सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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HUNGER

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CHILDREN at play do not feel hungry and refuse to answer the call for food. Men absorbed in affairs forget the meal hour. The sick loathe the very sight of food. All these conditions are not normal. A healthy body feels hunger at the appointed hour, eats and relishes its food, and forgets about it while engaged in the performance of tasks.

What is true of the body is equally true of the mind. There are playful minds which never seek knowledge. There are minds so absorbed in their own avocations that they care not about the events of the world or about the woes and worries of mankind. There are sick minds in whom the very sight of a book produces nausea. If quite healthy bodies are rare, rarer still are normal, healthy minds, whose development is regularly attended to. Failure in life, attributed to fate, is often due to neglect of mental training, which for so many stops with school or college. Such people would consider it lunacy if a body having come of age were to refuse to eat; they do not see that the mind also decays and dies without proper nourishment. A truly healthy mind desires and relishes mental food and makes up its menu with even greater care than the gourmand. Such a person studies regularly and methodically, and derives help from it in discharging his life-duties.

If the mind is neglected more than the body, the soul is even more neglected. It is uncared for because its very existence is denied, or its nature misdefined. The world is full of child-souls, sick-souls, dying and dead souls.

What food is to the body, that knowledge is to the mind, and Spirit

to the human soul. When food is eaten and digested it becomes the body; when knowledge is obtained and assimilated it becomes the mind; when Spirit is contemplated upon and absorbed It becomes the Soul — the Great Soul.

In Sanskrit, Atma is both the universal Self and the human self. These two are indissolubly linked. When the human soul by its own efforts becomes one with the impersonal Spirit, man becomes divine — Atma flowers into Mahatma. The two are not only linked; they have coalesced.

Human soul, Manas, is self-conscious; therefore it is the link between Spirit or consciousness and matter or Nature. Spirit can attain self-consciousness, consciousness can become aware of itself, in the human nature, in that kind of matter which builds the human form. Therefore the goal of evolutionary force is the human kingdom, and the goal of man, Masterhood. Attainment of self-consciousness is the first step, attainment of Universal Self-consciousness the last.

When manas, the human soul, the thinker, seeks knowledge about its own source, the Spirit, he seeks *sattvic* food. When a man seeks knowledge about the nature of his own mind, he seeks *rajasic* food. When a person seeks knowledge about his body and senses, their power and glory, he seeks *tamasic* food.

The student of Theosophy must seek *sattvic* food.

How?

He will have to pay the price — Sacrifice. He must learn to sacrifice in a triple way: (1) by mortifying his own sense-nature; (2) by purifying his own mind; (3) by serving human souls. This necessitates the sacrifice (1) in money which pampers his sense-nature; (2) in time in which to improve his mind; and (3) in work of spreading soul-wisdom or Theosophy.

Money, time, work are the needs of the Great Cause. Those who give these pay the price and secure the power to sacrifice.

THE GLAMOUR OF THE ABNORMAL

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA (literally, the *Gita* or Song of Bhagavan or Lord) is the book of instructions which teaches the practice of *Buddhi Yoga.* It gives guidance as to how each event in life is to be met and how each step upon cautious step is to be taken on the path of knowledge and divine wisdom. Nowhere in the treatise does Krishna urge his disciple to develop abnormal powers, whether they be physical, psychic or spiritual. The goal of human evolution is not attained by their acquisition. The entire trend of the teaching is towards the blending (*yoga* or union) of mind and soul and the final assimilation in the Supreme. This union and final assimilation is an end by itself. It is not taken as a means for obtaining powers. These but follow upon and are a natural outcome of attainment. Arjuna too does not ask for nor covet powers for the averting of the conflict, nor for the obtaining of victory. He desires only such instructions as will quieten his inner turmoil. All his questions are directed towards that end.

Krishna as the Guru, the Asylum and the Friend of Arjuna imparts the divine wisdom. Commencing his discourse with the teaching about the immortality of the Self and the spiritual and imperishable roots from which the mortal man springs, he recites the excellences of the Supreme and reveals the divine universal form with all its resplendent effulgence, the imprint of which will remain with Arjuna for all times. But that is all. Even the demonstration of his Universal Form comes not as a display of a phenomenon but as a legitimate sequence of the Instructions which preceded it and also as a corrective to Arjuna's previous blindness in failing to see the presence of the Lord in all things and everywhere. Krishna does not give to Arjuna the fabled glance by which Kapila made a mountain of ashes of King Sagar's 60,000 sons, nor does he protect Arjuna's son from being slain, nor yet does he make Arjuna immune to death and the other risks of war. He does not use his supreme power to reduce the Kurus to ashes, nor does he depute such powers to his devoted disciple. Divine powers are not so used.

For centuries man has chronicled the manifestations of abnormal powers and forces, dubbing them divine or diabolical to suit his own prejudices. Their range is vast, and some are so stupendous as to cause men to disbelieve their existence. But they are there and can be awakened and directed by the perfected will of man. When the student sees these powers exercised, he may get so awed by the manifestation as to

start paying homage to the operator. Under the dangerous spell cast by the phenomenon, he may treat the man through whom such power manifests as the chosen one of God, and abandoning previous vows of loyalty, proclaim himself the disciple of the new-found teacher. Many a student thus falls by the wayside, unable to lift his gaze beyond the range of the encircling spell which obsesses his mind and numbs his discrimination. *Isis Unveiled* treats of phenomena and their rationale and proves by facts piled upon facts that there are no miracles in nature. What the ordinary man calls miraculous is the effect of a law that at the particular time and for the particular individual was hidden or non-comprehensible. Clairaudience, clairvoyance, telepathy, mind-reading, apportation, and all the other phenomena now clubbed together under the appellation of extra-sensory perception were considered miraculous only a hundred years back.

The student has to understand the basic fundamentals that lie at the root of the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled*. He may pass over them lightly, but then it would be at his own risk. The truths which these items give out are the only immunizing agents that will protect the student against the glamour of the abnormal. Each phenomenon which he sees or which is brought to his notice can be understood by one or the other key which these Ten Items provide.

Theosophy postulates that Nature is triune and that so is man. The triune man provides the key which fits the lock of Nature and opens its mysteries. Each of the three great divisions has its own sub-divisions which have their own respective planes of consciousness, their own sensory instruments of perception and their own powers and potencies depending upon the subtility or grossness of the substance in use. So vast, so complex is the realm of nature that even in regard to the matter with which we are familiar our humanity has not reached to the knowledge of all the subtler forces that reside therein.

The three broad divisions of nature and of man are: the physical, the astral or psychic and the spiritual. The first two divisions are in a constant state of flux. They are perpetually changing and are for that reason perishable. It is only when man succeeds in merging himself in his spiritual nature that he becomes an immortal entity. The forces that reside in the spiritual aspect cannot be reached by the physical perishable, nor yet by the perishable psychic. The perishable natures must for all time remain ignorant of the spiritual. Further, they cannot be used to mount to the spiritual. The forces that reside in the spirit are

not for showmanship, nor for the gaping laudation of the multitudes. When the man rests in the spiritual, the desire either to possess the powers or to glory in their use and demonstration is gone. Therefore is it written for the disciple that the power he shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men.

Those who love to parade their virtue or their knowledge may by that very act be judged to be without access to the powers of the spirit. This must be so because the quality of impersonality which is the essence of the spirit precludes the exercise of force for ends lesser than spiritual. Persons who worship the evil powers or the elemental spirits or the ghosts of dead men put themselves out of the pale of the spirit as do others who profess one religion or the other and favour one sect or creed as opposed to others. Spirit is one, indivisible and impartite. It cannot be reached nor its powers drawn upon by the mortal and warring aspects of men.

The powers that an Adept can acquire are so vast, so ludicrously impossible to the ordinary mind as to invite ridicule at their very mention. Some of these powers will be found enumerated by Patanjali. They exist, but the stress is not on their acquisition but rather on the fact that they are met with on the way and should not be allowed to divert the aspirant from the ultimate goal. A knowledge that such "impossible" powers exist will rob the lesser powers of much of their glamour.

No force in nature or in man is inherently good or bad. Forces or powers are colourless — even those of the physical plane. It is the motive which propels the force to action that can make it white or black, benign or malignant. To be white, the force has to be directed by one who at operation time is as impersonal as the sun, wind or the ocean swell. So functioning, the man can protect large multitudes. The acts which such a man performs are in harmony with Nature's laws and with what has been called the fixed arithmetic of the spheres. This rules out any use of power — however trivial — for self-glorification, pleasure, the wonderment or the confusing of others, or for gain to oneself, one's nation, family or group. It *ipso facto* precludes the seeking of a reward or the doing of harm to anyone, even though he be the vilest and the meanest of mankind.

When the student comes across persons who operate the lesser known powers, his initial reaction often is that the possessor of these must be very close to perfection. Here would be a teacher fit for him because

he displays his superiority over those who merely preach. Phenomenalism appeals to the emotions, makes the mind captive, and the man reduced to this condition willingly surrenders his will to that of another. Thus, though he may have studied the Ten Items of *Isis Unveiled* (II. 587 *et seq.*) and can recite them backwards, he is liable to be glamoured at the sight of flowers and medallions produced from nowhere, or at the correctness of information about events occurring at the very moment at places continents away. Coming in contact with a medium, he may stand enthralled when he is told that his long-lost relative is by his side and is calling him by a nickname which perchance he had himself forgotten. These are hours of great danger and there will be no angel by his side to ward it off.

