

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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OUR POSSESSIONS

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IN this world mortals crave for possessions—money, and the things which it can purchase; these satisfy the senses. Using the highest faculty known to them, mind-power, men and women use it for the fulfilment of their desires.

The personality and its possessions coalesce to satisfy the animal nature—tasty viands, attractive apparel, the charms of sounds and scents, and a self-identifying attachment for children, wife and household. The ordinary person lives for these. He considers himself happy if he is able to satisfy his wants; he goes so far as to look upon his wants as his needs. To have a full life of ease and contentment is his ideal. In securing his possessions he competes and he does not hesitate to elbow out of his way those fellow men who seem to him to be obstructing his getting what he is after. Thus the thirst for possessions and the enjoyment of them develop in him selfishness and—increasing selfishness. Success in this acquisitive endeavour develops pride. Therefore the human personality is called both selfish and egotistic; it follows the specious formula: “Might is Right.”

Personal possessions are one's own cherished property. These are used to obtain other possessions. Thus money is used to obtain fame, fame to obtain power, and so on. But the Soul is powerful and patient and at last the Inner Ego overcomes the egotistic personality. Meanwhile selfishness is bound to lead a person to blunder and to sin. And sin is overtaken by suffering. So God and Nature fulfil themselves.

The sense of personal possessions is the dark shadow, ugly and misleading, of Soul possessions. The characteristic of these is the

reverse of that of sense possessions. Soul possessions grow as they are shared, unlike sense possessions which diminish in the sharing. He who desires Soul possessions is dear to Krishna.

We must note that the *Gita* seriously warns us against falling prey to the inclinations of the senses; they are wombs of pain. Of the four classes of men who are dear to Krishna the first are those who are afflicted and who suffer. In their agony they learn that the fruits of sense life, selfishness, pride and the spirit of competition, turn to dust and ashes in the mouth. Therefore they look for the power that will heal the great disease.

So the sufferer passes on into the second class—he desires Wisdom, he seeks for Truth. Soon he learns that it is not by merely parting company with his sense possessions that he can unfold peace and contentment and the spirit of bliss. Control of craving is one thing; unfolding divine virtues altogether another. His yearning for Wisdom reveals to him that he has to gain powers and faculties which are aspects of Soul possessions and which knowledge reveals. Not only the negating of the lower but the positive evolving of the higher has to be undertaken.

What kind of possessions must one yearn for to draw to himself the benediction of Krishna? We find a good answer in *Light on the Path*, which commands the would-be occultist to “desire possessions above all.” And it is added:

But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united. Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self. (p. 4)

Theosophy teaches that Wisdom is one such possession; and that it is acquired by study and meditation. Compassion is another, without which the “united spirit of life” cannot be felt and our “only true self” cannot be realized. The third is Good Company—the friendship of those who are striving to tread the Path, which means the nearness of the Holy Ones. Wisdom and Compassion do not suffice for this achievement. What a disciple singly and alone is not able to accomplish becomes possible of realization in the company of co-disciples. The ever-gracious Gurus, therefore, bring the ardent aspirants together. The human soul for its real unfoldment must find like-minded and like-hearted aspirants, and the converging lines of Karma are used by the Teachers to get him what he needs—co-workers, associates and

companions. These become for him, so to speak, the channel for hearing the voice of his own Divinity, for feeling the Presence of the Gurus.

Where two or three are gathered together in His name, the presence of Christ is felt. Where five men assemble to contemplate and speak about the Supreme, Parameshwara is present. This experience results from the unity practised by the disciples through the institution of *Sat-Sang*, Good Company. *Bhakti-Prasad*, the Grace of Devotion, is the supreme binding power which creates that unison among the devoted disciples of the Gurus. A disciple by study and meditation can acquire Wisdom; by his own inner effort at application he unfolds reverence for Nature, gratitude to the Powers that be, etc., and so also Compassion; but he still needs that force by which he can feel himself "abiding in all things, all things in Self," by which he can bear love to men as though they were his brother-pupils. The aspirant and devotee cannot, in one step, learn to "be in full accord with all that lives"; he has to have a starting point, and this he finds in practising unity with those who in mind and in heart are akin to him. This is implicit in the inspiring verses of the tenth chapter of the *Gita*:

...the wise gifted with spiritual wisdom worship me; their very hearts and minds are in me; enlightening one another and constantly speaking of me, they are full of enjoyment and satisfaction. To them thus always devoted to me, who worship me with love, I give that mental devotion by which they come to me. For them do I out of my compassion, standing within their hearts, destroy the darkness which springs from ignorance by the brilliant lamp of spiritual discernment.

In the Christian Psalm 133 we get a similar statement about the prevalence of unity among the disciples:

Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

The great Enlightened One has the same teaching. In *The Dhammapada*, Verse 194, we are told:

Blessed is the birth of the Buddha; blessed is the teaching of the Good Law; blessed is the concord in the Order; blessed is the austerity of Those who live in concord.

Worldly possessions bring the mortal man power over other

persons; these possessions afford him some pleasure and satisfaction and peace; but they also increase the force of greed, and so the pleasure passes, satisfaction evaporates and peace recedes; the gnawing urge for more "which will bring me lasting peace" works in his blood.

Soul possessions also bring power—that power which develops true humility. That power which the disciple covets "is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." Soul possessions also unfold peace—"that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the Soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons."

If study and meditation bestow the gift of Wisdom, if application and practice unfold the power of Compassion, efforts at promulgation and service of Theosophy bring one the company of co-students and devotees and, united with them, he learns slowly the secret teaching of how to develop the sense and spirit of unity with all that lives and breathes.

LIFE does not need comfort, when it can be offered meaning, nor pleasure, when it can be shown purpose. Reveal what is the purpose of existence and how he may attain it—the steps he must take—and man will go forward again, hardily, happily, knowing that he has found what he must have—intentional living—and knowing that an effort, which takes all his energy because it is worth his full and constant concentration, is the only life deserving the devotion, satisfying the nature and developing the potentialities of a self-conscious being.

—ANONYMOUS

PRAYER—PROPITIATION—ADORATION

Pray not! the darkness will not brighten! Ask
Nought from the Silence, for it cannot speak!
Vex not your mournful minds with pious pains!
Ah! Brothers, Sisters! seek

Nought from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,
Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruits and cakes;
Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
Each man his prison makes.

—*The Light of Asia*

The only God we must recognize and pray to, or rather act in unison with, is that spirit of God of which our body is the temple, and in which it dwelleth.

—*The Key to Theosophy*

THERE is an innate belief that there exist Divine Powers and Forces which, though unseen and impalpable, are continuously engaged in the governance of both Kosmos and men. The belief persists that it is through the agency of these high and exalted beings that good brings forth good; and evil, evil. Even though it is generally admitted that these Powers and Forces do not have physical bodies and are not weighed down by fleshly desires and appetites, men in their desperation cling to the notion that they can be propitiated by animal and other sacrifices and by the countless rites and ceremonies that an unenlightened clergy thrusts upon them. People do realize intellectually that no prayers and bending of knees can make a river run uphill, nor can the fiat of the most powerful dictator stop the ocean waves from advancing up to their wonted limits. Nature's Laws are inviolate in physics as in ethics. Yet, such is the depth to which human gullibility has sunk that during wars each supposedly enlightened antagonist rushes to his church and seeks to petition the "Almighty" through bell, book and candle to join forces with him and become his active ally in the act of decimation of millions. In similar manner is the Lord's intervention sought for obtaining riches, power, the downfall of men and nations, the triumph of the wrong over the right, and for that indulgence which would satisfy earthly cravings. Why does any individual or nation think that he or it can stop causes from producing their effects, or that by invoking God or the other Powers, vice and wickedness may be stopped

from bringing on their own punishment?

