

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### SALUTATIONS TO THE REGENERATOR !

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BEFORE our next issue is out, the Hindu festival of Maha-Shiva-Ratri, the Vigil Night of Shiva, will be observed by thousands of all castes, though understandingly by very few. As the meaning and message of Christmas and Easter are not understood by the greater part of Christendom, so the festivals of Makara-Sankranti and Maha-Shiva-Ratri are not understood by millions of Hindus. Students of Theosophy should know the value of celebrating festivals of olden times which have a universal message and hold more than one meaning. Christmas is of Pagan origin, and the dread and appeasement or the devotion and sacrifice called out by Maha-Shiva-Ratri have also a very long history.

Rudra of Vedic lore, the precursor of Shiva, himself has a pre-Vedic origin. He is dreaded as the Destroyer and yearned for as the Regenerator. He has many names, each of which tells a tale. Shankara is one of His Names and as Shankara He is most auspicious. The first teacher of that name is known as the avatar of Shiva.

Shiva's title as the Patron Saint of all yogis—for he is not only Maha-Deva, the Great God, but also the Mahayogi, the Great Yogi—refers to His power which transmutes the ordinary man of rajasic passions into the chaste devotee of sattvic compassion and then into the impersonal Adept, transcending the three gunas. He is depicted as the most intellectual of the Hindu gods, for He is the God of Wisdom who insists on trying human reason as well as common-sense by forcing mankind to view with equal reverence his good and evil acts. He is a type of St. Augustine's God who “prepares Hell for pryers into his Mysteries.” The Chaste

Ascetic—and yet He is Tryambaka, the sweet-scented increaser of prosperity; the Great Dancer and Musician whose stage is the cemetery. He symbolizes and personifies the principle of Transmutation. He rewards self-effort, the disciplining of the mind by the Soul, the chastening of the Soul by the Spirit, and so He is revered by the Yogis and appealed to by the Chelas. As the Maha-Guru, the Great Guru, He is spoken of as the Master of Masters.

All students of Theosophy will do well to study the story of Shiva. Let us all derive the benefit of the real Transmutation which Wisdom applied creates. All of us should try to benefit ourselves, for the sake of the Movement; and what better method could there be than dwelling upon the meaning and message of Maha-Shiva-Ratri? The vigil of the dark night, attentively observed, will dispel the ignorance born of our separative personalities; the Light will dawn in our minds and its radiation will enable us to serve the mind of the race in its task of evolutionary transmutation.

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I unveiled the mystery of the Self  
And disclosed its wondrous secret.  
My being was an unfinished statue,  
Uncomely, worthless, good for nothing.  
Love chiselled me: I became a man  
And gained knowledge of the nature of the universe.  
I have seen the movement of the sinews of the sky,  
And the blood coursing in the veins of the moon.  
Many a night I wept for Man's sake  
That I might tear the veil from Life's mysteries,  
And extract the secret of Life's constitution  
From the laboratory of phenomena.

—MUHAMMED IQBAL

## SOUL CONTENTMENT

Our philosophy teaches us that the object of doing our duties to all men and to ourselves the last, is not the attainment of personal happiness, but of the happiness of others; the fulfilment of right for the sake of right, not for what it may bring us. Happiness, or rather contentment, may indeed follow the performance of duty, but is not and must not be the motive for it.

—*The Key to Theosophy*

HAPPINESS is not to be striven after with energy or trapped by tricks. That for which the majority of men give up so much of their lives is to be found within their hearts if the proper mental attitude be formed. Happiness or Bliss is an inner harmony, contentment of the Soul. Bliss is the centre of the mystic's consciousness. The Ancients held the key to Bliss and have bequeathed it to us as our heritage. Happiness (and its reverse) is brought about, neither by what we have or have not, nor by what we do or leave undone. Nor is it caused by our environment, which is but the outer manifestation of our inner state. Mistaking cause for effect and *vice versa*, we seek to achieve happiness by changing our surroundings instead of setting to work on ourselves. There lies the trouble. The force of outer circumstances is fixed; it is we who vary in our reaction. We would rather change the Discipline to suit us than adapt ourselves to it.