Phenomena beyond the threshold of the normal do occur. *Fakirs* and *sannyasis* have been known to produce them in such abundance as to appear as minor gods in the eyes of gaping multitudes. Diseases have been known to have been cured on the instant by magnetic passes, by breathing upon the patient and by other unorthodox means. But the production of even the most baffling of phenomena is no indication of any advancement on the spiritual path. The path shown by the Masters of Wisdom is a very special path. It demands from the aspirant altruism and the giving up of anything that life can offer as a loving sacrifice at the altar of human advancement towards the higher life. Many a student moves away from this path because he finds no glamour in Theosophy, while in the degree of his emotional tendencies he finds himself carried away to sit at the feet of phenomenalists, mediums and holy men. Holiness gives powers; it throws a halo of sanctity around the man and persons who come close to such an one may feel the warmth of that achievement. But it does not breed volunteers for selfless service in other and more troublous centuries when the forces of goodwill have to be marshalled to protect multitudes from the evil intentions of those who may be called masters in evil. *Kali Yuga* has yet several hundred thousand years to run, and the iron age as it proceeds will have troubles in plenty for the unwary and for the weak of heart.

The switching from one teacher to another, the abandoning of one system for another, once a firm declaration of adherence is made, leaves a scar or wound in the inner make-up of the man. It may become a sore and will in time fester and putrefy. This is the wage of a *volte-face* on the planes of soul and spirit. The pledging of one's troth, the declaration of one's undying fidelity is no light matter. Once given, it

remains as a covenant for life and lives. For one who remains fixed in his resolve and staunch to Masters' programme, the *Mundaka Upanishad* gives this advice:

> Having taken as a bow the great weapon of the Secret Teaching, one should fix in it the arrow sharpened by constant meditation. Drawing it with a mind filled with That (Brahman), penetrate, O beloved one, the Imperishable as the mark.
>
> The *Pranava* (*Aum*) is the bow; the arrow is the Self; Brahman is said to be the mark. With heedfulness is It to be penetrated; one should become one with It as the arrow becomes one with the mark.

THESE two types of persons take trouble in vain and use fruitless endeavours — he who acquires wealth without enjoying it, and he who teaches wisdom but does not practise. However much you may study science, when you do not act wisely you are ignorant. The beast whom they load with books is not profoundly learned and wise.

A learned man without temperance is a blind man carrying a link; he shows the road to others but does not guide himself.

A kingdom gains credit from wise men, and religion obtains perfection from the virtuous. Kings stand in greater need of wise men, than wise men do of appointments at court.

Three things are not permanent without three things — wealth without commerce, science without argument, a kingdom without government.

Hostility between two people is like fire; and the evil fated backbiter supplies fuel; afterwards, when they are reconciled together, the backbiter is hated and despised by both parties. To kindle a flame between two persons is to burn yourself inconsiderately in the midst.

—SADI OF SHIRAZ

THE TERRACE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

I salute you, my Brother, and wish you to reach the terrace of enlightenment.

—WILLIAM QUAN JUDGE

CAN ANY BOOK, we may well ask, ever have gone forth into the world with a more truthfully descriptive title than the one known to us as *Letters That Have Helped Me,* by William Quan Judge? Written to "Jasper Niemand" (Mrs. Julia Campbell VerPlanck, later Mrs. Archibald Keightley) in the closing years of the last century, and appearing originally in *The Path,* the magazine founded and edited by Mr. Judge, the first volume of these letters appeared in book form towards the end of 1891. A second series, compiled by Jasper Niemand and Thomas Green, consists of letters and extracts from letters written to a number of people in different parts of the world, and was published in 1905, since when both series have been repeatedly reprinted. The number of those who have been helped by them must be legion, and those who have fed upon them can avouch how great that help has been. Let the testimony of one reader speak for all. The Irish poet George William Russell (AE) refers to the Letters as "written by a man whom I consider the wisest and sweetest of any I have ever met. I have more reverence for him than for any other human being I know of. I hope they will mean as much to you as to many of us. They are not badly written; but do not think of fine or beautiful phrases when reading them, but only of the things it is good to live with and ever to keep in mind. I think he says only things he *knows.*"

Granted, it is the matter, not the manner, that counts most, yet because the expression of Truth by one who "knows" is invariably fine and beautiful, such phrases are assuredly not lacking. What of the oft quoted one, so applicable to the writer of it, "Let us use with care those living messengers called words"? Or that other, equally well known: "The first step in *becoming* is Resignation. Resignation is the sure, true, and royal road." Again, there is the visionary: "We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good, shall thus arouse a new current, and then finally result in drawing back the great and the good from other spheres from beyond the earth." And if we seek poetry, this passag

surely approaches it: "The darkness and the desolation are sure to be ours, but it is only illusionary. Is not the Self pure, bright, bodiless, and free—and art thou not that? The daily waking life is but a penance and the trial of the body, so that *it* too may thereby acquire the right condition. In dreams we see the truth and taste the joys of heaven. In waking life it is ours to gradually distil that dew into our normal consciousness."

But neither vision nor poetry was W.Q.J.'s object in his letter-writing. That object was always, unswervingly, the clear presentation of the teachings of Theosophy as transmitted by H.P.B. from her Masters, and — thereby — the helping of every sincere seeker whose need might come before him in his busy days of indefatigable and often single-handed work. "I do not know what to write," he confesses once, "for I've been so occupied with people. I am anxious about my lectures; still unprepared. . . . Indeed, I often think how nice it would be not to speak or write. I am no hand at those nice phrases that people like." As guide and friend, though, he was *never* "unprepared." "Receive my brotherly assurances," he writes, "my constant desire to help you." And to an unknown inquirer, "I shall be glad to give you any information possible respecting Theosophy and the Theosophical Society." To another he gives the reassurance: "It is a relief to turn from the eternal legal quibbles (of my business) to say a word or two on eternal matters." And indeed his whole attitude to the task of constant letter-writing is summed up in his reply to one who is obviously a stranger to him: "You by no means need to apologize for asking my attention to the matter. . . . It is my great desire and privilege to give to all sincere enquirers whatever information I may possess, and certainly there can be no greater pleasure than to further the internal progress of any real student and aspirant."

W.Q.J. assuredly was not one who failed to practise what he preached. He speaks from the heart when he says, in concluding a lengthy letter, "Let us, then, extend help to all who come our way. This will be true progress; the veils that come over our souls fall away when we work for others." There is a hint here of personal experience. It gives us an insight into Mr. Judge's modest, unassuming nature. Great occultist as he was, illumined master of the Theosophic teachings, he can readily align himself with an earnest inquirer, as though writing from the same lowly level: "I will talk the matter over with you for your future guidance in replying to such questions; perhaps also to clear up

my own mind." Again, "I am, like you, struggling on the road." And again, "As before, so now, I will do all I can for you, which is not much, as each must do for himself." Finally, "I wish I could answer your letter as you ought to have it done. But I feel my inability. However, our duty is to never consider our ability, but to do what comes to be done in whatever way we can, no matter how inadequate the work appears to others. . . . So I will just say what comes."

This last extract, which bears the stamp of true humility, is the opening to a letter (Vol. I, No. 5) abounding in oft-reprinted quotations (*e.g.*, "On the doors and walls of the temple the word 'TRY' is written"), a letter particularly rich in intuitive wisdom. Yet, to himself, it seemed "inadequate"!

That injunction, "our duty is to never consider our ability, but to do what comes to be done in whatever way we can," is but one example of the simple, unforced way in which W.Q.J. can introduce into his letters a bit of valuable Theosophic teaching. In another, in which he strongly advises his correspondent "to give up all yoga practices, which in almost all cases have disastrous results unless guided by a competent teacher," he goes on to offer the counsel of his own sound common sense: "If you will take some subject or sentence from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and concentrate your mind upon that and meditate upon it, you will find much good result from it, and there is no danger in such concentration." On another occasion he speaks out frankly from his own advanced standpoint: "Where I see you mistaken I will speak, to warn my Brother who temporarily knows not. For did I not call on the bugle, perhaps other things might switch him off to where perhaps for the time he would be pleased, but would again be sorry, and then when his mistake was plain he would justly sigh to me across dark centuries of separation that I had been false to my duty of warning."

He is equally prompt to give ready backing to a good project. "You have my very hearty approval of and encouragement in your work and I am very sure that that work will not be without fruit." Again, we find him tincturing what his correspondent might have taken for criticism with the same modest comparison of himself and his circumstances with those of another. "There is no better opportunity than is hourly presented to you in the whole world. . . . I would gladly have such a chance, which Karma has denied me, and I see the loss I incur each day by not having it there or here. . . . My reminding you of all this is

not a criticism, but is due to my own want of such an opportunity, and being at a distance I can get a clearer view of the case, and what you have for your own benefit and also for all others."

