the diseases of the mind and soul. They have indicated the root cause of the troubles afflicting the world, and have also pointed to the remedy, which requires the removal of ignorance and selfishness and the cultivation of virtue and wisdom, leading to joy and peace. The key-note of their teachings is altruism, without thought of personal gain. Therefore, purity of motive is essential. "To live to benefit mankind is the first step. To practise the six glorious virtues is the second."

To point out the "Way" by spoken or written word is indeed neces-

sary, but far more important it is to live the life and set a noble example. This is how Mr. Judge accomplished all his work successfully, bringing out the practical aspect of the teachings in a simple way so as not to overwhelm the understanding of even a child. His own living example impressed all those around him. He wrote:

What we most need is such a Theosophical education as will give us the ability to expound Theosophy in a way to be understood by the ordinary person. (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 54)

The U.L.T. exists to give Theosophical education, to give all possible help on an impersonal basis, to indicate the true concepts as given by all the great teachers, so that more and more people may derive benefit from them and become ready to point out the "Way."

The image of the evening star is most inspiring. Not only does it help the lonely traveller in the darkness, but during certain months of the year it changes its position from the west to the east and becomes the morning star heralding the dawn, the dawn of a new day, the dawn of a new year, the dawn of a new era, the dawn of a new age. The great bard of the 19th century, Tennyson, in his *In Memoriam* says:

Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name  
For what is one, the first the last,  
Thou, like my present and my past,  
Thy place is changed; thou art the same.

We owe a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Judge for pointing out the "Way" so precisely through example and precept, in a simple and straightforward manner.

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THERE IS but one right motive for treading the Path: to bring all living things into harmony with Tao, even if that should force you to be the last to attain to peace.

—*Book of Tao*

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Under the auspices of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago, a Symposium on Religions was held on September 15, 1968, in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the historic World Parliament of Religions organized at Chicago in 1893. During these 75 years, many changes have taken place in human life and in the world's religions, and the purpose of the Symposium was to evaluate these changes and "to test them in the light of reason and the scientific spirit of the modern age."

One of the speakers, Rabbi Asher Block, Head of the Jewish Centre, Little Neck, emphasized the spirit of interfaith tolerance by citing from scripture, history, injunctions for spiritual practice, and the lives of the mystics. "The amazing thing about any of the outstanding scriptures," the Rabbi said, "be it the *Gita*, the Sermon on the Mount, the Eightfold Path, or the Ten Commandments, is that there is hardly a word in them that is parochial in nature. If we could for a moment detach ourselves from the particular origins and historical associations that have clustered around these teachings, it would be impossible to differentiate one from another." He advocated that each religious community cultivate its own garden intensively, and then, "when the fruit is produced, it shall be evident to all how nourishing and sustaining that fruit is to everyone's spiritual life."

Professor Michio Kushi of the Department of Comparative Religion, Boston University, spoke on Buddhism, emphasizing the twofold knowledge of the impermanence of all things, including the ego, and the immortality of Truth. He stressed that many people follow Buddhism together with their own beliefs, and do not fear contradiction as they accept a universal life built on the foundation of the highest human qualities.

Speaking on Zoroastrianism, Dr. Keki Bhote of India, founder-president of the Zoroastrian Association in America, referred to the fundamental moral and spiritual teachings of his ancient religion, its close kinship with India's ancient Vedic religion, and its influence on the middle eastern religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Father Robert Campbell, Professor of Theology, DePaul (Catholic) University, Chicago, spoke of the crisis that has developed in Christianity — the worst crisis in its history. He gave examples of the breakdown of authority that is endemic in present-day Christianity. The

Pope's recent statement as to the nature of the Catholic credo represented the traditional view of Catholicism, but it met with a resentful reception from many directions. In every Christian denomination there are two different currents, the traditionalistic and the modernistic. The traditionalist group affirms, for instance, that Jesus is God and is unique; no other person can be mentioned in the same breath with him. The modernistic view, on the other hand, takes issue with this and says that Jesus is divine, true, but any one of us can be divine. The liberal Christian outlook, Father Campbell went on to state, is sympathetic to a great extent to the Hindu outlook. It is moving in the direction of the East in much of its philosophy — especially in the idea of an impersonal God and in the concept that man is inherently divine and is perfectible by training and proper education. In the Roman Catholic Church, for the last five or six years, there has been a move in the direction of challenging the infallibility of the Pope, the ideas of heaven and hell, original sin, and many other traditional doctrines.