There are those who, out of tune with this world, seek a way by which the soul may realize inner contentment and peace by resolving the discordant uproar of life's moral jazz into a harmonious and rhythmic symphony. They see happiness as an end in itself, in no wise to be accounted as a mere by-product, come and go as it will, of the purposes of life—Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Work.

Here we take issue with all such. To be happy is *not* the goal of life. The pitiful state of our civilization is the inevitable result of a selfish search for personal or even limited group or national happiness. Materialistic philosophy has led to the denial of the rights of our fellow human beings, while a blasting iconoclasm has ripened on the tree of a society calling itself "civilized."

According to Theosophy, Bliss-Ananda is the highest attribute of Deity in Eastern philosophy. Such Bliss-Ananda requires resignation of Soul, which is the progeny of divine discontent, not an anxious peering about for ways to change our outer circumstances, but that discontent of the heart which alone leads to

progress from within and so brings about by the law of natural growth the changes of environment most needed by the soul. The first and requisite step is resignation to that discontent which will not let us rest one moment inactive. Satisfaction, contentment and knowledge will follow in their turn, but until resignation has taken possession of our Heart, we must remain like a rudderless ship in mid-ocean.

The first lesson such resignation brings is that happiness is to be found only in ceaselessly *becoming*, in an endless series of progressive awakenings which cleanse our life, broaden our mental horizon and purify our affections. While happiness can never be an end in itself, since its violation of the laws of Nature would bring about its own annihilation, it will yet become the predominant characteristic of him who has learnt "in whatsoever state he is, therewith to be content." He does not choose this or that state, environment or condition, but wherever he finds himself actively engaged in creative service he is filled with enjoyment. And Knowledge and Happiness go hand in hand, are one and impartite.

*"To know"*

Rather consists in opening out a way  
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,  
Than in effecting entry for a light  
Supposed to be without.

The Soul's life annihilates time; it ignores the boundaries of a single life's activities. It passes all sensible horizons in its demand for fresh fields in which to gain its needed experience. The soul is a microcosm, and is born for the happiness that flows from a cosmic, not a political or economic, life.

It is in our Soul consciousness alone that we can know happiness, never in the animal centre of the *ahankaric* man. Drowning that touchy animal identity in the ocean of Universal Life, we waken to the realization that he who would find his life must lose it. We must sacrifice our personal ideas of enjoyment, devote ourselves to a selfless labour of love for the Great Orphan Humanity. Such renunciation of life, ambition, yes of happiness itself, will, if we are patient, reveal to us that true happiness is not an art or a trick—but is in truth Life Itself.

It is by contrast that we learn and progress, that we are enabled to evaluate anything in life. The poor we have always with us, the millionaire as well. The wealth which anchors one man fast may by its absence give wings to the soul of his poor

brother. The true seeker closes his eyes to pleasures as to pain and accepts cheerfully the woes of birth as avenues for further growth and service. He cannot afford to miss a single lesson which the passing events of life, humbly bowing at his feet, offer as a sacrifice of purification and enlightenment ere they slip into the past. His heart, ceasing to be ruffled by every fitful wind of passing passion, becomes calm and limpid like a mountain lake, reflecting the same Great Law working as unerringly in the affairs of men as in "the ordered music of the marching orbs." He rests content with fate, realizing that happiness is not in what we do or have, but is vitally concerned with what we *are*. Thus his heart, like the mighty ocean, receives all streams and rivers of life, yet never quits its bed. Happiness implies increase of understanding which is inner or subjective, and its counterpart, increase of *real* altruism, which is outer or objective, and which alone brings the power to bless and serve humanity.

The old ways of life, the old standards of value, the old ideas of responsibility, must be abandoned. Experience has taught us that self-seeking is spiritual suicide, that passion, anger and avarice are the gates of Hell. To see the inwardness of *any* experience, pleasurable or painful, is productive of happiness, for in that process both joy and sorrow resolve themselves into Pure Creativeness. Passion is thereby turned to compassion, anger to patience, and avarice to generosity. Thus, opposite the gates of Hell stand those of Heaven. Peace and bliss are born of such high aspiration. Though full realization is not immediate, the altruist is content to spend his time in patient service. A new being is born in him. He realizes himself as something above likes and dislikes, beyond birth and death in space and time, eternal, persisting even when the day has ended in the night of eternity. This communion with the Higher Self will compel intelligent love and compassionate understanding of all Humanity which the seeker will recognize as himself. We cannot live in isolation. What affects one for weal or woe must affect all, for Brotherhood is a fact.