Warmth of heart glows throughout the Letters. ("I cannot tell you how my heart turns to you all.") So, while deeply aware of their spiritual wisdom, it is delightful to note their human affection also. "That you may pass beyond the sea of darkness," he tells Jasper Niemand, "I offer you my life and help." To another, "I wish you luck, and wish I could do more for you. But I will do what I can." The note of brotherhood is struck repeatedly. "*Brother*," he reminds us, "was the noble name given in 1875 to the Masters. Hence you and I and all of us must cultivate that." At some period when he has not had any letters or news from anyone to lead him to write, he begins his own letter by saying simply, "I send you a word of brotherly greeting," and continues, "We are so far away from each other that now and then such a greeting is well, and should be taken in the spirit it is sent." Again, he urges, "Let us all draw closer together in mind and heart, soul and act, and try thus to make that true brotherhood through which alone our universal and particular progress can come." Concluding one of his letters to Jasper Niemand, he writes, "I must go. But Brothers are never parted while they live for the True alone."

Naturally, with his great powers of mind and spirit, W.Q.J. did not depend for communication upon the written word alone. "A word of love to ——?" he writes, as though taking up some query or request; "I sent it, I sent many. I not only sent it visible but also the other way. What could I say? I do not know. In what I sent my whole heart was put." This recurs in a letter to a friend who was tending a sick person. "I would I were there with you. Tell him how much I love him.... Words are of no use. I have sent thoughts, and those are useful.... I sent every night lately all the help I could, and continued through the day, not only to ——, but also you. It reached there, I know, but I can't overcome Karma if it is too strong."

Mr. Judge makes little reference, however, to such inner powers and these two instances are mentioned here only as revealing further his warmth of human feeling. Of this there is touching proof when he says, in concluding a letter, "I am writing this, instead of machining it, in order that you may feel the force of my love and comradeship." Another example occurs in a letter to the Theosophical Publication Society when it adjudged his fine *Epitome of Theosophy*, which had appeared in *The*

Path, as "too advanced to be reprinted now," averring that what was needed was "a stepping-stone from fiction to philosophy." Mr. Judge begins his reply by stating that he had learnt of this "with great regret," but he ends it "Fraternally yours." Brotherhood first, last and always! As he says elsewhere, "Let us be of and for peace."

All his forms of concluding his letters are characteristic and beautiful. "I give you my best wishes and brotherly greeting for the new year and for every year that is to come. Affectionately yours." "Good-bye, then, and may you find that peace that comes from the self." "Again, in storm and shine, in heat and cold, near or afar, among friends or foes, the same in One Work." "Good-bye, and good luck, and may the devas help you and also karma. Love to all, as usual. As forevermore." The phrase "as forevermore," or a similar one, recurring frequently, seems to indicate his sense of a lasting relationship. "As forevermore and after." "As formerly, and as now, and as forever and forevermore." "Again I go, as forevermore." Perhaps the key to this sense of timelessness lies in the italicized words (italics ours) of a final greeting: "Let us go on from place to place and from year to year; no matter who or what claims us outwardly, *we are each the property of the self.* As forevermore and after. . . ."

There is one of these letter-endings which seems to call for special mention, so precious is it in this dark age of Kali-Yuga as the word of a Friend and Guide who "says only things he *knows.*"

"I send you my love and hope, and best thoughts that you may all find the great light shining around you every day. It is there. Your brother, William Q. Judge."

Letters That Have Helped Me could provide matter for many articles. This is but a brief one, which has not sought to be a commentary, or even to mention the many aspects of Theosophical life and teaching that Mr. Judge deals with in his correspondence. Its purpose was simply to make contact with the writer himself in his warmth of personality, beauty of mind and strength of spirit. "May you all be well sustained!" we seem to hear him saying across the years, and though his farewell comes to us, too, "And now, my Brother, for the present I leave you," his words of wisdom speak on for our guidance and inspiration.

Let us, in gratitude, return his own greeting — "Salute, most noble, brave, and diamond-hearted!" And let us honour him by striving to reach the Terrace of Enlightenment.

OLD AND NEW METHODS

[This article was first published by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist,* April 1883.—Eds.]

So much information relating to the highest science of Nature has lately been given out to the world through these columns, that it is worth while at this stage of the proceedings to call the reader's attention to the way in which new methods of dealing with spiritual truths illuminate the old methods adopted by occult writers of a former date. It will grow more and more apparent to students of occult philosophy as time goes on, that the explanations now in process of development were all foreshadowed by mystic writers of the earlier school. Books that have hitherto irritated impatient readers by their almost hopeless obscurity, will already have grown intelligible to a considerable extent, and many of the riddles they still present to the student will probably be interpreted as time goes on. In this elucidation of old standing enigmas there is a double interest for all serious investigators of Nature. Firstly, the occult writings of the obscure school gather fresh importance in modern estimation as it is thus demonstrated that their obscurity of style is not — as unsympathetic critics may often have been inclined to think — a mere cover for obscurity of thought; secondly, the recent teachings of which the Theosophical Society and these pages have been the channel, will be invested with all the more authority in the eyes even of comparatively apathetic recipients as it grows evident that they were familiar long ago to advanced students of the mystic era.

The science in fact which is now being given out to the world in clearly intelligible language for the first time has been in possession of the elect few from time immemorial. Never mind, for the moment, why that science has hitherto been jealously hidden from mankind at large. There are plenty of reasons forthcoming in justification of that reticence really, and it may not be unreasonable to suggest that the world at large, to which the elements of occult doctrine are now received as something new and strange, almost too wonderful for belief, should give credit to the exceptionally gifted persons who have fathomed these mysteries and many more besides, for having had some motives for the policy they have pursued, which everybody may not yet be in a position to understand. But this is another branch of the subject: the justification of Nature's most advanced explorers, in regard to the precautions they have hitherto taken in reporting their discoveries, may be remitted

to a future period. What we are concerned to show for the present is, that though purposely veiled and expressed in language which ordinary readers were not expected to understand, the science in which all who wish to learn may now be taught very freely was long ago recorded in books to which we may now appeal for the retrospective confirmation of the explanations now given.

Anyone who will read Eliphas Levi's writings after thoroughly assimilating the ideas that have been expounded in our "Fragments,"[1] will find for himself abundant illustrations of the coincidences to which we refer; the obscure language at once breaking out into significance by the light of the clear explanations given under the new method; and Mr. Hargrave Jennings' *Rosicrucians* will in the same way be invested with new significance for readers who take it up with perceptions sharpened by recent study of that science, which, if the new method is persevered with long enough, will hardly any longer deserve to be called "mysticism." But for the purpose of these remarks, their purport may best be illustrated by reference to a passage in a later work which will ultimately be seen, when it comes to be fully understood, to have bridged over the chasm between the old and new methods, *viz.*, *Isis Unveiled*. If the reader will turn to page 455 of the second volume he will find the following passage in exposition of "Hindu ideas of cosmogony":

> Be it remembered— (1) that the universe is not a spontaneous creation, but an evolution from pre-existent matter; (2) that it is only one of an endless series of universes; (3) that eternity is pointed off into grand cycles, in each of which *twelve* transformations of our world occur, following its partial destruction by fire and water, alternately. So that when a new minor period sets in, the earth is so changed, even geologically, as to be practically a new world; (4) that of these twelve transformations, the earth after each of the first six is grosser, and everything on it — man included — more material, than after the preceding one: while after each of the remaining six the contrary is true, both earth and man growing more and more refined and spiritual with each terrestrial change; (5) that when the apex of the cycle is reached, a gradual dissolution takes place, and every living and objective form is destroyed. But when that point is reached, humanity has become fitted to live subjectively as well as objectively. And not humanity alone, but also animals, plants, and every atom. After a time of

[1] " Fragments of Occult Truth," reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vols. 24 and 25, November 1953 to February 1955.

> rest, say the Buddhists, when a new world becomes self-formed, the astral souls of animals, and of all beings, except such as have reached the highest Nirvana, will return on earth again to end their cycles of transformations, and become men in their turn.

Who can have read the recent "Fragments" without being in a position to see that this passage contains a brief *exposé* of the doctrine there elaborated with much greater amplitude! It really contains allusions to a great deal that has not yet been elaborated in the "Fragments"; for the return "to earth" — and to the chain of worlds of which the earth is one — of the astral souls that have not in the preceding *manvantara* attained the highest *Nirvana,* has to do with the destinies of individualities (as distinguished from personalities) that are not launched on the main stream of evolution with which the recent essays on the Evolution of Man have been concerned. And the "Fragments" have not yet dwelt at any length on the vast phenomenon of *Solar manvantaras* and *pralayas* as distinguished from those of the septenary chain of worlds to which our earth belongs. The sun, which is the centre of our system, is the centre of other systems too, and a time comes when all these systems go into *pralaya* together. Therefore the period of activity between two periods of rest which is a *maha* or great cycle for one world only, is a *minor* cycle for the solar system. This leads to a superficial confusion of language sometimes in occult writing, which, however, embodies no confusion of thought and never need for an instant embarrass a reader who remembers the constant similitudes and resemblances connecting microcosms and macrocosms. Again, the reader of the "Fragments" will be puzzled at the reference in the passage cited above to the *twelve* transformations of the planet. Twelve transformations will not at first seem to fit into the septenary divisions to which students of occultism under the new method have been accustomed. But the explanation simply is that the new method is very frank and outspoken about a good many points on which the old system has been very reserved and mysterious. The seventh form of all things has been regarded by the older school of occult writers as too sacred to be written about. A hundred and one quotations might easily be put together to show how profoundly they were impressed with the septenary idea, and what enormous importance they attributed to the number seven in all its bearings. These quotations would serve, on the principle we are now pointing out, as foreshadowing the explanation of the "Fragments" on the sevenfold constitution of man, the world, the system of which it is a part and the system of which

that is a part again. But just as the seventh principle in man has been passed over silently by some occult writers who have referred to only six, so the twelve transformations are the exoteric equivalent of fourteen.[2] And those transformations, again, may be taken to refer either to the cataclysms which intervene between the evolution of the great root-races of earth in the course of one "Round" period, or to the Rounds themselves and their intervening "Obscurations." Here we come upon the micro-macrocosmic principle again. But we are not concerned at present with the anticipation of future teachings or the repetition of those which have been already given out, but merely with the interesting way in which anyone who chooses may go back, either to the relatively obscure expositions of *Isis Unveiled* or the more obscure dissertations of earlier occult works, and trace the identities of the Great Doctrine — which the Theosophical Society, faithful to the promise of its triple programme, is engaged in bringing to light.