It seems that in our insatiable quest to amass as much of material acquisitions as we can lay hold of, we have lost, somewhere along the way, the conviction that we have our moorings in the eternal and the true. The gods of a bygone age, the ethics of the religion of our forefathers no longer rule our lives, and we now seek other masters who we think are more inclined to satisfy our questionable cravings although these will require for their fulfilment the moral and material ruination of a large number of our fellow men. It is a strange aberration of human thought that two nations vow, both of them, to work for man's salvation, and yet each convinces itself that it alone is right and that therefore the other is wrong and must be exterminated. Over centuries of self-deception men have contrived to convince themselves that their own corporate or individual interests must be furthered by the use of their godgiven intellect; and if in the process others get hurt by not getting out of the way in time, why then it is they who are the cause of their own suffering. These people choose to forget that mere intellect becomes devilish unless it is restrained and guided by the dictates of soul and spirit. It is not as if the divine sapience does not exist or that the delinquents are not aware of its rules. The Wisdom from on high has existed in all ages. It is also true that many a pearl of Wisdom lies buried under the debris of centuries; but quite a few of the ancient texts, mutilated, altered and disfigured, are still extant from which with some effort the truth can be distilled. Forgotten truths can still be brought to remembrance and lost jewels covered over by the river's mud can be recovered from the slimy depths. Human will has the potentiality to do just that.

Man is not an animal progressing by hit-and-miss methods towards divinity. Matter unaided has not that potentiality. Man has always been an immortal entity shrouded in mortal vestments. He has undoubtedly vast powers of insight and wisdom that his enveloping vesture of the animal kingdom cannot and does not possess. The lives and teachings of Kapila and Plato, of Zoroaster and Pythagoras, of Tsong-kha-pa and Jesus point indubitably to the fact that a wisdom higher than the terrestrial, sensual and devilish exists and can be drawn upon by him who builds within himself the necessary capabilities. One of the teachings of the Ancients, now lost to the West but still jealously preserved in crypt and underground libraries, is that the entire body of wisdom accumulated from the earliest times has been preserved intact and unaltered and will be released to humanity when it

becomes morally worthy of receiving it.

Indian philosophy asserts that after a long, long period of 311,040,000,000,000 years of existence, the life of the Kosmos comes to an end. As the twilight that precedes the night of non-existence (*Pralaya*) casts its lengthening shadows upon manifestation, all the worlds and the milliards of beings inhabiting them are withdrawn, each into the next preceding source from which it was projected, and so on, from one source to the next higher, until the one ultimate parent source is reached; and there so absorbed, it will remain in dreamless sleep during the eons of non-existence stretching for 311 trillion years and more. Thus are absorbed all forms of life, all entities at their various stages of development—those who are self-born and those who are begotten—the builders and the architects of Universes, the gods, powers and principalities; all now steeped in the dreamless sleep of ages. But this absorption is not as some may imagine—a final and total annihilation, an erasing of the entities and their experiences gathered during the preceding day of manifestation. The dawn of a new period of manifestation will not be a new starting with new entities and new Powers. The idea that things can cease to exist and still *be*, is a fundamental one in Eastern psychology.¹ To make this clear to human perceptions, a familiar instance of a similar paradox is found in the chemical combination of hydrogen and oxygen. Do these two cease to exist when they combine to form water? The fact that these gases are found again when water is decomposed, shows that they must have been there all the time.

On earth, when one is sunk in a deep dreamless sleep, the sleeping entity is for the time being freed from its terrestrial chains and lives its own life on planes unreachable by any earthly consciousness. And yet the life-energy continues to pulsate in the body and the other material aspects of the sleeping personality. The laws of life continue to govern these earthly vestures while the immortal soul sojourns in the higher realms. But, whether the person is sleeping or waking, alive or dead, his consciousness and his several bodies remain contained in Space. So too during *Pralaya*. The previous objective Universe dissolves into its one primal and eternal cause, and is, so to say, held in solution in space, to differentiate again and crystallize out anew at the following Manvantaric dawn.² Not the flimsiest of breath, not the most attenuated of substances, not the slightest ripple or vibration even in its most abstract sense can exist outside of space

¹*S.D.* I, 54. ²*S.D.*, I, 41.

which, seemingly filled or empty, remains for ever and always the container, the root and the resting place of all. Space is thus an aspect of the Unknown Deity. Omnipresence, Omnipotence and Omniscience are in it and yet it remains unmoved and without attributes and therefore impersonal and beyond petitions and prayers.

The other "aspect" of the Absolute is absolute abstract Motion. To make it comprehensible to human intellect, it is symbolized by the term "The Great Breath." A very ancient Rishi has compared this motion during *Pralaya* to the rhythmical motions of the Unconscious Ocean.³ Inherent in this Motion is the presence of Law, which during *Pralaya* continues to mark the passing of eternities so that when the period arrives for the dawn of manifestation, the absolute Will expands naturally the force within it, in accordance with the Law of which it is the inner and ultimate Essence.⁴ Thus, in the initial stages, there was the One Eternal Element, or rather one element-containing Vehicle which we know as Space, dimensionless in every sense; and co-existent with it are endless Duration, primordial (hence indestructible) Matter, and Motion—absolute perpetual Motion which is known as the "breath" of the One Element. This breath can never cease—not even during the Pralayaic eternities.⁵

The Absolute is just that. The word sums it up admirably. It is not only unknown, but is unknowable. Any attempt to describe It dwarfs Its absoluteness. It has no consciousness, for It Itself is all-consciousness. You cannot predicate wisdom of It because it is Omniscience Itself. No material thought can approach It, nor human mind comprehend It. It is therefore above and beyond all approach by prayer or exoteric ceremonies. The Ancients understanding Its depth adored It in the sanctified silence of their own hearts. There is a superb religious poem by the Kabbalist Rabbi Solomon Ben Gabirol, from which some portions given in the prayers of Kippur may be cited:

Thou art one, the beginning of all numbers, and the foundation of all edifices; Thou art One, and in the secret of Thy unity the wisest of men are lost, because they know it not. Thou art one, and Thy Unity is never diminished, never extended; and cannot be changed. Thou art one, but not as an element of numeration; for Thy Unity admits not of multiplication, change or form. Thou art existent; but the understanding and vision of mortals cannot attain to Thy existence, nor determine for thee the Where, the How,

³*Transactions*, p. 10.

⁴*S.D.*, I, 354.

⁵*S.D.*, I, 55.

and the Why. Thou art Existent, but in Thyself alone, there being none other that can exist with Thee. . . .⁶

It is pertinent to note that the ancient records show that from the early ages of the Fourth Race (we are now in the Fifth) when Spirit alone was worshipped—shall we say, adored—and the mystery was made manifest, down to the last palmy days of Grecian art at the dawn of Christianity—the Hellenes alone had dared to raise publicly an altar to the Unknown God.⁷

Passing in thought from the absolute negation of what may be called the It and the That, we come to the metaphysical conception of what may be called the two "Ones." There is the ONE on the unreachable plane of Absoluteness and Infinity on which no speculation is possible and which has therefore to be passed over in silence and secrecy. The second One is on the plane of Emanations. The first ONE can neither emanate nor be capable of division; but the second One (this is the Logos in the universe of illusion), which is the reflection of the first ONE, can both emanate and divide. It is this second One that emanates the Seven Rays—the archangels of Christian theology.⁸ Thus, from the Unknown ONE—the infinite totality—the manifested One, or the periodic manvantaric Deity, emanates. This is what is called the Universal Mind, together with which the concealed Wisdom emerges as the manifested Iswara, which is the Osiris of the Egyptians, the Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Heavenly Man of the Hermetic philosopher, the Logos of the Platonists, and the Atman of the Vedantins.⁹ In Eastern metaphysics this Universal Mind is known as Mahat or the manifested Wisdom. It is represented by the innumerable centres of spiritual Energy in the whole of Kosmos. It is this Mahat which is the one impersonal Great Architect of the Universe. It is a symbol, an abstraction, an aspect of which assumed a hazy entitative form in the all-materializing conceptions of men.¹⁰ At this stage of the divine emanations, matter as we visualize it had yet to make its appearance, while the man of desires was still millions upon millions of years away from these formative years. Desire as man knows it today was non-existent at this stage. There was only Universal Love—a chapter in the grand history of kosmic and universal creation.

Thus, long ages before the evolving human being appeared on the scene, there existed an almost endless series of Hierarchies

⁶*S.D.*, I, 439 fn. ⁷*S.D.*, I, 327.