Through jungles of doubt and deserts of despair, the road, steep and rough and full of perils, leads to the Banquet Hall of the Gods, whose Nectar will not turn to gall on our lips and whose Abodes never crumble.

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THE greatest independence in the world comes not from the possession of money but in freedom from wanting to possess it.

—MAUD PARKER

## THE MISSING LINK OF SCIENCE

FORMS change continuously, but the elements of which they are constituted preserve their integrity throughout with at least a relative constancy. These elements are more or less noted, their behaviour and interactions studied, by the host of chemists, biologists and physiologists. "Chemistry and physiology," writes H. P. Blavatsky in her *Secret Doctrine*, "are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great *physical* truths." She continues (I, 636):

No doubt that the care of analyzing and classifying the human being as a *terrestrial animal* may be left to Science, which Occultists—of all men—regard with veneration and respect. They recognize its ground and the wonderful work done by it, the progress achieved in physiology, and even—to a degree—in biology. But man's *inner*, spiritual, psychic, or even moral, nature cannot be left to the tender mercies of an ingrained materialism; for not even the higher psychological philosophy of the West is able, in its present incompleteness and tendency towards a decided agnosticism, to do justice to the inner; especially to his higher capacities and perceptions, and those states of consciousness, across the road to which such authorities as Mill draw a strong line, saying "So far, and no farther shalt thou go."

Thus, the more reflective will, it is hoped, feel that there may be indeed a close relation between Science and Occultism, which is the complement and missing soul of the former. Our scientific specialists and authorities now have an inkling that their "atoms," etc., belong wholly to the domain of *meta*-physics, *meta*-chemistry, *meta*-biology; that beyond and within the field of the physical senses is Matter existing in *super*-sensuous states—states, however, as fully objective to the Inner eye of the Occultist-Scientist as a horse or a tree is to the ordinary mortal.

Until recently, indeed, such an assertion, whether of Occult knowledge itself or of living men in possession of it, would have been dismissed *a priori*. Still, as the wise Cicero remarked two millenniums ago, "Time destroys the speculations of men, but it confirms the judgment of nature." Despite the devoted assiduities of the men of modern science, its history is not the unbroken record of progress so many believe. On the contrary, that record registers a long series of failures on its own chosen route—as testified to by the succession of theories alternately accepted and discarded in the endeavour to explain the very mysteries en-

countered. Today, scientists themselves are willing to admit these failures, and a few are humble enough to begin looking outside their self-imposed limitations in research and may now be said to be "willing to learn," even from sources hitherto almost unanimously rejected out of hand, and this despite the fact that they are still unconsciously under the sway of the scientific modulus of their caste.

But that modulus itself must needs be discarded before modern science can become the pupil, and Occult Science the teacher, in any direct sense. The difficulties on both sides are great, but not insuperable. Confining the consideration to known facts, it is admitted by science itself that its basis is amoral, its methods unrestricted by ethical considerations. This is an approach to nature on precisely the same path as that of purely animal consciousness, the only distinction being that the physical and metaphysical equipment of the scientist vastly exceeds that of the animal. Science disclaims responsibility for the results accruing from its discoveries and their publicity, or for the use made of those discoveries once they are available to all and sundry. The physical and moral consequences of this attitude of mind, not less than the policy pursued, have wrought appalling havoc to humanity in general, and portend a catastrophe of immeasurable proportion unless checked. Reform, to be really ameliorative or effective, has to be undertaken by the scientists themselves.