WHAT is my inheritance? All that humanity has achieved, all that it has thought and felt, and suffered and taken pleasure in . . . that astonishing adventure of man.

—JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

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[2] Thus, in *esoteric* Buddhism the seven kinds of Wisdom (*Bodh-anga*) are often referred to as six; the seven *qualities* or properties of living bodies also as six; while of the seven states of matter the *esoteric* doctrine says that "strictly speaking there are only *six* states, since the seventh state is the sum total, the condition or aspect of all the other states. When speaking of the "six glories" that "glitter on the incomparable person of Buddha," the Book of *Kiu-te* explains that only *six* are to be mentioned, as the student (Yu-po-sah) has to bear in mind that the *seventh* glory can by no means "glitter" since "it is the *glittering* itself." This latter explanation is sufficient to throw light on all.—*Ed.* [*The Theosophist*]

THE CAVE OF THE ECHOES

A Strange but True Story*

[This story by H. P. Blavatsky appeared first in the *Banner of Light* (Boston) for March 30, 1878, and was reprinted in *The Theosophist* for April 1883.—Eds.]

In one of the distant governments of the Russian empire, in a small town on the borders of Siberia, a mysterious tragedy occurred more than thirty years ago. About six versts from the little town of P——, famous for the wild beauty of its scenery, and for the wealth of its inhabitants — generally proprietors of mines and of iron foundries — stood an aristocratic mansion. Its household consisted of the master, a rich old bachelor, and his brother, who was a widower and the father of two sons and three daughters.

It was known that the proprietor, Mr. Izvertzoff, had adopted his brother's children, and, having formed an especial attachment for his eldest nephew, Nicolas, he had made him the sole heir of his numerous estates.

Time rolled on. The uncle was getting old, the nephew was coming of age. Days and years had passed in monotonous serenity, when, on the hitherto clear horizon of the quiet family, appeared a cloud. On an unlucky day one of the nieces took it into her head to study the zither. The instrument being of purely Teutonic origin, and no teacher of it residing in the neighbourhood, the indulgent uncle sent to St. Petersburg for both. After diligent search only one Professor could be found willing to trust himself in such close proximity to Siberia. It was an old German artist, who, sharing his affections equally between his instrument and a pretty blonde daughter, would part with neither. And thus it came to pass that, one fine morning, the old Professor arrived at the mansion, with his music box under one arm and his fair München leaning on the other.

From that day the little cloud began growing rapidly; for, every vibration of the melodious instrument found a responsive echo in the old bachelor's heart. Music awakens love, they say, and the work begun

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* This story is given from the narrative of an eye-witness, a Russian gentleman, very pious and fully trustworthy. Moreover, the facts are copied from the police records of P———. The eye-witness in question attributes it, of course, partly to divine interference and partly to the Evil One.—H.P.B.

by the zither was completed by München's blue eyes. At the expiration of six months the niece had become an expert zither player, and the uncle was desperately in love.

One morning, gathering his adopted family around him, he embraced them all very tenderly, promised to remember them in his will, and wound up by declaring his unalterable resolution to marry the blue-eyed München. After this he fell upon their necks, and wept in silent rapture. The family, understanding that they were cheated out of the inheritance, also wept; but it was for another cause. Having thus wept, they consoled themselves and tried to rejoice, for the old gentleman was sincerely beloved by all. Not all of them rejoiced, though. Nicolas, who had himself been smitten to the heart by the pretty German, and who found himself defrauded at once of his belle and of his uncle's money, neither rejoiced nor consoled himself, but disappeared for a whole day.

Meanwhile, Mr. Izvertzoff had given orders to prepare his travelling carriage on the following day, and it was whispered that he was going to the chief town of the district, at some distance from his home, with the intention of altering his will. Though very wealthy, he had no superintendent on his estate, but kept his books himself. The same evening after supper, he was heard in his room, angrily scolding his servant, who had been in his service for over thirty years. This man, Ivan, was a native of northern Asia, from Kamschatka; he had been brought up by the family in the Christian religion, and was thought to be very much attached to his master. A few days later, when the first tragic circumstance I am about to relate had brought all the police force to the spot, it was remembered that on that night Ivan was drunk; that his master, who had a horror of this vice, had paternally thrashed him and turned him out of his room, and that Ivan had been seen reeling out of the door and had been heard to mutter threats.

On the vast domain of Mr. Izvertzoff there was a curious cavern, which excited the curiosity of all who visited it. It exists to this day, and is well known to every inhabitant of P——. A pine forest commencing a few feet from the garden gate, climbs in steep terraces up a long range of rocky hills, which it covers with a broad belt of impenetrable vegetation. The grotto leading into the cavern, which is known as the "Cave of the Echoes," is situated about half a mile from the site of the mansion, from which it appears as a small excavation in the hillside, almost hidden by luxuriant plants, but not so completely as to prevent any person entering it from being readily seen from the terrace in

front of the house. Entering the grotto, the explorer finds at the rear a narrow cleft, having passed through which he emerges into a lofty cavern, feebly lighted through fissures in the vaulted roof, fifty feet from the ground. The cavern itself is immense, and would easily hold between two and three thousand people. A part of it, in the days of Mr. Izevertzoff, was paved with flagstones, and was often used in the summer as a ball-room by picnic parties. Of an irregular oval, it gradually narrows into a broad corridor, which runs for several miles underground, opening here and there into other chambers, as large and lofty as the ball-room, but, unlike this, impassable otherwise than in a boat, as they are always full of water. These natural basins have the reputation of being unfathomable.

On the margin of the first of these is a small platform, with several mossy rustic seats arranged on it, and it is from this spot that the phenomenal echoes, which give the cavern its name, are heard in all their weirdness. A word pronounced in a whisper, or even a sigh, is caught up by endless mocking voices, and instead of diminishing in volume, as honest echoes do, the sound grows louder and louder at every successive repetition, until at last it bursts forth like the repercussion of a pistol shot, and recedes in a plaintive wail down the corridor.

On the day in question, Mr. Izvertzoff had mentioned his intention of having a dancing party in this cave on his wedding day, which he had fixed for an early date. On the following morning while preparing for his drive, he was seen by his family entering the grotto, accompanied only by his Siberian servant. Half an hour later, Ivan returned to the mansion for a snuff-box which his master had forgotten in his room, and went back with it to the cave. An hour later the whole house was startled by his loud cries. Pale and dripping with water, Ivan rushed in like a madman, and declared that Mr. Izvertzoff was nowhere to be found in the cave. Thinking he had fallen into the lake, he had dived into the first basin in search of him, and was nearly drowned himself.

The day passed in vain attempts to find the body. The police filled the house, and louder than the rest in his despair was Nicolas, the nephew, who had returned home only to meet the sad tidings.

A dark suspicion fell upon Ivan, the Siberian. He had been struck by his master the night before, and had been heard to swear revenge. He had accompanied him alone to the cave, and when his room was searched, a box full of rich family jewellery, known to have been carefully kept in Mr. Izvertzoff's apartment, was found under Ivan's bed-

ding. Vainly did the serf call God to witness that the box had been given to him in charge by his master himself, just before they proceeded to the cave; that it was the latter's purpose to have the jewellery reset, as he intended it for a wedding present to his bride; and that he, Ivan, would willingly give his own life to recall that of his master, if he knew him to be dead. No heed was paid to him, however, and he was arrested and thrown into prison, upon a charge of murder. There he was left, for under the Russian law a criminal cannot — at any rate, he could not in those days — be sentenced for a crime, however conclusive the circumstantial evidence, unless he confessed his guilt.

After a week had passed in useless search, the family arrayed themselves in deep mourning; and, as the will as originally drawn remained without a codicil, the whole of the property passed into the hands of the nephew. The old teacher and his daughter bore this sudden reverse of fortune with true Germanic phlegm, and prepared to depart. Taking again his zither under one arm, the old man was about to lead away his München by the other, when the nephew stopped him by offering himself as the fair damsel's husband in the place of his departed uncle. The change was found to be an agreeable one, and, without much ado, the young people were married.

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Ten years rolled away, and we meet the happy family once more at the beginning of 1859. The fair München had grown fat and vulgar. From the day of the old man's disappearance, Nicolas had become morose and retired in his habits, and many wondered at the change in him, for now he was never seen to smile. It seemed as if his only aim in life were to find out his uncle's murderer, or rather to bring Ivan to confess his guilt. But the man still persisted that he was innocent.