⁸*S.D.*, I, 130 and 16 fn.

⁹*S.D.*, I, 110.

¹⁰*Transactions*, p. 50.

whose task it was to guide and control the whole of Kosmos. These Hierarchies of sentient Beings consist of conscious Divine Powers who are the active manifestations of the One Supreme Energy. They are the framers, shapers, and ultimately the creators of the manifested Universe, in the sense that they themselves inform and guide it. These hosts of intelligent, spiritual Beings, through which the Universal Mind comes into action, is like an army composed of corps, divisions, brigades, regiments, etc., each having its own separate individuality with its limited freedom of action and limited responsibilities; each contained in a larger individuality to which its own interests are subservient.¹¹ These Hierarchies vary infinitely in their respective degrees of consciousness and intelligence, and whereas some are composed of perfected men of a previous field of evolution, others are made up of entities on the verge of becoming men in the Universe they themselves are helping to build. The perfected do not have bodies of flesh any longer and are thus free from the trammels of Maya. The incipient monads, having never had earthly bodies yet, do not possess at this stage any sense of egoism. Each entity in any Hierarchy is and remains the slave and creature of Karmic and Kosmic Law. Therefore to appeal to such an entity or to all of them put together is useless because their sympathy cannot be secured by any kind of propitiation. However, since man has in him the essence of all these celestial Hierarchies, he can, by paralysing his lower nature and in the process arriving at a full knowledge of the non-separateness of his Higher Self from the One Absolute Self, become as one of the "gods"; and once on their plane, the spirit of solidarity which pervades every Hierarchy must extend over him and protect him in every particular.¹²

There is, however, a real danger in prayers chanted by mortal lips and for personal ends. The *Bhagavad-Gita* warns of this danger for those who would heed its instructions. Says Shri Krishna:

Those who devote themselves to the gods go to the gods; the worshippers of the Pitris go to the Pitris; those who worship the evil spirits go them, and my worshippers come to me. (IX, 25)

It is not as if the prayer has to be directed to Krishna or the Pitris or the evil spirits. The nature and motive for the prayer gives it the proper and appropriate direction. Even by standards of earthly reasoning, prayers for vengeance and the downfall of

¹¹S. D., I, 22, 38.

¹²S. D., I, 274-76.

others are incapable of reaching entities who are on planes where purity and harmony prevail. But such prayers get readily attracted to such entities of darkness as are capable of giving the wished for result. These have the power to glamour and to satisfy in the initial stages the earthly longings of their potential recruits to the paths of evil. When the praying mortal finds that his desire is granted, he stands elated. In his ignorance he is convinced that his god has heard and has responded. His multiplied desires now get launched on wings of prayer. The cunning evil entity lures him along until the erring mortal gets enmeshed in webs which he does not see and cannot destroy. The evil entity now uses its victim to commit all forms of depravity and itself savours vicariously the intoxication of the vice. Worse still, the one who is now lost to decent living becomes an agent of the dark powers and by guile and persuasion draws other unsuspecting mortals into a similar alliance with the entities of darkness in return for favours received.

In her *Key to Theosophy*, defining meditation Madame Blavatsky says:

Meditation is silent and *unuttered* prayer, or, as Plato expressed it, "the ardent turning of the Soul toward the divine; not to ask any particular good (as in the common meaning of prayer), but for good itself—for the universal Supreme Good" of which we are a part on earth, and out of the essence of which we have all emerged.¹³

For chelaship, a reliance on extraneous powers and entities becomes a hindrance until the obstacle is surmounted. In the qualifications of Chelaship given in her article "Chelas and Lay Chelas," H.P.B. cites a rule from Book IV of *Kui-te*:

Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the law of Karma, independent of any power in nature that could interfere; a law whose course is not to be obstructed by any agency, not to be caused to deviate by prayer or propitiatory exoteric ceremonies.¹⁴

¹³*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 10.

¹⁴*Raja Yoga or Occultism*, p. 2.

THE PURPOSE OF EXISTENCE

No man can learn true and final Wisdom in one birth; and every new rebirth, whether we be reincarnated for weal or for woe, is one more lesson we receive at the hands of the stern yet ever just schoolmaster—KARMIC LIFE.

—H.B.P. in *Lucifer*, VII, p. 4

IF we look out upon life, we see that its dominant characteristic is change. Men and women, in endless procession, are being born, growing up to maturity and then drifting into old age and death. As with man himself, so with all his works: we are for ever straining to achieve and to acquire, despite the obvious truth that all our creations and all our possessions, like our physical bodies, must inevitably, sooner or later, crumble into dust and be forgotten. And yet we continue to ignore this most patent of all truths, and go on pursuing our petty interests and ambitions with desperate seriousness, toiling to hoard up that very "treasure upon earth" which the Gospels warn us must be the certain prey of the moth and rust of time.

As a passage through a series of impermanent states, life, considered as an end by and in itself, has no meaning at all: its meaning, if it have one, must be in relation to something outside itself. Were the outer life all, existence would be a thing without point or purpose—a sort of cosmic joke, and a bad one at that. But this is a supposition that is incredible to our reason and revolting to our sense of the fitness of things.

Let us assume, then, what everyone must feel intuitively to be the case, that life is not without significance, that there is an unseen background to it, in relation to which the cinematograph-like procession of events, in which we play a brief and generally ineffectual part, has both meaning and purpose.

The old sage Patanjali said that "the universe exists for the purposes of the soul"; in other words, that life is to be regarded as a school in which the inner man learns, more or less quickly, the lessons necessary for his progress. Generally the emphasis is on the *less*, for with the great majority of us learning is a very slow matter indeed, and the progress towards wisdom and self-conquest, achieved in seventy years or so, is infinitesimal. In the school of life, as in any other school, there are a few pupils who want to learn, and bend their wills to it; but there are many who are indifferent, and some who deliberately set themselves against learning. For most of us, life could be an effective school

only if prolonged vastly beyond the normal span. In fact the conception of life as a school for the soul is untenable unless we can regard one particular life as but a stage in a long course of training. In one term a pupil learns very little; but, if he returns to his desk, term after term, and if his idleness and neglect are invariably followed by unpleasant results, he will in time give his mind to his lessons and master them. A single life then may aptly be compared to a school term, at the end of which comes a holiday for rest and the quiet absorption of what has been learned.

Life considered as an end in itself is meaningless; one single life without forerunner or sequel is also meaningless; but life, considered as a series of incarnations, during which the soul learns and develops, is understandable and consonant with our sense of justice and our deepest aspirations.

So far we have assumed the soul without defining it. To ascertain what the soul is, let us consider first what it is *not*.

Clearly the soul, that pre-exists and survives, is not the outer man—the bodily form, name, and personal memory of events, scenes and words—which begins to take shape at birth, and then passes through that cycle of growth, maturity and decay which is the universal experience of mankind. Whether the whole of the personal man ceases to exist at death, or whether, as may plausibly be contended, there is a temporary survival of a psychic remnant which slowly disintegrates after death, having perhaps in the meantime played a part in the phenomena of the séance room, is a deeply interesting topic, but outside the scope of this article.

But such a psychic survival is not the soul, the real man, who is born and reborn. Of what he is, we may gain some idea by considering what he brings with him into birth. Briefly, he comes into birth equipped with certain aptitudes, tendencies and affinities, or, to sum up in one word, character. This character, as modified by his thoughts and actions during life, he takes with him when he passes out through the portals of death.

If we regard the soul, or real man, that passes from birth to birth, as oneself, equipped with an ever-developing character, may we not, as so many philosophers and mystics of every epoch have done, regard that Self as a spark or ray of the Universal Self making a pilgrimage through material life in quest of perfect self-consciousness, self-realization? As an immortal seeking conscious immortality? Trying to build up a character-vehicle through which,

when perfected, he might realize that immortal self-consciousness? By its very nature, this conception is one to which we can only, as it were, reach out with the mind. Full understanding can come only with perfect achievement.