Over against the attitude, the methods, the policy of modern science, must be placed what is reasonably certain with respect to the ageless true Occultism which is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." The first law, or rule, applicable to neophyte and adept alike, is that expressed in the Hermetic axiom: "To dare, to know, to will, and remain silent." All history is evidence of the continuous existence of the Mystery Schools, and of their guarded participation in human affairs. Every Saviour, every Hero, every Sage, along with the great Humanitarians and many, many common men, have been members of these Fraternities, or have been under their inspiration. Great as are the mysteries confronting science, they are as nothing compared to the mystery which envelops innumerable characters in human history. Every Scripture and Epic, every classical philosophy and record, bears witness to men "who come, do their work, and return" to that No-Man's-Land beyond the bourns of human science, religion, and philosophy alike. All bear the same sign manual, whatever their station, their activities, their utterances. They are marked by entire self-consecration to their task, by an intense and

sustaining love for mankind, by an inner strength and guidance absolutely immune to the influences to which even the best of ordinary men are more or less subject.

And again, it is evident that the magicians of modern science have relied fundamentally on such revelation of nature as is obtainable through the use of the physical senses only. That inner senses exist in every man which, once recognized and cultivated, open to clear perception and scientific experiments an altogether different, surer and more fruitful revelation—this has been overlooked, derided, denied by modern science as a whole. Yet all the time that science has been as steadily faced with facts inexplicable on any other assumption than that of the existence in man of a complete set of inner faculties, separable in part and as a whole from their now normal physical associations or entanglements. The mystery here may be succinctly stated in the words of *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 149):

The whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter.

This “astral body,” by whatever names it may be called, is the missing link in Western religion as well as science, theoretically, practically, and actually. Yet it is a “precision instrument” understood and used for countless ages in the Mystery Schools—incredible as the assertion may appear to those who have not troubled even to ascertain and weigh in their own scales the accessible testimony. Whoever has been at pains to do so, knows for himself that that testimony is as overwhelming as it is unimpeachable, knows for himself that modern science and religion unwittingly add to the evidence by a mountain of facts which they can no more explain than deny—which they can only neglect or capitalize, however unconsciously.

There *are* mysteries of normal waking, dreaming, and sleeping states, as well as of variations ranging all the way from genius to insanity, from individual and collective hallucinations of every description, to those deeds and writings we call inspired, arising from prophetic vision and retrospective insight. All these and many more mysterious phenomena of life are approachable between “Soul” and “Body,” between “Spirit” and “Matter.” The mysteries of birth, life, death, and rebirth, as of the intervening states from death to reincarnation—these, too, are within the province of the “astral body,” and that Hall of Mirrors—the “astral light.”

The more the subject is investigated, the more it becomes understandable why the great Teachers have preserved the extreme of reticence—yet the more it becomes an assured conviction that here lies the secret of life-and-death in every sense. But old and time-honoured errors, even though they become with every day more glaringly self-evident, yet guarded as though they were the holiest of relics—these stand arrayed in battle-order, now as in the past. Every fresh truth has to fight its way to recognition against the forces marshalled by prejudice and preconception. The *sine qua non* criterion of Occult Science is freedom from dogmas of any kind. To the extent that anyone knows anything, he is an Occultist. To the extent that he does not know, does not freely admit his own ignorance, does not gladly take the position of a learner—to that extent he is *no* Occultist, and must remain self-debarred from the Mysteries.

And when, confessedly ignorant in a given direction, a man nevertheless undertakes to prescribe the terms on which knowledge may be gained, what does he do but condemn himself to progress by the painful route of “trial and error”? Among ordinarily intelligent and educated men such a modulus would be considered appropriate only in the savage and the ignoramus—would be regarded as disqualifying the applicant for instruction. Yet, when the course of modern science and religion is observed in the round, who can fail to perceive that this is precisely the unwitting attitude maintained by many?

The history of the race is one long and woeful recital of the magic and magical arts of the fomenters of differences and divisions of opinion among those who genuinely desire to promote the common welfare. Such conscious and unconscious practisers of “Black Magic” are confined to no profession or class, no creed or country. They abound in all, but they all alike belong to one and the same dark school, whatever the uniform they indifferently don or discard. The ignoble art of intelligent, trained selfishness must necessarily triumph over the misdirected, undisciplined, ignorant efforts of those between whose “good motives” and whose conduct there lies the unexplored terrain of “human nature,” with its endless admixtures of “mental deposits” from the unrecognized and therefore unreckoned past of the race and of the individual.

It is against this almost universal ignorance and misconception of the triune nature of man, of the threefold Karma of the beginningless past and endless future, that the Great Teachers and their Disciples have to contend in every present passing moment.