An only son had been born to the young couple, and a strange child it was. Small, delicate, and ever ailing, his frail life seemed to hang by a thread. When his features were in repose, his resemblance to his uncle was so striking that the members of the family often shrank from him in terror. It was the pale, shrivelled face of a man of sixty upon the shoulders of a child nine years old. He was never seen either to laugh or to play, but, perched in his high chair, would gravely sit there, folding his arms in a way peculiar to the late Mr. Izvertzoff; and thus he would remain for hours, drowsy and motionless. His nurses were often seen furtively crossing themselves at night, upon approaching him, and not one of them would consent to sleep alone with him in the nursery.

His father's behaviour towards him was still more strange. He seemed to love him passionately, and at the same time to hate him bitterly. He seldom embraced or caressed the child, but, with livid cheek and staring eye, he would pass long hours watching him, as the child sat quietly in his corner, in his goblin-like, old-fashioned way.

The child had never left the estate, and few outside the family knew of his existence.

About the middle of July, a tall Hungarian traveller, preceded by a great reputation for eccentricity, wealth and mysterious powers, arrived at the town of P—— from the North, where, it was said, he had resided for many years. He settled in the little town, in company with a Shaman or South Siberian magician, on whom he was said to make mesmeric experiments. He gave dinners and parties, and invariably exhibited his Shaman, of whom he felt very proud, for the amusement of his guests. One day the notables of P—— made an unexpected invasion of the domains of Nicolas Izvertzoff, and requested the loan of his cave for an evening entertainment. Nicolas consented with great reluctance, and only after still greater hesitancy was he prevailed upon to join the party.

The first cavern and the platform beside the bottomless lake glittered with lights. Hundreds of flickering candles and torches, stuck in the clefts of the rocks, illuminated the place and drove the shadows from the mossy nooks and corners, where they had crouched undisturbed for many years. The stalactites on the walls sparkled brightly, and the sleeping echoes were suddenly awakened by a joyous confusion of laughter and conversation. The Shaman, who was never lost sight of by his friend and patron, sat in a corner, entranced as usual. Crouched on a projecting rock, about midway between the entrance and the water, with his lemon-yellow, wrinkled face, flat nose, and thin beard, he looked more like an ugly stone idol than a human being. Many of the company pressed around him and received correct answers to their questions, the Hungarian cheerfully submitting his mesmerized "subject" to cross-examination.

Suddenly one of the party, a lady, remarked that it was in that very cave that old Mr. Izvertzoff had so unaccountably disappeared ten years before. The foreigner appeared interested, and desired to learn more of the circumstances, so Nicolas was sought amid the crowd and led before the eager group. He was the host and he found it impossible to refuse the demanded narrative. He repeated the sad tale in a trembling voice, with a pallid cheek, and tears were seen glittering in

his feverish eyes. The company were greatly affected, and encomiums upon the behaviour of the loving nephew in honouring the memory of his uncle and benefactor were freely circulating in whispers, when suddenly the voice of Nicolas became choked, his eyes started from their sockets, and, with a suppressed groan, he staggered back. Every eye in the crowd followed with curiosity his haggard look, as it fell and remained riveted upon a weazened little face that peeped from behind the back of the Hungarian.

"Where do you come from? Who brought you here, child?" gasped out Nicolas, as pale as death.

"I was in bed, papa; this man came to me, and brought me here in his arms," answered the boy simply, pointing to the Shaman, beside whom he stood upon the rock, and who, with his eyes closed, kept swaying himself to and fro like a living pendulum.

"That is very strange," remarked one of the guests, "for the man has never moved from his place!"

"Good God! what an extraordinary resemblance!" muttered an old resident of the town, a friend of the lost man.

"You lie, child!" fiercely exclaimed the father. "Go to bed; this is no place for you."

"Come, come," interposed the Hungarian, with a strange expression on his face, and encircling with his arm the slender childish figure; "the little fellow has seen the double of my Shaman, which roams sometimes far away from his body, and has mistaken the phantom for the man himself. Let him remain with us for a while."

At these strange words the guests stared at each other in mute surprise, while some piously made the sign of the cross, spitting aside, presumably at the devil and all his works.

"By-the-bye," continued the Hungarian with a peculiar firmness of accent, and addressing the company rather than any one in particular; "why should we not try, with the help of my Shaman, to unravel the mystery hanging over the tragedy? Is the suspected party still lying in prison? What? he has not confessed up to now? This is surely very strange. But now we will learn the truth in a few minutes! Let all keep silent!"

He then approached the Tehuktchene, and immediately began his performance without so much as asking the consent of the master of the

place. The latter stood rooted to the spot, as if petrified with horror, and unable to articulate a word. The suggestion met with general approbation, save from him; and the police inspector, Col. S——, especially approved of the idea.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the mesmerizer in soft tones, "allow me for this once to proceed otherwise than in my general fashion. I will employ the method of native magic. It is more appropriate to this wild place, and far more effective as you will find, than our European method of mesmerization."

Without waiting for an answer, he drew from a bag that never left his person, first a small drum, and then two little phials — one full of fluid, the other empty. With the contents of the former he sprinkled the Shaman, who fell to trembling and nodding more violently than ever. The air was filled with the perfume of spicy odours, and the atmosphere itself seemed to become clearer. Then, to the horror of those present, he approached the Tibetan, and taking a miniature stiletto from his pocket, he plunged the sharp steel into the man's forearm, and drew blood from it, which he caught in the empty phial. When it was half filled, he pressed the orifice of the wound with his thumb, and stopped the flow of blood as easily as if he had corked a bottle, after which he sprinkled the blood over the little boy's head. He then suspended the drum from his neck, and, with two ivory drumsticks, which were covered with magic signs and letters, he began beating a sort of *réveille*, to drum up the spirits, as he said.

The bystanders, half-shocked and half-terrified by these extraordinary proceedings, eagerly crowded round him, and for a few moments a dead silence reigned throughout the lofty cavern. Nicolas, with his face livid and corpse-like, stood speechless as before. The mesmerizer had placed himself between the Shaman and the platform, when he began slowly drumming. The first notes were muffled, and vibrated so softly in the air that they awakened no echo, but the Shaman quickened his pendulum-like motion and the child became restless. The drummer then began a slow chant, low, impressive and solemn.

As the unknown words issued from his lips, the flames of the candles and torches wavered and flickered, until they began dancing in rhythm with the chant. A cold wind came wheezing from the dark corridors beyond the water, leaving a plaintive echo in its trail. Then a sort of nebulous vapour, seeming to ooze from the rocky ground and walls, gathered about the Shaman and the boy. Around the latter the aura was

silvery and transparent, but the cloud which enveloped the former was red and sinister. Approaching nearer to the platform the magician beat a louder roll upon the drum, and this time the echo caught it up with terrific effect! It reverberated near and far in incessant peals; one wail followed another, louder and louder, until the thundering roar seemed the chorus of a thousand demon voices rising from the fathomless depths of the lake. The water itself, whose surface, illuminated by many lights, had previously been smooth as a sheet of glass, became suddenly agitated, as if a powerful gust of wind had swept over its unruffled face. Another chant, and a roll of the drum, and the mountain trembled to its foundation with the cannon-like peals which rolled through the dark and distant corridors. The Shaman's body rose two yards in the air, and nodding and swaying, sat, self-suspended like an apparition. But the transformation which now occurred in the boy chilled everyone, as they speechlessly watched the scene. The silvery cloud about the boy now seemed to lift him, too, into the air; but, unlike the Shaman, his feet never left the ground. The child began to grow, as though the work of years was miraculously accomplished in a few seconds. He became tall and large, and his senile features grew older with the aging of his body. A few more seconds, and the youthful form had entirely disappeared. It was totally absorbed in another individuality, and, to the horror of those present who had been familiar with his appearance, this individuality was that of old Mr. Izvertzoff, and on his temple was a large gaping wound, from which trickled great drops of blood.

This phantom moved towards Nicolas, till it stood directly in front of him, while he, with his hair standing erect, with the look of a madman gazed at his own son, transformed into his uncle. The sepulchral silence was broken by the Hungarian, who, addressing the child phantom, asked him, in solemn voice:

"In the name of the great Master, of him who has all power, answer the truth, and nothing but the truth. Restless spirit, hast thou been lost by accident, or foully murdered?"

The spectre's lips moved, but it was the echo which answered for them in lugubrious shouts: "Murdered! murdered!! mur-der-ed!!!"

"Where? How? By whom?" asked the conjuror.

The apparition pointed a finger at Nicolas and, without removing its gaze or lowering its arms, retreated backwards slowly towards the lake. At every step it took, the younger Izvertzoff, as if compelled by some irresistible fascination, advanced a step towards it, until the

phantom reached the lake, and the next moment was seen gliding on its surface. It was a fearful, ghostly scene!

When he had come within two steps of the brink of the watery abyss, a violent convulsion ran through the frame of the guilty man. Flinging himself upon his knees, he clung to one of the rustic seats with a desperate clutch, and staring wildly, uttered a long piercing cry of agony. The phantom now remained motionless on the water, and bending its extended finger, slowly beckoned him to come. Crouched in abject terror, the wretched man shrieked until the cavern rang again and again: "I did not . . . No, I did not murder you!"

Then came a splash, and now it was the boy who was in the dark water, struggling for his life, in the middle of the lake, with the same motionless stern apparition brooding over him.

"Papa! papa! Save me . . . I am drowning! . . ." cried a piteous little voice amid the uproar of the mocking echoes.