When to a man who understands, the Self has become all things, what sorrow, what trouble can there be to him who once beheld that unity? (*Isavasya Upanishad*)

BRAHM

The "That" ran its cycles through
 And slept again.
 When Time awoke and Chaos broke,
 The "That" laughed on its bosom;
 And becoming Motion
 It whipped up the foams of the Sea,
 Flung up whirling atoms,
 Collected the dust of stars,
 And moulded a thousand universes.
 And in playful steps, laughing,
 It pulsated in vegetations through,
 And in changeless Change
 Took up forms
 In the shining Void;
 And taking up the bars
 Of strange senses invisible,
 Entered within the cage.

A prisoner, the "That" looks on
 Its own creation;
 But why wail and smite
 Thy own handicraft?
 And turn laughter
 Into ceaseless tears?
 Is it a whim, O Brahm,
 Thyself so free and gay
 To be caged wingless,
 Sitting in helpless sorrow?
 Or perchance
 Is it a manner of thy Play?

LOOKING FORWARD

LOOKING forward! What words are these? Words of promise and encouragement, of renewal, or words that darken the scene? Words of warning, words whose aura is self-confidence, or, simply and wholly, of uncertainty?

Reassurance comes to us from Mr. Judge. "The way gets clearer" he tells us, "as we go on, but as *we* get clearer we get less anxious as to the way ahead."¹ And alike for our own good and that of those others, our fellow wayfarers, he bids us "have courage, patience, hope, faith, and cheerfulness,"² a quintet of qualities in which he himself was never lacking, as all that comes from his tireless pen will testify.

That fact alone should be a lesson to us. For we cannot promulgate the doctrines and the rules of life found in the teachings of Theosophy and at the same time ourselves not endeavour to live up to them as far as possible. Granted our failures will be all too many for our liking, but even in regard to these Mr. Judge can dismiss them as "occasional despondency." "The occasional despondencies"—thus he refers to them—"which all feel, but which the light of Truth always dispels."³

Looking forward. Looking to the future. Looking to something which at the moment has no existence, "the future being only a word," says Mr. Judge, "for the present, not yet come." But he adds, and it is a vital reminder, that for that very reason we must "see to the present more than all."⁴

It should come naturally to us to do so. Is not the present our sole reality? In it, as the Scriptures say, "we live and move and have our being," past and future alike surrendering their claim upon us. Time, however, has a prior claim. "Time," says Mr. Judge, "is needed for all growth, and all change, and all development." To which he adds, "Let time have her perfect work and do not stop it,"⁵ knowing well from his own experience what potency rests with Time.

Effort is likewise needed, spiritual effort, in which we shall be aided if we draw upon those wise teachings of Mr. Judge, accepting his guidance as though he were in very fact beside us. He knew all the qualities needed (and never more so than they are today), for the leading of a worthwhile life that could be of benefit to others. Viewing our situation as that of pilgrims, what he emphasizes is *immediacy*. "The future for each," he writes.

¹Letters That Have Helped Me, p. 140.

²P. 134.

³P. 21.

⁴P. 76.

⁵P. 72.

“will come from each present moment. As we use the moment, so we shift the future up or down for good or ill.”⁶ Is not that something upon which to meditate, an undeniable fact to which too many pay but little attention? Mr. Judge has a gift for showing us facts which at first sight may seem but familiar commonplaces. Let a little thought, however, be bestowed on them and we shall see them for what they are—wise and helpful utterances from our ever wise and helpful Teacher.

What ensues? Why, the plain and simple fact that we shall have no excuse in the future for falling short in the things that matter if we take Mr. Judge as friend and guide. What we do have is a call, or aim, “to bring to the West and East the doctrines that have more effect on human conduct, on the relations of man to man, and hence the greater possibility of forming at last a universal brotherhood.” A possibility, yes, but Mr. Judge expects no miracle, nor does he ask for it. “Let us hurry nothing,” is still his counsel. “Eternity is here all the time.”⁷

That indeed is the truth. But many do not see it so. Time, to them, is in a sense an entity, a something that keeps slipping away from them. Mr. Judge views it differently, the future for him “being only a word for the present, not yet come,”⁸ a term already quoted in a different context, the one indicating in a sense a *lapse*, the other firmly focusing the attention on that which is still to be.

We may not have proved this for ourselves as yet. Life today, as many know all too well, is crowded. Others, however, have done so and have found what Mr. Judge so often speaks of as “the Path.” That he loved the term is obvious. Was not it the name he chose for the magazine he founded? Surely none could have been more appropriate, for do not we all, as we grow older, have the sense of journeying, of going forward, though we may not in the first instance know our destination? The more we align ourselves with Mr. Judge, the clearer, however, will it become. Let us be on the lookout for every reference to it. Many are to be found in that invaluable little book, *Vernal Blooms*.

Looking forward! We do it instinctively, either from happy anticipation or the reverse, but very specially at the beginning of a new year which may or may not bring us that which we need or desire. Who or what shall we look to or rely upon? Let Mr. Judge answer us—let him speak for himself.

⁶P. 75.

⁷P. 95.

⁸P. 76.

OCCULT AXIOMS AND THEIR SYMBOLS

[Reprinted from *Lucifer*, April 1889.—EDS.]

MATERIALISTIC science will never be able to furnish morality with a sound basis, so long as it considers humanity only as a species of the animal kind; so long as it assigns to evolution and progress no other purpose but an amelioration in physical organisms, and the acquisition, by the fittest individuals, of a kind of shrewdness and perfected instinct which will allow them to live more comfortably; so long as it refuses to recognize in man principles entirely different from the material ones, subject to different laws and surviving physical dissolution. If everything ends with material life, the only wise plan is to fill it with material enjoyment. On these lines of belief, virtue is a supernumerary quantity; it may be your interest to be virtuous in appearance, but it is of no consequence to anybody whether you are so in reality or not. No individual benefit arises from virtue, except what consideration or profit you may derive from it, or the reciprocity of good treatment and protection you may expect from the community, supposing the community is commonly honest. Then the man must be a fool who instead of calculating exactly the possible returns, is simply charitable, or who, instead of taking clever measures to escape detection, simply avoids wickedness. As for the community called Society, everybody knows how tender-hearted it is to its benefactors, how ready to proclaim and recompense virtue, how prompt to detect and punish crime. Everybody knows that big consideration, big fortune, and big stomachs are the exclusive appanage of bankers and deacons, who have deserved them by lives of truthfulness and integrity. Provided you do not transgress the letter of the established code, you may indulge in a tolerable number of sins of commission, without speaking of those of omission, and remain a very respectable citizen. Undeniably any more than ordinarily clever man will not be satisfied with such innocent ambition. The man who deserves admiration is the one who cheats others into the belief that he has done them some service, and induces them to an undeserved reciprocity. This is the principle of modern charity, which is a means to social safety, a personal gratification of pride, and an excellent way for females of calling attention to their beauty, elegance and loving disposition, and for men of advertising their business. With a little practice at that game, a man may easily deserve a statue on public thoroughfares. Charity is a

fine word, when engraved on a pedestal, or when printed at the head of a list of the members of some committee, or of some programme for a mundane entertainment. Charity is the occasional sop by which is kept down the anger of the starving beasts in their cages. It is as necessary to public order as the wig of Justice. As for real silent charity, without hope of reward or expectation of reciprocity, as for virtue for the sake of virtue itself, as for self-sacrifice and devotion to others, they are ridiculous, absurd, and happily rare exceptions. More: they are dangerous and of bad example, as several Positivists have already remarked.