Speaking on Islam, Mr. Wadi' Haddad, Associate Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Princeton University, New Jersey, said that to discover the universal aspects in any one religion is to discover the universal aspects in all religions. We must be open-minded. There are in every religion men who are becoming more and more inclusive in their outlook.

Swami Ranganathananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, India, speaking on Hinduism, referred to it not as *a* religion but as a *federation* of religions, held together by the cord of love and finding expression in active toleration and acceptance. He recalled the words of Swami Vivekananda in his speech at the Chicago Parliament of Religions: "The whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. . . . The same God is inspiring all of them."

Speaking on the special theme of "The Ideal of Universal Religion," Swami Ranganathananda referred to the problem of the conflict between the traditional and the liberal, posed by Father Campbell, as the basic problem of all religions today. In recent decades, there has been a steady erosion of people's faith in religion as traditionally understood. Man's inhumanity to man on a colossal scale, as during wars, has made man lose faith in himself also. Today, therefore, he has no faith either in God or in man. He lives for the moment and moves aimlessly. His spiritual malnutrition finds expression, in his individual and collective life, in an inner restlessness and tension, a constant search for worldly substitutes, and a general sense of meaninglessness.

Swami Ranganathananda continued:

It is in the context of this dilemma that we have to reassess the place of religion in human life and human fulfilment, and the changes the religions of the world have to undergo to be able to contribute to that end. . . . It is obvious that a crisis is facing every religion today. Modern world conditions and modern education are forcing all religions to justify themselves at the bar of reason. No religion can escape the critical scrutiny of its own youthful followers. . . . Swami Vivekananda taught Hinduism to welcome such rational scrutiny so that all its deadwood may be removed, allowing its tested truths to shine and inspire the modern Hindu to acquire the necessary spiritual strength to face the challenge of modern materialism. He exhorted all other religions too to respond to the modern challenge in the same way and, uniting their spiritual energies, throw a counter-challenge to modern materialism and worldliness, and thus help restore to modern man his spiritual integrity and true dignity.

It is when religions undergo this process that they bring out the central truths that form their spiritual core and reveal their ever-present universal dimension. This, and not religious uniformity nor religious eclecticism, is what Hinduism understands by universal religion.

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Among the many problems that face humanity, that of race relations and minority groups has assumed great importance and urgency in recent times. It is a major world issue, and, directly or indirectly, affects people everywhere, although its incidence varies from country to country.

*World Goodwill Commentary*, a bulletin on current trends in world affairs, dated September 1968, is devoted to "The Race Problem." As stated there:

Let us make no mistake about it—to admit that efforts to achieve inter-racial harmony and integration have failed and to contemplate "separate solutions," is to admit that goodwill has failed. We must not lose our nerve in the face of the growth of violence and hatred. The present racial crisis has already demonstrated, so far only in a limited way, the appalling consequences of hate, prejudice, thinking based on "separateness" and the breakdown of human values. But it is not true to say that good-

will, love, tolerance and moderation have failed. *They have never been fully or sufficiently tried.* The present racial crisis provides a new opportunity to demonstrate the power of genuine altruism and love and to prove the reality of the statement that "when men of goodwill meet, no matter what their political party, nation or religion, there is no problem which they cannot eventually solve and solve to the satisfaction of the various parties involved." . . .

Racialist thinking is not and never has been based in reason. Nor is it inherent in the nature of humanity, but it emerges and gathers strength only in certain conditions. The seeds are sown by an often unconscious parental and social conditioning, and the roots of racial prejudice and discrimination are essentially to be found in the emotional and irrational side of man's nature. The child absorbs the implicit assumptions and values of the society in which he grows up, and unless he later rebels, as indeed these days he may, his attitudes on race may be permanently distorted from an early age. . . .

It will be a lengthy and difficult task therefore to eradicate this poisonous and pernicious disease of race prejudice and discrimination from both the practice and the thinking of the bigots of all races. Efforts will have to be directed along many lines, of which the following are the most important:

*First:* We must constantly assert the great moral and spiritual truth that all men are brothers, of equal value, and that the destiny of humanity is to be united as one family. The fact that racial prejudice and discrimination is immoral, inhuman and degrading must be stated again and again. The problem of race is one of the great moral issues of our time.