"My boy!" shrieked Nicolas, in the accents of a maniac, springing to his feet. "My boy! Save him! Oh, save him! . . . Yes, I confess . . . I am the murderer . . . It is I who killed him!"

Another splash, and the phantom disappeared. With a cry of horror the company rushed towards the platform; but their feet were suddenly rooted to the ground as they saw amid the swirling eddies a whitish shapeless mass holding the murderer and the boy in tight embrace, and slowly sinking into the bottomless lake. . . .

On the morning after these occurrences, when, after a sleepless night, some of the party visited the residence of the Hungarian gentleman, they found it closed and deserted. He and the Shaman had disappeared. Many are among the old inhabitants of P—— who remember him; the Police Inspector, Col. S——, dying a few years ago in the full assurance that the noble traveller was the devil. To add to the general consternation, the Izvertzoff mansion took fire on that same night and was completely destroyed. The Archbishop performed the ceremony of exorcism, but the locality is considered accursed to this day. The Government investigated the facts, and — ordered silence.

Two men look out through the self-same bars;
One sees the mud, and one the stars.

—Frederick Langbridge

THE THREE AVENUES TO ACTION

> Guarding speech, controlling mind, not doing wrong with the body, a man keeps the three avenues to action clear and thus finds the Path shown by the Wise.
>
> —*The Dhammapada*

THE ABOVE QUOTATION advises the aspirant to keep clear the three avenues of speech, mind and body so that the immortal soul of man may have proper instruments, proper channels to carry on its physical, mental and spiritual work and find the Path shown by the Wise. It is the inner Path of wisdom and compassion, of purity and peace, of service and sacrifice, of harmony and happiness. It has been not only indicated by the Wise but actually trodden by them. Thus we can see the need to do the same if we are in earnest to find the path.

These three avenues or channels are not separate from one another but are closely linked, though not understood as such by many, and hence the chaotic condition of the world. There must be perfect harmony between thoughts, words and deeds. It is usually considered that actions are performed only on the physical plane by one or another organ of action. From the Theosophical point of view thoughts are the seeds of action. These seeds are sown in the minds of men, and words and deeds are but their visible effects. Thought power is the greatest force for good or evil, and if speech and action depend on it, how much more important to begin with the purification of the mind! It is stated in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Strive with thy thoughts unclean before they overpower thee" — a very strong warning to indicate how thoughts can drag the soul down. Only soul-wisdom can purify the mind and set it right. Hence the necessity to practise daily the purification of the mind. A pure and well-directed mind is a precious possession of the soul, and it is considered to render greater service than even a mother or a father can; so also a wrongly directed mind can do us greater harm than anyone else. Therefore it is necessary to understand that we are duty-bound not to corrupt the mind but always to elevate it in the service of the soul.

H.P.B. states in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 280):

> Man ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of *Ideas*, by becoming to the best of his ability a *co-worker with nature* in the cyclic task.

Plato said that Ideas rule the world. Noble and high ideas and ideals bring about noble and loving deeds that would help the world. Speech is closely connected with mind. When man had not acquired the light of self-consciousness he could only utter sounds, not articulate speech. It was only after the divine intelligences lit up the mind of man that he developed speech. Untruthful speech, evil speech, ugly speech, scandal, gossip, etc., are the result of a corrupt mind. "Truth is the speech of inward purity." Whether the speech is deliberate or impulsive, pure or impure, it is the result of the mental attitude.

Therefore the need to strive to help the "divine evolution of *Ideas*" and to become a co-worker with Nature. The sun and the moon and the stars, the seasons, the trees and the plants, the brooks, the rivers and the oceans, all perform their tasks cyclically, harmoniously, in an orderly, methodical way. Cannot we also become co-workers with Nature? We have our days and nights, sleeping and waking, working and resting; if in the performance of all our duties, high or low, we follow the beautiful pattern of Mother Nature, and observe the great law of cycles and the law of cause and effect, we too can become co-workers with Nature, and help the divine evolution of Ideas through example and precept. It is a great task, but a very important one, and the sooner we begin it the better for the world. "Causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World." The world is in need of great ideas which would change the minds and hearts of people and bring about that real unity for which all the great Teachers have come, giving the selfsame teachings, but human nature does not seem to change! It is the duty of students of Theosophy to keep on circulating the divine ideas of the mighty philosophy, so that they may touch a soul here and there and awaken him to his responsibility.

Next, we are asked to do no wrong with the body. The body has to be used as a living temple of a living god. It has to be a proper channel for the work of helping our fellow beings, for lifting them up to a higher level of consciousness and real life. Everything has to be achieved while in the body. The seven principles in man are combined while in the body. The human soul has to acquire immortality while in the body. The after-death state is but a period of assimilation; therefore all our efforts in the right direction, on all planes, must be deliberately put forth while in the body. Thus it can be understood why we are instructed to do no wrong with the body. Neither self-indulgence nor undue self-mortification, but moderation in all things is prescribed by all the great

Teachers, as by Sri Krishna in the Sixth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The body has to be active and alert, the mind tranquil, the soul as a firm and flaming diamond. Then only can the soul reflect the light of the Divine Parent and find the Path.

"The Path is one for all, the means to reach the goal must vary with the Pilgrims," says *The Voice of the Silence*. One may prefer a steeper climb, another may choose winding ways and go slower. One may find the path of knowledge more suitable to him; another, the path of action; and a third, the path of devotion. Ultimately, they will all lead to the destined goal and merge into one path, the path of royal knowledge and of royal mystery. The important point to remember is to continue with the triple discipline with patience and perseverance, till one beholds the glorious light Nirvanic. Then comes the final choice, whether to enjoy the rest and bliss of Nirvana, or to return to earth to help suffering humanity, to point out the path to other souls, to teach them the meaning and purpose and goal of life, and bring them out from darkness to light, from ignorance to wisdom, and from death to immortality.

Enter the Path! There spring the healing streams
Quenching all thirst! there bloom th' immortal flowers
Carpeting all the way with joy! there throng
Swiftest and sweetest hours!

ONE LESSON we are invariably taught by all natural things, however approached or viewed — that the work of the great Spirit of nature is as deep and unapproachable in the lowest as in the noblest objects — that the Divine mind is as visible in its full energy of operation on every lowly bank and mouldering stone, as in the lifting of the pillars of heaven, and settling the foundation of the earth; and that, to the rightly perceiving mind, there is the same infinity, the same majesty, the same power, the same unity, and the same perfection manifest in the casting of the clay as in the scattering of the cloud, in the mouldering of the dust as in the kindling of the day-star.

—JOHN RUSKIN

THE SAGE WHO SAW THE OBVIOUS

IV.—THE KEY OF HARMONY

To THE SAGE with the gift for seeing the obvious there was one thing that had never been that. Throughout his long life he had seen no need to read very many books. One only, and that a small one, afforded such rich sustenance to his heart that he was content to return to it constantly and to pore over it so deeply that his speech on even the simplest matters often held echoes of the Voice of the Silence.

He was sitting late one evening, pondering some stanzas to which he frequently returned, when a car drew up at the door, which was now closed against the flooding silvery moonlight. Presently there was a knock, and the Sage, who knew no fear, though a caller at that hour was unusual, rose and opened it, revealing a tall young man on the step, who, even to dim eyes, had something familiar about him.

"Pardon this intrusion," said the stranger. "I need help, and time presses. You may remember me, perhaps. I am Dilip, whom you knew as a schoolboy on holiday visits to my late grandfather, your landlord."

"Welcome, Dilip!" the Sage said cordially, with a gesture of invitation. "Come sit at peace awhile in this humble room of mine and tell me how I can aid you amidst the troubles that beset you."

"Of course you have heard of them," rejoined the young man sullenly, taking the chair the Sage indicated. "The newsmen have certainly made the most of them. But I am not so much to blame as you may think."

"You were unprepared, I fear, my son, for the great responsibility suddenly thrust upon you. The deaths of your father and elder brother in that disaster changed the entire current of your life, did they not?" the Sage replied quietly.

Totally," said Dilip, frowning. "As you know, I was in Paris, studying music. Now I am nominal head of my father's great industrial empire, which does not interest me. I tell you, sir, my life is ruined."

"Not so," rejoined the Sage. "But you are in trouble, I grant you. What have you done, my son, to turn your workers thus against you in so short a space of time?"

"You have not heard the worst," said Dilip bitterly. "I dare say you only know them to be dissatisfied. But a couple of hours ago I

learnt of a plot against my life, an act of mad revenge because they say I have deceived them."

"And have you?" the Sage asked simply.

Dilip stared at him in angry surprise.

"On the contrary, full six months ago, I promised them all they asked. Ay, and almost weekly, ever since, I have promised more. Every demand they put forward I vowed I would fulfil."

"And how much," the Sage said evenly, "of this promising, Dilip, have you implemented?"

"So far, none," was the young man's frank reply. "It was only to content them, to gain time, till I knew my own mind better. I may decide to return to Paris. Or I may feel it my duty to continue my father's work. After all, it provides the livelihood of many. But now that they distrust me so, what am I to do?"

The Sage could hardly refrain from smiling. "My son," he said, "why ask a needless question? Surely it is obvious that you must proceed to keep your promises. Fulfil your words with acts."