Human faculties are like sirens, virtues above the waist and vices below; passions are the material of powers, evil is the origin of good, pain the substratum of pleasure, and ridicule the potentiality of the sublime. The taste of the ragged vulgar for barrel-organs and cheap oleographs, and of the vulgar in full dress for ballad concerts and ugly antiques, is the announcement of a nascent artistic feeling. Similarly, hypocrisy is a homage to virtue, and the sham charity of the replete bourgeois is the beginning of unselfishness. True, the night of egotism is still very dark; egotism is yet the mainspring of our social activities, competition the backbone of our industry, and national selfishness the ideal for which many heroes are ready to die. But is this a proof that patriotism will not be looked upon as a vice a few centuries hence, that no civilization can be conceived where production alone would have the importance now imprudently attributed to exchange, that the present social state is the best and only one possible? Ask the question, not from those who have been successful in the struggle, but from its victims, from the multitudes trampled under the wheels of progress, from the unemployed men and starving families, and from those moral wrecks, more pitiful still, whose brains have been atrophied by the weight of their account books. The few advantages of competition are largely compensated by its inconveniencies; it is the principal and nearly sole cause of our present miseries and social evils. Says one of our Masters:

That curse known as "the struggle for life" is the real and most prolific parent of most woes and sorrows, and all crimes. Why has that struggle become almost the universal scheme of the universe? We answer: because no religion, with the exception of Buddhism, has taught a practical contempt for this earthly life; while each of them, always with that one solitary exception, has through its hells and damnations inculcated the greatest dread of death. Therefore

do we find that struggle for life raging most fiercely in Christian countries, most prevalent in Europe and America. It weakens in the Pagan lands, and is nearly unknown among Buddhist populations. . . . Teach the people to see that life on this earth, even the happiest, is but a burden and an illusion; that it is our own Karma, the cause producing the effect, that is our own judge—our Saviour in future lives—and the great struggle for life will soon lose its intensity.

Again, because competition is amongst us a prevailing motive, it does not prove that no other incentive to action exists or may be found. Are we to believe that people would not work unless they be starved, this degrading argument of people who employ the Chinese or German paupers at reduced wages on one hand, and excite the hatred of the British or American workmen against them on the other? Some monsters speculate on misery and thrash human dignity with the whip of animal want; does this prove the laziness of the victims or the baseness of the executioners? Exploitation and tyranny, necessity and overwork are means the best calculated to disgust a man with his task. Ask any craftsman, free and sincere, what is the best incentive to his efforts; he will answer you that it is the love of his business and not the necessity of earning his livelihood. Enthusiasm and desire of affection will prompt an artist further and quicker than competition and the desire to earn more money than his colleagues; nearly always, when a man of genius is seized with the ambition of making his fortune, he loses his originality and becomes a base flatterer of common vulgarity and vice. A decoration generally proves a patch on a fine picture. The rival efforts of real artists towards the beautiful, of poets towards the ideal, of philosophers towards the truth, can no longer be called competition. They are termed emulation, a term which is nearly synonymous with united efforts. What then shall we call the convergent efforts of the saints towards virtue? One of the first things taught to those who would tread the path of Occultism is that they must give up all wish to overcome their brothers, and grow, like the lilies of the fields, without knowing it. Love of perfection itself is scarcely a sufficient qualification; their main motive must be the desire to acquire knowledge in order to place it at the service of Humanity.

Since the world has passed its middle point of evolution, altruism has begun to dawn upon Humanity; and however pale and distant this aurora, we may feel sure that these calls from Bud-

dha, from Christ, from Theosophy, these rays which have always come from the East, are the presage of the coming day. However disagreeable may be at present the relations between members of the social body, yet each one of them is indebted to these relations for most of the things he possesses, knows, or can do. Men can be numbered whose opinions are not from newspapers, whose science is not from books, whose wit is not from hearsay. To improve upon the achievements of others, we must first assimilate them. In fact if competition is an element of progress, association is the condition of progress and of competition itself; and rivalry is but the means to some association of a superior order. If wild individuals had not wrestled with each other, no tribal alliances would have been formed; without the fights between tribes, there was no motive for the formation of provinces, and the dissensions between counties prepared national unity. Will this be the end of association, and may we not hope that our international wars, perhaps by their very atrocity, will necessitate International Arbitration, and that cannon shots will have cleared the way for universal brotherhood?

The author of that thoughtful work, *Looking Backwards*, traces the same process of growth through social economy, and predicts for it a similar development: upon individual exchange, small trade was an improvement; now we see small trade ruined and absorbed by big stores and co-operative companies. Mr. Belamy believes that the competition between the latter will eventually result in their agglomeration into national syndicates, so that the wealth of the nation will be administered by the nation itself. The author has drawn upon this hypothesis the Elysian picture of a social state where the struggle for existence has no more a *raison d'être*. Then the history of philosophy is there to show that the shock of opinions always elicited light; after religious wars, after metaphysical battles, the champions generally find themselves purified, and some new and larger truth establishes itself on the ruins of the dismantled creed. The egotists are not the men who launch boldly and alone upon the sea of the unknown, nor the audacious who frankly express their doubts upon an adopted dogma or a consecrated habit; it is through such benefactors that the world really advances. The inventor of a new instrument of labour, of a new product, of a new mode of thought or a new method of conduct is a fighter against the egotism of those who try to stifle the discovery, because it disturbs their interests or simply their quietness. The egotists are those whose laziness would prevent the world from moving, whose

sleepiness would paralyse the thoughts of others. The common egotism of the Pharisees was responsible for the crucifixion of Christ; the aggregate egotism of the Christian church is responsible for the narrowness of modern thought, and the scholastic egotism of modern science is responsible for the psychic ignorance of our age.

There is between each of us and his fellow men a borrowing and lending somewhat analogous to the process of feeding. The productions, acts and thoughts of others are the material from which our thought gets its sustenance; it extracts the essence of that food and gives it back to the commonwealth under the form of its individual activity. The man who has understood this process can no more think of his soul as separated from others, than we can conceive our bodies as independent from universal substance and life. But, even for the common egotist, what after all is the end of the struggle? What is the ambition of the most narrow-minded candle merchant, when he has retired from business? To buy a cottage where he may invite his friends, and spend, in rejoicing with them, part and sometimes the whole of the money he has laboriously saved. There are really very few joys attractive to a man unless he partakes of them with others. Even upon his animal wants he must throw the veil of company, and he loathes a lonely dinner table. Acquirements are of little use unless shown and communicated. The potentate who hires a concert room for his exclusive use, the drunkard who shuts himself up in a solitary cellar, are exceptions. Few men could bear the weight of lonely enjoyment; madness and despair would be the result for the majority. Perfect egotism is an asceticism of a peculiar kind, and constitutes the trial of the black magician.

Thus, even ordinary reasoning and examples taken from daily life show us that the dictates of egotism are not infallible. But the necessity of altruism can be demonstrated philosophically. In a magnificent article upon Theosophy (*Revue des deux mondes*, July 15, 1888), Mr. Burnouf, the celebrated French Orientalist, called upon it to render Humanity an immense service by showing the existence of a law superior to that of the struggle for existence. Our doctrine is the only one able to furnish such a demonstration as a basis for morality; further, it can give altruism three equally solid foundations, the one practical, the other philosophical, and the third religious.

(To be concluded)

SEVEN CLASSES OF MEN

THOSE who tread the inner Path, they who serve Krishna, are divided in Chapter VII of the *Gita* (verse 16) into four classes, graded according to the degree of perception they have attained. First come the "arta," those who have seen that all life is sorrow.

Ache of the birth, ache of the helpless days,
Ache of hot youth and ache of manhood's prime;
Ache of the chill grey years and choking death,
These fill your piteous time.

Seeing that life is transient, that all things pass and die, they turn from them in sorrow and seek consolation from That which is beyond all suffering, the Undying Krishna, beyond the reach of change.

This is the first stage, the first of the Buddha's four Noble Truths, but it is only the first because it is based on mere recoil from suffering. Insight has shown the disciple that life is shot through and through with sorrow, its so-called joys mere cheats, and so he sadly turns away his eyes. Were life to be more joyful, he would not thus have turned his face to Krishna.

The next class is the "jijnasu," the inquirer, the seeker after knowledge. Knowledge gives mastery and power, and, seeing that life is sorrow, he seeks the understanding that shall master it, the knowledge of the causes of men's woes.

Next comes the "artharathi," he who seeks the true Wealth. Knowing that it is the outgoing forces of desire that are the sources of all sorrow; knowing, too, that all manifested life is transient by its very nature, he turns his back on all desire for anything that is manifest and seeks the Sorrowless State of Liberation, lifted on high above the bitter waters of life.