The whole struggle may, perhaps, be illustrated in three terms of chemistry and biology—the cell, the crystal, the colloid. To grasp the force of the illustration, one has but to reflect that these represent the two basic forms of the organic and the so-called inorganic kingdoms of the matter our senses reveal to us, plus the connecting up-or-down link between them. The constant and continuous cycle from mineral dust to the physical man, and then, in the accepted ritual of speech, once more “ashes to ashes”—this cycle is little weighed for its possibilities of disclosure, even from the purely materialistic, let alone the psychic point of view.

For one thing, it reveals the cycle of transmigration and metempsychosis which forms the physical side of the mystical teachings in the various religions, whatever their apparent diversities. For another, it shows that great as are the differences among creeds and sects, arising from the misuse of the psychological senses, they are no greater than the warring theories of the sciences and scientists that rely upon the physical senses. Moreover, the too-often savage nature of religious dissensions, as contrasted with the amiable mutual contradictions of scientific disputation—this, too, is amenable to an altogether different interpretation from that of either theology or materialism, or of the exegetes of both in prevalent philosophy, metaphysics and psychology. Such immoral use of their own ethical capital springs from two underlying misconceptions: confusion of the psychic with the spiritual; ignorance of the laws of Occult dynamics.

Applying the same theorem to the physical sciences in general, and to chemistry and biology in particular, it is clear from their own researches that all the processes of physical generation are included in the ascent from the crystalline through the colloidal to the cellular; all the processes of physical existence and dissolution, in the reversion from the cellular through the colloidal back to the crystalline state. This cyclic circulation, which in biology is called metabolism, is modifiable and modified in countless ways—a few recognized, the many merely guessed at.

Having due regard for the difficulties of language as well as of the mind, it may not be considered inappropriate or without measure of scientific warrant, positive as well as negative, to suggest that the “astral” or psychic side of nature, ignored or neglected by modern science, is the inviting open door to the very factual knowledge that science so industriously seeks.

“Nature’s Finer Forces,” to quote the phrase that applies to the subject-matter in hand, cannot be understood, cannot be studied

to any advantage, without the postulation of "astral substance" intermediate between mind and matter, as the colloid is intermediate between cell and crystal. But that "matter" is the *molecular* containment of both—matter, as invisible and intangible to the physical senses as the "forces" and "energies" of science. Is the one to be rejected, but the others accepted, on identically the same grounds that they do not lend themselves to the scalpel, the culture-medium, the microscope, and the other devices of the physicist? For all anyone knows to the contrary, the "molecules" of science *are* the "astral matter" of the Occultist; the "chemical messengers" of the biologist identical with the "elementals."

Modern physics, while borrowing from the ancients their atomic theory, forgot one point, the most important of the doctrine. For lack of this great philosophical principle, all the indefatigable efforts of modern science to probe the very mysteries of "force and matter" unearthed by themselves, have ended, as they must ever end, in failure until that principle is recognized. Science has taken the husk and ignored the kernel, in the adoption of merely "physical" atoms, molecules, whatnot.

Science is in itself wholly soulless; its motives are, on the one hand, an insatiable curiosity; on the other, an equally insatiable lust for power over the forces of nature. Such passions carried *practically* into the unseen planes can lead to black magic. To the scientist, an intimation of the astral plane means an opportunity to "project the astral body"; the possibility of clairvoyance means prying into other people's affairs for the welfare of "society" or himself; the world of "shells" beyond the grave means the satiation of curiosity as to after-death states; the world of primordial force means the unlocking of the atom to the utter destruction of such civilization as we have. Science is the physical body of knowledge; psychism is the middle principle. Neither, without the soul-light of Theosophy, can be other than downward in tendency. A thoroughgoing education in Theosophy can save the successful investigator into realms physical and psychic from the abyss.