"If —" began Dilip. Then he stopped. It seemed to him that something strange was happening. He might not have thought so if he had known the Sage more intimately, especially if he had known the old man's favourite reading. All he was aware of at the moment, however, was that a deep hush had fallen on the room, and that the very lamp seemed to burn with a curiously still flame, though a tiny night-breeze stole through the netting at the window. In the cave of the heart the Sage was hearing the Voice he loved so dearly, and, as It spoke in silence, so he murmured the words aloud, Dilip losing some, but catching a single sentence.

"Shila, the key of Harmony in word and act, the key that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action."

"Ah," sighed Dilip, "harmony!" And his thoughts took wing to a familiar studio far away, to his music-making, with his dear piano as sole companion. "I believe," he said, "I love every string of it."

He, too, had spoken aloud. The Sage opened his eyes and regarded him. "What is in your mind, my son?" he asked gently, and when Dilip had told him, he was swift to use the opportunity.

"Dilip," he said, "in music, I doubt not you know well the key of harmony. Why omit it in life? Surely you know that word and act

must harmonize. If you heard what I was repeating just now, that one of the Golden Precepts, you would hear that such harmony 'leaves no further room for Karmic action.' You have discarded that key recently and are learning harshly what Karmic action follows. Continue to ignore it, and from that action will come more, by Karmic law. But rather, I entreat you, Dilip, use it, for it 'counterbalances the cause and the effect.' Whatever you do ultimately as regards your own career or your father's business, fulfil your promises in the meantime, and so ensure a state of equilibrium and goodwill."

Dilip was not deaf to this appeal. He knew that his father's workmen had served faithfully in the past. But he had meant them no ill. He had, at the outset, intended to keep his promises. It was only that, being torn in two directions, he felt so harried, so confused, and, having promised, had somehow shrunk from further action. "After all," he thought, "I was only playing for time."

He took up the word "playing" and tried to justify himself. "Sir," he said, "I have earned your disapproval. But I had little say in the matter, you must allow. All has come about through a tragic accident. I may not have reacted well — you obviously think I haven't — but if I may be allowed to speak in terms that come naturally to me, one doesn't blame a piano string if it sounds discordant because of a finger falling accidentally on the key."

The Sage's eyes did not close, but a far-away look came into them. He spoke slowly, and even the resentful, troubled Dilip was aware that his lips but formed the words his inmost heart was hearing.

"The string that fails to answer 'neath the Master's touch in dulcet harmony with all the others, breaks — and is cast away."

Dilip leapt to his feet. "Enough!" he cried. "That string I will not be." Sudden resolution strengthened his face. "Sir, I must make haste. Permit me to thank you and take my leave."

The Sage nodded his white head. "You go, my son," he said questioningly, "to *act*?"

"To act," said Dilip firmly. Smilling, he added, "to use the key of Harmony," and with that he was out of the room and making for his car with young flying feet.

"To use the key of Harmony," repeated the Sage, gazing through the open door at the fair moon. " 'Tis well, my son. Ay, truly, 'tis very well. *'So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives.'* "

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948 by the United Nations General Assembly, was 25 years old on December 10, 1973. This noble document, though not binding on governments, is recognized by the Member States of the United Nations as "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations."

Professor René Cassin, winner of the 1968 Nobel Peace Prize, who has dedicated most of his life to the struggle for human rights and who played an important part in drawing up the Declaration, in an interview with the editor of *Unesco Features,* Pierrette Posmowski, discusses the significance of the Declaration, progress made in the 25 years since its adoption, and outstanding problems besetting human rights today.

Referring to the improvements brought about by the Declaration Professor Cassin said:

> Initially, the Declaration was a protest. But very soon it became clear that this protest should not be purely passive, that it must affirm the dignity of all human beings — those in colonial territories, and in the independent developing countries, as well as men and women in the countries that are ostensibly most advanced.
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> That was the original aim, and on this level the Declaration can be said to have brought about real progress. Nations which later achieved independence drew inspiration from the Universal Declaration, and a great many of them incorporated its provisions into their new constitutions.
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> For the first time in the history of mankind, all the nations of the world — whether Marxist, Christian, or subscribing to other political or religious beliefs — had reached agreement on a certain number of principles. . . . Instead of confining itself to generalities, as had been the case with most of the declarations drawn up during the 19th century, the world community asserted its right to concern itself with what happens *inside* a country. . . . This right to be concerned exists and is recognized — as an affirmation of human solidarity. . . . Many nations, whether prompted or not by the Declaration, have adopted laws to improve the human condition.

In answer to the question, "What principles [of the Declaration] are still furthest from being applied today?" Professor Cassin said:

> There are many. Take the right to life, for example. We know

that there are many arbitrary arrests, slavery is still being practised, that many people continue to work under inhuman conditions, that the lives and well-being of countless human beings are not sufficiently protected. In particular, we know that famine is decimating large populations, and that human solidarity is not sufficiently operative.

In addition to the right to life, there is the individual's right to a proper status in the community: residence, nationality, marriage, divorce, private property, freedom and travel. . . .

In the third place, there is the question of civic liberties: freedom of expression, freedom of belief, freedom to take part in political life. How many countries prevent private citizens from exercising these freedoms? . . . .

I've left until last a fourth kind of freedom — economic, social and cultural rights. By these I mean the right every human being has to education and to decent wages; the right of children to protection and of old people to material security. These things are not only freedoms; they are debts owed to individuals by society. . . .

Finally, I would like to stress the principle of non-discrimination. The Universal Declaration reaffirms the principle of liberty, equality and fraternity, but its authors were careful to add the word *non-discrimination*, so as to indicate clearly that all human beings are equal everywhere. . . .

Non-discrimination has become a vital issue. . . . Obviously, the psychological aspect of the question is very important. For the struggle against discrimination hinges on the citizens' conscience and reason. This fight must be waged on every front: we must all control the temptation to give in to certain impulses; we must remember that every man is our brother, whether he is black or yellow, ugly or handsome, a member of one religion or another; and that he embodies the common dignity of man which should never be violated. It is up to us to fight against discrimination — especially through education and by spreading knowledge.

Is there any hope of a solution to the myriad problems that arise from the curse of discrimination, which no country can claim to have eliminated entirely, unless we bear in mind, and hold continually before the minds of people everywhere, what Theosophy has to teach us concerning the common origin of Man?

The worldwide crisis in education has become a much-debated topic. The symptoms are either the outbursts of violence, or indifference, or permissiveness, depending on the temperament of the student groups and the concrete problems they face. What are the students revolting against? In an article on "The Crisis in Education" (*The Times of India*, December 30, 1973) Joseph Panthackal writes:

> Youth is fighting for a new education based on freedom, creativity; equality and fellowship. A new consciousness is dawning on students that the new education cannot be achieved unless the existing social structures are broken down. We are experiencing the birth-pangs of a new education conceived by the power of a new vision of man.
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> According to an inquiry into education conducted by UNESCO in 1971, there has never been so much demand for education (between 1960 and 1968 the total number of school-age children in the world increased by 20 per cent) and there has never been so much dissatisfaction with, and rejection of, education by the young. . . .
>
> Now the authentic human feelings of the students are coming to the foreground. They are realizing that they are neither the tools of the Establishment to preserve the *status quo* nor machines to be fed with mere information. A teen-age student tells her geography teacher: "Your text-book covers all the world, but makes no mention of hunger, monopolies, political systems or racialism. . . ." The students' quest goes beyond the mere facts of geography to man and his problems. One of the leaders of the international student movement says: "It is absurd to develop education while maintaining a social structure that is almost universally unjust."
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> Thus, youth aims at a radical transformation of the existing unjust structures of the world society in which a minority oppresses a majority economically (30 per cent of the world population monopolizes 85 per cent of the world's wealth), culturally (the mighty western culture) and politically (capitalism and totalitarianism). Students know that they are part of this inherently oppressive system. To conform to the *status quo* is to promote dehumanization; to rebel is to participate in the liberation of man.
>
> The crisis in education has a special urgency in our country. . . . The present generation of students, having been exposed to the ideology of democratic socialism, has begun to develop a new consciousness of freedom, equality and fellowship. Their consciousness is neither articulate nor clear and hence often they are mis-

led by interested parties. However, they express their resentment against traditional education in violent protests which often culminate in desecrating the sacred guru and his institution.

Further, the traditional education system is creating more and more frustrations among the majority of students. They painfully realize that academic degrees for which they spend the best part of their youth are becoming worthless bits of paper in the present socio-economic condition. According to employment registration on June 1, 1971, there were 2,053,400 unemployed educated youth in our country....

The evolving awareness of youth is that man is a learning being. He does not need to be pulled or pushed about — education is no more a violent process — he *learns* freely and spontaneously if a favourable situation is given. Ivan Illich, the well-known radical thinker, says, "The touchstone of mutation in education is the honest recognition that most people learn most of the time when they do what they enjoy doing." Hence the field of education is to be broadened according to the wide interests of man. Moreover, the means of learning — books, films, lectures, and so on are to be made available to all. Accessibility is the watchword of the new education. The learner continues to learn and seek without ever coming to a stop. Now the traditional schools lose much of their meaning. For they cease to be centres of teaching; they become centres of learning. They serve to initiate the learner to more efficient self-teaching. So also, the centres of higher education are no more degree-distributing factories but study clubs and circles of enterprising learners. The stress is on *man, the learner*. It is the rediscovery of the subjectivity of man in education....