But beyond this stage there lies another, the stage of the *jnani*, the Wise One, he who treads the Path of perfect knowledge. For the seeker after Liberation there is a dualism between the world and the *Nirvana* and he rejects the one to cleave unto the other. But the *jnani* is one who sees that all duality is false. "Here" as "There," his opened eyes see nothing but the One. He seeks no liberation for himself "beyond the flaming ramparts of the world," for he has seen that "all is *Vasudeva*" ("the Light which dwells in all"), and, in the words of the *Upanishad*, he knows that "what is There is here; what is not here is nowhere at all."

The preceding verse (verse 15). speaks of three other classes

of men—the evil-doers, the deluded, the devilish. These seven classes of men in their totality present an accurate picture of the human kingdom. The four classes (who work for righteousness), as stated above, represent the degrees of perception attained by men. The remaining classes trace the downward curve of the human soul, whom Nature leaves free to go to Hell, if it so chooses. This is perhaps a blunt way of putting the truth; another way of saying it is that man is a being with free will, so if he persistently indulges in personal, egotistic, or *ahankaric* ways of life he finds himself in that state of consciousness symbolized by the term Hell.

When a person acts impelled by *Kama*—Craving, Passion, Lust, Thirst, Desire—he breaks the rhythm and the harmony of Nature. He works evil, albeit in ignorance. He is the performer of evil deeds because he acts without a basis of principles. Thus acting thoughtlessly, impelled by his own personal inclinations, he takes the first step on the downward grade.

As a result, pain and suffering come upon him; but passing through agonizing experiences does not necessarily mean learning their lessons. People go through the same type of experience repeatedly and are none the wiser for it. If suffering awakens a man, he passes into the first of the four classes who work righteousness, *viz.*, *Arta*—the afflicted who have realized that life is but sorrow. But if he does not awaken, if he continues to act without seeking right principles of action, he becomes *Mudhah*—deluded.

The deluded man is one who is so blinded that he is unable to see that evil is wrong; mistaking lust for love, desire for aspiration, sense-craving for soul-life, vindictiveness for self-justice—he indulges in evil, unaware of the hardness of his own heart, or the darkness permeating his own mind. More suffering overtakes him, and he is unable either to feel the pain or to perceive its meaning. From being merely sour, life becomes bitter as gall, and the man drifts into the third class, *Naradhamah*—the devilish. Having become desperate through numerous frustrations, he behaves like a mad elephant, mistaking forest trees for living foes. Even in this stage there is hope for him if only he will seek the source of evil within himself and recognize that the hands that smite him are his own. If he does not, his fate can only be annihilation.

Right philosophy alone can save men and women by shaping their daily lives and their hourly actions. Such a philosophy the *Gita* offers to the modern man, be he Oriental or Occidental, afflict-

ed either by religious suggestion or by scientific dogmatism. Our civilization, surfeited with knowledge that is superficial when not dangerous, sorely needs the purifying influence of ancient religious and philosophic Truth.

THE TRUE God, the undefined and infinite God, is the negation of all defined and finite gods.

God drives away the gods.

True religion makes an end to religious systems.

A multitude of fools cannot make folly reasonable.

An error does not become venerable on account of its being old.

Every ideal not in accord with nature is a monstrosity.

The best catholic is he who has most indulgency and charity.

Charity is higher than all dogmas, morals and ceremonies.

Charity is patient, benevolent and sweet.

Charity has neither rivals, nor jealousies; she acts with prudence and never becomes inflated with pride.

She is not ambitious and seeks no personal advantage.

She never gets irritated and suspects no evil. because she revels in the Good and clings to the Truth.

She passes through all trials, believes in hope and supports him who elevates himself.

Charity will never perish. Prophecies may prove to be lies, people may change their languages, science may be destroyed and change its basis, because our knowledge is only relative; but when the absolute is revealed, the relative need exist no longer.

A child talks and reasons like a child, and manhood corrects the errors of childhood.

While we are waiting, let us keep the three sisters: Faith, Hope and Charity; but let us trust in and hope for everything from Charity, because she is the greatest of the three.

This sum of the prophecies and climax of all religions, this saying which is more catholic than all the popes and all councils, has been expressed by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians. There you will find truth and light, the religion of the future. The true dogma is that which maintains charity, the true cultus is that which realizes charity, and the only truly infallible authority is charity.

—ELIPHAS LEVI

THE TRUE RELIGION

IS there a necessity for any organized separative religion to persist as a competitor of other creeds in any part of the globe?

Theosophists hold the view that true Religion is necessary for the well-being of man. Religion illumines the mind, unfolds intuition, and unites man to man. But this cannot be said of any organized religion, which, whatever its name, narrows the mind, engenders blind belief and fanaticism and divides man from man. Once an Adept spoke of the churches as anti-Christ and the same may be said of every organized religion. Because of the evils of the latter, Religion has come to be regarded as an opiate.

In sober truth, one of the pressing needs, perhaps *the* most pressing need of our civilization is Religion. Not a new religion; the world has been hitherto sufficiently cursed with the intellectual extinguishers known as dogmatic creeds. What is needed to-day is freedom from the extremes—atheism is one, sacerdotalism is the other. Masses cannot be freed from the grip of these two monsters, but a large number of individuals can free themselves.

Today the individual needs the aid of some living power, some energy which would enable him to drive the engine of existence without injury to himself and to others, and through it gather the experience which would not only sustain his whole being but unfold it to its full capacity. The True Religion alone can provide that power. The human individual suffers from his attempt to follow two religions—one, the creed into which he is born and bred or into which he has been converted; and second, the impulses and the principles, good and bad, which he follows mostly unconsciously and which form his real inner religion. The result is compromise at every turn—between the sacred and the secular, between the urge of the flesh and the voice of conscience, between belief and reason, between concrete thoughts and vague intuitions, between personal affections and altruistic aspirations. The pressing need of the individual is a philosophy of conduct and of action which would reduce this conflict to the minimum, and bring about an integration in himself.

The Occidental as well as the Oriental needs this integrating influence of true Religion. Therefore to try to buttress the tottering churches and temples is not rendering real service to our civilization. That which is true in the outworn creeds is crushed by the debris of rites and ceremonies, of blind belief and exclusive claims; the priest has elbowed out the prophet and the latter is allowed by the former only to enchant the worshippers from a

long distance. As the magic, used to invoke the sages, is that of the priest, no response comes. No, the old creeds should be allowed to die their natural deaths. An attempt should be made to present the soul-satisfying philosophy of the old Sages. That religious philosophy or philosophical religion offers a way of life for the intelligent man and woman of today. Its fundamental principles can well form the basis of action and conduct and these may be tabulated simply thus:

- I. Everything existing, exists from natural causes.
 - II. Virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment.
 - III. The state of man in this world is probationary.
-

WE do not understand, but somehow we are a part of a creative destiny, reaching backward and forward to infinity—a destiny that reveals itself, though dimly, in our striving, in our love, our thought, our appreciation. We are the fruition of a process that stretches back to star-dust. We are material in the hands of the Genius of the universe, for a still larger destiny that we cannot see in the everlasting rhythm of worlds. Nothing happens but what somehow counts in the creative architecture of things. We fail and fall by the way, yet redeeming grace fashions us anew and eliminates our failures in the larger pattern. The pangs of pain, of failure, in this mortal lot, are the birth-throes of transition to better things. We are separated for a time by the indifference of space and by our blindness which particularizes and isolates us. But in us is the longing for unity. We are impelled by a hidden instinct to reunion with the parts of the larger heart of the universe.

—JOHN ELOF BOODIN

THE FAMILY

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From the influence of impiety the females of a family grow vicious; and from women that are become vicious arises the confusion of castes.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*, I, 41

SUCH is the reason Arjuna advances to Krishna in the very first chapter; he explains his argument in subsequent verses. Not as an excuse for his timidity does Arjuna wear the mask of a philosopher. Hero of a thousand battles, not a trace of cowardice remained in his blood. What was his argument? He who disturbs the peace of the family precipitates the destruction of the family. Such disturbance of family life (*Kula-dharma*) culminates in the loss of virtue of the women of that family; this, in its turn, shakes the very foundations of society, because the vicious woman becomes the womb of the outcaste. Once the family-dharma—laws which uphold and sustain the family—is disregarded, the larger unit, the society, is corrupted.