*Second:* A continuing and continuous educational programme must be conducted so that men of all races, classes and countries are left in no doubt about the true facts of race—scientific, historical, cultural, religious, and philosophical—and the fundamental reality that all races have an equal human and spiritual potential.

*Third:* Strenuous efforts must be made to eliminate the economic and social conditions in which racial problems flourish, such as poverty, unemployment, substandard and segregated housing, inadequate educational, medical and welfare facilities.

*Fourth:* Anti-discrimination legislation, covering all aspects of human rights, and backed by an efficient yet humane administration, must be established where it does not yet exist. Experi-

ence has shown that such legislation is an essential element in all successful programmes for eliminating racial discrimination.

*Fifth:* Men must be led to a better understanding of the psychological mechanism of prejudice, and especially its irrational basis, so that they may guard against the growth of racial prejudice both within themselves and among others.

*Sixth:* And finally goodwill to all must be the continuing and underlying keynote of all efforts to establish right relations between the many races and peoples who comprise the one humanity.

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Air pollution in many parts of the world has reached alarming levels. In London, for instance, smog killed off 4,000 people in one year alone. Almost 500 New Yorkers die annually from causes related directly to the city's polluted atmosphere. It has been estimated that about 360,000 tons of gaseous wastes are discharged into the air over America *every day*. An eminent scientist has calculated that at this rate "the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will rise by 30 per cent in another 30 years, causing catastrophic climatic changes which could melt the polar caps and kill millions of people" (*The Times of India*, December 17, 1968). Such is the price of "civilization"!

These frightening statistics seem to be making some impact; local authorities in heavily industrialized areas are taking steps to check air pollution. An interesting experiment in Britain also promises to provide significant data on the problem. Identical garden plants and vegetables, using the same soil, are being grown at two different sites — one near an oil refinery and the other in the countryside. Scientists will then examine the grown plants and vegetables to determine the effects of air pollution on the soil and on what grows in it.

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Does pandering to the taste for inflicting pain and injury, or seeing them inflicted, deserve the name of "sport"? The September 1968 issue of *World Health*, the magazine of the World Health Organization, in presenting the ugly side of the practice of boxing states:

It damages the boxer physically and encourages the worst type of brutal feelings in the spectators. . . . In an average ten-round fight, something like a thousand blows are exchanged. They are aimed at very delicate parts of the body, the stomach, the kidneys and most of all — *worst* of all — the head. Each blow sustained

by the head results in some slight injury to the brain, often causing irreversible damage. Heart injuries result from left-hooks to the heart; the larynx may be damaged by uppercuts. All these injuries are familiar to people who are close to the ring. A hard blow to the chin not only knocks out the opponent, but may cause permanent damage, particularly if the boxer's head hits the floor of the ring.

Boxing can kill. The number of boxers who die from cerebral haemorrhage is still being added to (425 boxing deaths since 1945). . . . Surely the energy and endurance that boxing calls forth could be better spent in some other exercise.

What of the incalculable harm done to the mentalities of people who take part in, enjoy and encourage this particularly sterile, unintelligent and brutish form of violence? Does it not play a role in coarsening human nature, in destroying the finer sensibilities and in engendering feelings of violence and brutality in the spectators?

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Dr. Vikram A. Sarabhai, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, delivering the sixth B. C. Guha memorial lecture at the 56th session of the Indian Science Congress held in Bombay early in January, said that the sun had many subtle influences on events on the earth. The 11-year change of the growth rate of trees was one such. There had also been reports of changes in the accident-proneness of human beings. "We must look not only to the wave radiation from the sun but also to the influence of the solar wind on the earth to understand the variability of natural events on the earth," Dr. Sarabhai added. (*The Statesman*, January 7)

The solar wind, he said, arose from the sun's corona which had a temperature of a million degrees centigrade. It blew at the magnetic field of the earth, pressing it in different directions from the sun, and produced a magnetic tail of the earth which extended beyond the distance of the moon. This tail had a very interesting structure, permitting matter from the plasma wind to leak into the earth's immediate environment.

Dr. Sarabhai said that recent work done by him had shown how the measurements of the earth's magnetic field could be related to the solar wind.

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