To be authentic to one's essence is to share one's essence in the community. Learning becomes a communitarian process. Learning happens in the community, with the community and for the community. Education is the movement of the whole society. It is a common effort to be more fully man....

The success of the restructuring of society and of the educational system depends on the potential of the current system to discover and articulate an ideology from the aspirations of revolting youths in our country and in the world. It is only through showing clearly to the people what they confusedly perceive and look for that we will be able to achieve the motivation necessary to give direction and power to isolated revolts and effect a thorough change in society.

There has been much debate about the uses and abuses of science, but little attention has been paid to the anti-science movement, which rejects science altogether and which may be a growing force in modern society. Professor Stephen Cotgrove of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences in the University of Bath, England, writes of this movement in *New Scientist* (July 12, 1973):

> The primary preoccupation of the search for an "alternative" society in recent years has, of course, been its concern with exploring new forms of human freedom. Its thrust has been directed against the constraints of outworn institutions and ideas. But this has extended well beyond an attack on the rigidities of the technological society and the domination of the expert. Whether such ideas prove from the hindsight of history to have been prophetic or trivial is a matter for speculation. But the fact that they have caught the imagination, particularly of some of the well-educated young, indicates possible portents for the future. Moreover, it will be argued, the latent antagonism to science is sufficiently widespread that it cannot be dismissed as the aberration of a few hippies or reactionaries.
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> Much of the protest is, of course, critical of the uses of science rather than of science as such. . . . But the protest is more than a plea for a socially responsible science, harnessed to the promotion of human welfare. It is an attack on the technocratic society which is seen as the coldly rational and inhuman world of technology in which human ends are lost sight of in the search for rational techniques and bureaucratic efficiency. . . .
>
> The attack on technology is not necessarily an attack on reason and rationality as such. Rather, it is an attack on the preoccupation in modern societies with technical means to the exclusion of human values and human ends. It is an attack on a society dominated by technique. But it is science which underpins technology and provides the fundamental knowledge for technological application. It is in this sense that science has become the contemporary ideology — the justification and legitimation for the technological society and above all for the technocrats who have become its chief functionaries. A technocracy, argues Theodore Roszak in *The Making of a Counter-culture* (Faber, 1968), is "a society in which those who govern justify themselves by appeal to scientific forms of knowledge. And beyond the authority of science there is no appeal." Science itself then comes to be seen as part of the apparatus of domination; the justification for tech-

niques and technologies which are imposed without consideration for other human values.

It is possible to argue that there is a basic logical connectedness between those who seek to liberate and express the human spirit and opposition to limiting and restricting structures, including highly structured forms of thought. And science can be seen as an authoritative body of knowledge which structures both the beliefs and practices of its adherents in a way markedly similar to theology. The search then extends to ways of liberating the human mind and imagination from what are seen as shackles of rigid modes of thought. . . .

What is clear is that the future of science cannot be divorced from its social context. Yet the majority of our science undergraduates continue to be educated in narrow honours schools, largely oblivious to the sword of Damocles which hangs over their heads, worried only about careers. Moreover, the study of the relations between science and society remains largely neglected in most universities (though there are notable exceptions), and is often too narrowly conceived as an exploration mainly of the impact of inventions and problems of policy. Without a much greater understanding of such relations, the future of science and technology, and of the societies which are so greatly influenced by them, must remain largely at the mercy of historical drift, short-term exigent reactions to unforeseen crises, and possibly growing radical dissent.

In our age, in spite of all the technological and scientific advance, many traditional beliefs, dubbed by some today as "superstition," still remain, though with 20th-century modifications. In an article entitled "Dark Things on the Fringes of Experience" (*The Daily Telegraph Magazine,* September 21, 1973), Byron Rogers examines the extent to which such old beliefs persist today:

Definitions are central to any discussion of superstition. One man's belief, as Voltaire said, is another man's superstition. "A Frenchman travelling in Italy finds almost everything superstitious. The Archbishop of Canterbury claims that the Archbishop of Paris is superstitious; the Presbyterians levy the same reproach against his Grace of Canterbury. . . ." The frontiers of superstition change constantly. Few people would believe today that it is possible to work out the Day of Creation from evidence provided in

the Bible; yet for much of the last century this belief was stoutly defended.

Superstitions survive, despite the encroachments of secularity, science and the media. Danger, uncertainty, fear bring them surging up again, as in times of war and ill-health. Often, in the classic dictionary definition, they are beliefs sheepishly clung to in spite of the fact that no rationality or scientific evidence underwrites them. . . .

Yet there is little joy in superstitions. Usually they are an attempt to propitiate, or ward off, something — or just to ensure good fortune. They are difficult to index as few people are prepared to talk about their superstitions, unless they are shared by a great number of people.

While some beliefs, says Theosophy, are as degrading as they are ridiculous and absurd, others, such as the belief in fairies, or in second sight, which are characterized by many as "pure superstition" are hardly so. For those, however, who believe in the invisible kingdom of Nature Spirits, fairies are a reality. Variously known as elementals, *devatas*, djinn, sylvans, elves, dwarfs, trolls, goblins, moss people, etc., these invisible beings under certain conditions take objective shape and become visible to people who have always believed in them — *e.g.*, in old countries like Ireland.

As for second sight, there are so many well-documented instances of it that it is impossible to dismiss them all as superstition. The author of the article in *The Daily Telegraph Magazine* is one of those who believes that second sight cannot be accounted for rationally, and that "pressure of belief in a society can make people see things." All the same, rational explanations do exist for those who understand that there is more to a human being and to Nature than meets the eye.

As for conditions in Britain, we are told:

It is difficult to work out just how superstitious Britain is today. The only large-scale survey was undertaken by Geoffrey Gorer who in 1955 invited readers of a newspaper to answer a lengthy questionnaire. More than 14,000 replied. He found that one in six believed in ghosts, and nearly one quarter were uncertain as to whether or not they existed. One person in three had been to a fortune-teller. About two-thirds read their horoscope at least occasionally. One person in ten believed they had lucky days or numbers.

A psychologist investigated the superstition of not passing

under a ladder simply by putting a ladder against a wall over a pavement. There was no one up the ladder, yet 37 of the 51 people who passed by in 15 minutes stepped into the road....

Modern technology seems to have done little to diminish superstition. Perhaps it is a case of wanting to believe in the strange and the wonderful and the dreadful. Perhaps it is a case of just having to. As Sanderson remarked: "One might say that more highly-educated people are less superstitious; but the more I observe my fellow dons the less I am convinced of this. The logic that mankind has pieced together so painfully is easily broken through."

Perhaps complete rationality, like the Golden Age and the Just City, is out of reach of humankind. If anything goes wrong, like disaster or disease (magicians, as Defoe noted, throve during the Plague), then the old terrors lurch back. Perhaps they will always be there, beyond the light, out of reach of faith, or knowledge, or even humour, their greatest enemy.

Born in this age, we are naturally prone to suffer from its superstitions; and born in a particular geographical area we also suffer from its superstitions. Superstitions are *skandhaic* and belong to the personal man. The Inner Manasic Ego, being a pure Thinker, is not fettered by superstitions and the dogmatism and fanaticism born of them. Superstitions die hard. We need gallons of the waters of knowledge and tons of the soap of exercise before our *skandhas* become transmuted, and the personality stands free from the incubus of superstitions.

That air pollution has adverse effects on the physical health of all those who breathe it daily, especially of people with respiratory ailments, is evident. Now two separate studies suggest that a polluted atmosphere may have psychological as well as physical effects. Scientists now say that air pollution may cause crime waves, mental depression, divorce, even suicide. (*Science Digest*, October 1973)

The first study, reported in *Behaviour Today*, found a significant correlation between the level of oxidants in the atmosphere and a city's crime rate. After charting the monthly rate of assaults and the levels of oxidants in the city of Newark for a year, psychiatry student Robert Jarmon of the New Jersey Medical School found that the peaks and valleys of the assault graph were paralleled by highs and lows in the changing levels of day-to-day air pollution.

While his study does not establish a definite causal link between ai pollution and crime, Jarmon points out that of the variables he studied such as precipitation, day of the week and time of year, only pollutio showed such a close correlation.

A second study, conducted by Dr. Leroy Schieler of South Seattl Community College, was more specific and found a close correlation be tween hydrogen sulfide pollution and mental depression, crime, divorc and even suicide. Among the variables that contribute to high concen trations of hydrogen sulfide in the air are large amounts of sulfur po lutants such as those poured out by smelting operations, pulp mills, c sationary power sources, and a highly acidic soil that readily release the gas to the air.

At what cost all our vaunted progress!

The University of Texas has found that college students with th highest anxiety levels are the ones who take their degrees in psycholog while engineering students exhibit the lowest level of anxiety. (*Unesc Features,* No. 655)

Assistant Professor Joseph M. Horn, who conducted the surve said that about 1,600 university students completed a personality i ventory measuring extroversion-introversion differences and pronene to anxiety. Dr. Horn found that in descending order of anxiety ps chology students were at the top followed by other social and behaviour science students, then those reading business, education, and lastl engineering.

"That confirmed for me," Dr. Horn said, "that students chose the vocations according to personality attributes. The differences are a ready there before they enter college."

Besides the personality test, Dr. Horn administered another test th reveals whether a person believes his life is controlled more by extern events than by internal factors. He found a high correlation betwe the anxiety-proneness of psychology students and their belief that e ternal events represent the major factors in shaping people's lives.