Arjuna reasons: If he and his brothers disturbed the peace of the family even though their own relatives were evil, were overthrowing justice and torturing righteousness, they themselves would be responsible for the ultimate destruction of the whole kingdom. Where was the glory and what was the good of ruling over a people who would be casteless?

Now, the *Gita* is a book of many meanings and many messages: its metaphysics and philosophy tell the story of the macrocosm, its psychology that of the microcosm; it is history concerned with weak humans, and myth concerned with mighty gods; above all it teaches the Secret Science, *i.e.*, the Science of the Soul; and how? As the hidden soul in man unfolds, it hears message after message hidden in this Song of Life.

Therefore *Kula-dharma*, family life, and corruption of women, and the arising of caste confusion—all have different meanings. Thus, there is the psychological confusion of caste in most men of today, for their inner aspirations do not harmonize with their desires and cause confusion in body and brain. Each one of us is male-female. Just as in the body of every male the female exists in latency and *vice versa*, so also in our minds and morals we may be male or female or both—generally both. There is a whole male line of evolution, and there is another, the female line; both

these mix and mingle in the human being. Celibacy, which chelas and real Gurus are called upon to practise, extends to all states of consciousness; there is mental celibacy, there is emotional chastity, there is psychic virginity, there is noetic continence, and so forth, and without these the legitimate and healthy birth of intuition cannot result. Each human being is a family in himself, and each one has to observe his own family-dharma within himself. Corruption of this particular family-dharma begets its own confusion; on the other hand, its correct observance begets the Deathless Race of Immortals. So there are different ways in which this as all other *Gita* doctrines can be interpreted. The soul, through its progressive awakenings, obtains one key and then another, which enables it to perceive these interpretations.

But let us consider the society around us in the light of this principle. Caste-destruction did take place and confusion ensued: India is said to be caste-ridden; it is with false castes. For 5000 years now the colours (*varna*) of our peoples have become mixed; for 5000 years on this sacred soil the confusion of castes has flourished, dragging India down and down. It is notable that Krishna did not answer, did not even consider, the specific objection Arjuna raised. He began with most lofty ideas, metaphysical and ethical; and when he came to speak of castes, He mentioned *Karma*-effects of *Gun*as-qualities, according to which the colours (*varna*) of men's characters and dispositions show themselves, life after life. Moreover, caste confusion prevails all over the world, and not only in India.

Caste confusion is the outstanding mark of the Kali-yuga, the cycle inaugurated by Krishna. It will persist among the masses of mankind who belong to Kali-yuga. That confusion will continue to disturb family life (*Kula-dharma*), will continue to corrupt the morals of womankind, and will ultimately compel people to doubt their own ways, their reasonings, themselves even, and then set them thinking. This is what is happening in our midst, but not on any large scale, because sex evil is almost universal, and more, it is not even looked upon as evil but is considered to be a natural phenomenon. Corrupt family life of this age is the direct outcome of sex evil.

Why did Krishna inaugurate such an era? To give direction to human evolution. Teachers and Revelations (*Rishis* and *Shastras*) help men in earlier cycles; through obedience and belief they grow; they are helped by Nature, as the infant is fed by the mother; the impulse given by Divine Incarnations and Holy Books carries them along. When that is withdrawn, good living becomes mechanical and would disappear, producing a greater chaos than

now exists, if Krishna did not set into motion His own wheel. The aim of Krishna then was to help men to live by conviction and not by belief. Not to allow the complete obliteration of the work of the previous Incarnations did Krishna come, but to sustain Their labour in the only right way open to Him, *viz.*, to make men rely on the impacts within themselves, impacts received by them from Teachers and Revelations. That is why Krishna is considered the most important of the avataras of Vishnu. Living in bliss within themselves, living at peace with all, people did not know for themselves what Light was. Shadows became necessary; a dark cycle, Kali-yuga, became due; and Krishna ushered in that new era.

The second outstanding mark of this Iron Age is individualism. The way of growth is individualistic. Why? Because each has to make his own effort, unaided by anyone save by that which he has acquired and which is within himself. Each man, each woman must remove his or her own caste-confusion, by re-establishing his or her own family-dharma.

The way out of the darkness of this age for every individual is through the family unit. Arjuna's fear was not unfounded; but Krishna did not come to destroy family life, *Kula-dharma*, but to help men and women establish it on the rock of knowledge, so that it can never again become mechanical, never again become a matter of belief, of tradition, of form.

Manu-Smriti, the Tradition handed down by Manu, gives the necessary information, but we must practise it intelligently, after due study and understanding.

WHERE women are honoured, there verily the Devas rejoice; where they are not honoured, there indeed all rites are fruitless.

—MANU-SMRITI (Laws of Manu), iii, 56

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The 17th-century philosopher René Descartes asserted that animals could not think because they did not have language, and since then this view has persisted. In the past two decades, however, there have been some fundamental changes of attitude; the notion that animals can reason and can communicate with one another is no longer treated with scorn by ethologists and comparative psychologists. At a meeting of the Royal Society in U.K., animal intelligence was the subject of discussion.

Dr. Robin Dunbar, an experimental psychologist who has carried out a number of field studies of the behaviour and ecology of various species of primates and ungulates, writes in *New Scientist*:

It is all but self-evident to most field ethologists that animals have remarkable cognitive powers and use them to make numerous complex decisions every day. Those capabilities are simply taken for granted: the real issue of interest to ethologists is how the animals use their knowledge in the struggle to survive and reproduce. Comparative psychologists, on the other hand, focus on the processes of acquiring and processing information: how the animals do it is of more interest than the use they make of it. . . . Most animals are social beings whose very survival depends on a complex series of interactions with other organisms at a variety of biological levels.

Yet, for all these remarkable abilities, there still appears to be one clear difference between animals and ourselves: we can step back from ourselves and our environment and reflect on it. None of the ape language projects have shown any signs that even the chimpanzees can manage to do that. . . .

We have often been much too ready to underestimate the intellectual abilities of animals. In fact, animals are multidimensional creatures that operate on several different levels at the same time. Cut off one line of sensory input to study its importance, and they will as often as not compensate by switching to another channel; structure an experiment to see if they can solve a problem in a particular way, and the chances are that they will see it in a different light and find some other way of doing it. . . . The past decade or so has seen dramatic developments afoot and the challenge for the future will be to capitalise on them.

The animal is certainly endowed with intelligence, but animal

intelligence, though seen now in a new light, differs from human intelligence in *kind*, not merely in degree. H.P.B.'s article, "Have Animals Souls?" (*The Theosophical Movement*, March, April and May 1970) raises some interesting points on animal consciousness. In *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 525 fn.) H.P.B. makes this suggestive statement: "The *monad* of the animal is as immortal as that of man, yet the brute knows nothing of this; it lives an animal life of sensation just as the first human would have lived, when attaining physical development in the Third Race, had it not been for the Agnishwatta and the *Manasa Pitris*"—the celestial hierarchies responsible for awakening the mind in man. Earlier in *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. explains the mystery of, and the gap between, "the informing principle in man—the Higher Self or human Monad—and the animal Monad, both one and the same, although the former is endowed with *divine* intelligence, the latter with instinctual faculty alone." (II, 102-3)

"Culture" is a word rarely understood, though it is frequently used and has acquired different meanings. The word "education," likewise, is bandied about without understanding its true meaning and is often considered to be synonymous with "instruction." Anybody with a degree or diploma from any institution calling itself educational is counted among the educated and the cultured.

Jacques Barzun's article, "Scholarship Versus Culture," in the November 1984 *Atlantic*, argues that the fruits of culture are designed to be understood intuitively, not broken down into parts by scholarly analysis. Culture and education are qualities found in persons who have managed, against heavy odds, to cultivate their minds, to educate themselves. The author, a university professor emeritus at Columbia University, draws a distinction between university education and true culture:

I venture to think that in the *qualitative*, honorific sense, culture—cultivation—is declining. It is doing so virtually in proportion as the various cultural endeavours—all this collecting and exhibiting and performing and encouraging—grow and spread with well-meant public and private support. The reason is not merely that the very abundance tends to distract attention, to leave no time for digesting and meditating upon the experience—though

that is an important drawback of the glut. There is a deeper reason. . . .

Through specialism culture is *delegated* to the experts; it is no longer the property of whoever wants to partake of it for the good of his soul. One obvious consequence is the fragmentation that everybody deplures and nobody does anything about. The expert specialist takes a little subject for his province—and remains a provincial all his life. But there is worse. By this delegation of culture the importance of art and the humanities is shifted to a new ground. These good things are no longer valuable for their direct effect on the head and the heart; they become valuable as professions, as means of livelihood, as badges of honour, as goods to be marketed, as components of the culture industry. . . .

We are mistaken when we believe culture and the humanities are being served by scholarship. The truth is that art and culture do not belong in a university. It cannot be a home for them, because culture proper and scholarship proper are diametrically opposed. . . .

It is not that knowledge is useless or should be disregarded, but rather that learning, doctrine, ideology, is not necessarily an addition to knowledge; it is often a retreat from it. In science, theory guides practice—that is, improves technology. In the arts, theory comes after the fact of original creation and, far from improving future work, usually spoils it by making the artist self-conscious, over-intellectualized. To put it another way, not everything that is good can be engineered into existence. . . .

It remains only to say what good there is in what we have lost, what culture and cultivation are for. That they are not for study I have hoped to show by pointing out how those who study culture soon make study the end, and culture the means, instead of the other way around; its further result being a vast army of producers—scholars and critics—and no consumers for their indigestible products. Culture in whatever form—art, thought, history, religion—is for meditation and conversation. Both are necessary sequels to the experience of art and thought. Cultivation does not come automatically after exposure to the good things, as health follows a dose of the right drug. If it did, orchestra players would be the most cultured people musically and copy editors the finest judges of literature. . . . Culture reshapes the personality; it develops it by offering the vicarious experience of art and thought; it puts all experience in order gradually, through reflection, meditation, and conversation.

Apropos, we may draw attention to what H.P.B. said of culture

in her article, "Progress and Culture," which was reprinted in our January 1973 issue from *Lucifer* for August 1890. She wrote:

Real culture is spiritual. It proceeds from within outwards, and unless a person is naturally noble-minded and strives to progress on the spiritual before he does so on the physical or outward plane, such culture and civilization will be no better than whitened sepulchres full of dead men's bones and decay.

H.P.B., in this article, decries "intellectual culture *minus* spirituality," as also the vaunted culture and progress of the so-called civilized world, which relate "in every case to purely physical appliances, to objects and things, not to the *inner* man." Culture is the expression of a person's character and his inner condition, having its roots in the cultivation of the possibilities and higher faculties inherent in every individual.

According to a book recently published from London, *Natural Disasters: Acts of God or Acts of Man?*, it is humans who are the real cause of such disasters. "Natural" calamities are on the increase, but casualty figures differ from country to country, the poorest people of poor countries being the worst sufferers. In the 20 years up to 1981, Bangladesh, for instance, suffered 63 natural disasters; on average, each one killed 10,000 people. In the same period, the Philippines had 76 natural disasters, which on average killed 223 people. In the world as a whole, six times as many people died each year from disasters in the 1970s as in the 1960s. Yet, according to the book, there is no evidence that the natural forces behind them, for example, droughts, floods, cyclones or earthquakes, are getting worse. What has changed is that human activities have made agricultural land and cities more susceptible to these natural events.

For example, the "droughts" that threaten people in African countries, especially in Ethiopia, are often a consequence of poor farming practices rather than a lack of rainfall.

There is yet another sense in which humans are responsible for natural calamities. Intimately connected with such calamities is the Law of Karma, for an earthquake, a flood, a drought, or a cyclone, is but a channel through which Karmic Law is adjusting

the disturbed harmony. The subject is difficult, but study of this aspect of the universal Law clarifies our understanding and reveals to us the connection between the individuals who suffer and the cataclysm which is the channel through which the suffering comes to them. The process by which Karmic precipitations take place is explained thus:

Karma operates to produce cataclysms of nature by concatenation through the mental and astral planes of being. A cataclysm may be traced to an immediate physical cause such as internal fire and atmospheric disturbance, but these have been brought on by the disturbance created through the dynamic power of human thought. (Aphorism on Karma, No. 30: *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*)

The Adepts hold that there is an indissoluble connection between man and every event that takes place on this globe, not only the ordinary changes in politics and social life, but all the happenings in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms. The changes in the seasons are for and through man; the great upheavals of continents, the movements of immense glaciers, the terrific eruptions of volcanoes, or the sudden overflowings of great rivers, are all for and through man, whether he be conscious of it or present or absent. And they tell of great changes in the inclination of the axis of the earth, past and to come, all due to man. (*Echoes from the Orient*, p. 17)

Was the Mediterranean an erstwhile desert? Over a century ago, field geologists collected evidence of an earlier ice age a million years ago that covered Central Europe and North America with glaciers. Two of their present-day successors, Kenneth J. Hsu and Bill Ryan, have now shown that the Mediterranean sea was a desert some five million years ago. According to them, the Mediterranean was then a "deep, dry, hot hellhole" with its wide basin three kilometres below sea level. It was the "seat of whirlwinds stirring red painted deserts, of transient briny lakes and of long river-cut canyons. (*The Times of India*, January 13)

Hsu and Ryan analysed several sand-and-gravel samples fished out from the sea by the drilling vessel, the *Glomar Challenger*, and came to the conclusion that they were evaporative residues

of seawater that could have originated only from an erstwhile desert. The story they have pieced together is as follows:

Five million years ago Gibraltar was a huge dam between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Its waters got steadily saltier in the hot sun with the result that only a dwarf microfauna survived. Suddenly the dam broke and the great basin was refilled over falls 1000-fold more grand than Niagara, taking perhaps centuries to fill. No wonder the microfauna of modern Mediterranean does not resemble its predecessors of five million years ago. The old plankton families are gone, lost in the salt. The present animals are new arrivals, not original inhabitants.

The geographical distribution of land and sea on the face of the earth has changed more than once since the earliest ages. "There was a time when the delta of Egypt and North Africa belonged to Europe, before the formation of the Straits of Gibraltar, and a further upheaval of the continent changed entirely the face of the map of Europe." (S.D., II, 8)

The whole globe is convulsed periodically; and has been so convulsed, since the appearance of the First Race, four times. Yet, though the whole face of the earth was transformed thereby each time, the conformation of the arctic and antarctic poles has but little altered. . . while the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Pacific and other regions disappear and reappear in turn, into and above the great waters. (S.D., II, 776)

The Secret Doctrine adds that "Geography was part of the mysteries, in days of old" (II, 9). The *Zohar* is quoted as saying: "These secrets (of land and sea) were divulged to the men of the secret science, but not to the geographers."

The following item from the January *Mirror* (Bombay) contains food for thought:

So they are going to kill (or would "massacre" be the *mot juste*?) 260,000 cows in West Germany. No, not because there is a shortage of beef to feed hungry Germans, but, believe it or not, because there is a glut of milk in Europe! The cows must

perish because the European Economic Council has decided that milk supply in Europe must be reduced by two million tons to help keep up the price. And this when 150 million people, mostly children, are starving to death in Africa!

One wonders why those eminent personages, who hold human life in such sanctity that they sternly oppose birth control, abortion, suicide and euthanasia, are silent over this crime against man and beast. And how can people calling themselves statesmen and who preside over the destiny of the world come to such a despicable decision when they lavish billions of dollars on new methods of mass slaughter with new and better nuclear bombs, star wars, lethal chemicals and germ warfare? And what price sanctity of human life? No wonder Mark Twain remarked, "Man is the only animal that blushes or needs to blush."

Is it morally right to popularize objectionable methods of family planning among the have-nots when those who have are destroying food to maintain high prices through artificial shortages? Again and again the world has faced the situation of excess of food co-existing with hunger—yet have we learnt the lesson? The Law is not mocked; the karmic consequences of waste, on the one hand, and of artificial methods of birth control, on the other, will have to be faced sooner or later.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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