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## THE PATH OF BEAUTY

THE extent and the nature of the influence of literature and the arts in engendering or enhancing the sense of appreciation of the beautiful has been discussed and debated at length. And the conclusion generally arrived at is that our environment coloured by beauty does tend to mellow our nature and to impart a touch of graciousness to our manner. An individual's ability to appreciate the beauty all around him is, like all of his other faculties, capable of being cultivated. One of the main ways of unfolding that capacity is the deliberate culturing of his own consciousness, surrounded by a million aspects and a million objects of beauty. Educationists and social reformers recognize the value of awakening and strengthening in the pupil as in the slum-dweller the ability to absorb and to appreciate Beauty. True evolution teaches us that by altering the surroundings of the organism we can alter and improve the organism. Therefore is the poet, the playwright, the singer, the sculptor and every other artist an educationist of a very special kind, whose value to his own country and to humanity at large is most difficult to appraise. In the debt which the layman owes to the creator of beauty is the incalculable extent of the latter's influence in arousing the creative faculty itself in the layman.

Evolution does not proceed from without within; otherwise with all the beauty which is spread abroad by nature and by man there would be a noble race of heroes existing today instead of a race of pigmies which meanly and conceitedly indulges in hatred and in cruelty and in marring that beauty itself. From within without is the course of evolution: unless an individual acts from within, he cannot become a creator. The knowledge of choosing paints and brushes and of copying on fresh canvas the masterpiece of some genius has its value. Such knowledge is helpful; it makes an educated man, but not a creator. None can educate humanity by outer impacts only so that it shall be in entire harmony with surrounding Nature—a cosmos of the true, the good and the beautiful. That art by which an individual is so awakened that he perceives the intrinsic worth of self-culture, and taking himself in hand educates himself as a creator of truth, virtue and beauty, is real.

An expectant mother surrounded by objects of beauty will derive the psychological assistance which they give and their influence absorbed by her will contribute its quota of beauty to the process of foetus-building; but the moods of the mother have

a far more powerful effect on the growing embryo. A hundred shapes of exquisite beauty remain useless to an expectant mother whose consciousness is tarnished by gloom or despair. So also, unless men and women look to their own consciousness, however much they may educate themselves, they will not go very far on the Path of Beauty.

There is the factor of symbolism used by the creators of great works. The nature of great art is symbolic and often the symbols are not self-consciously and deliberately used; sometimes the symbolism is as true as it is profound because it is not made by the mind of the artist but descends from spheres beyond that of conscious thinking. The deciphering and the assimilation of symbolism is one task of the treader of the Path of Beauty.

There is the great force which truth imparts to words in the remarks of Henry David Thoreau in *Walden*:

It is something to be able to paint a particular picture, or to carve a statue, and so to make a few objects beautiful; but it is far more glorious to carve and paint the very atmosphere and medium through which we look, which morally we can do. To affect the quality of the day, that is the highest of arts.

This is very much in line with ancient Indian thought which requires art to take note not merely of form but also of what lies behind. Gandhi once said: "There is an art that kills and an art that gives life. All true art must help the soul to realize its Inner Self."

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IF we are ever to enjoy life, now is the time—not tomorrow, nor next year, nor in some future life after we have died. The best preparation for a better life next year is a full, complete, harmonious, joyous life this year. Our beliefs in a rich future life are of little importance unless we coin them into a rich present life. Today should always be our wonderful day.

—THOMAS DREIER

## THE PATH OF THE INQUIRER

THROUGH its meetings, periodicals and publications, sincere efforts are being made by the United Lodge of Theosophists to shed the lustre of wisdom on the path of inquirers and students. Everyone drawn into the beneficent orbit of Theosophy is helped, in proportion to his own self-induced and self-devised efforts and the sincerity of his self-examination, to find his own place on the path to perfection. From this vantage-ground he can take stock of progress in controlling lower propensities and can estimate the trials through which he has to pass before the journey's end, before he can see in his own self the Self of all.

The impersonal philosophy, while mindful of Karmic disabilities, racial and particular, cannot but stress the ultimate ideas of life—difficult though they be to realize and to substitute for the easy expedients into which most of us are tempted to drift. Our willing submission to the lure of the low has made stupendous additions on the debit side of our Karmic ledger. It becomes our Dharma to find ways and means to square this old account before we can make a new start on a clean slate.

Luckily, there are many among us who have an uneasy feeling that all is not well with our world and that there may be something, somewhere, different and better. This presupposes, whether we are cognizant of the fact or not, that most of us have had some contact with ethical truths in prior incarnations. This is why all great Teachers have advised man to search his heart and to heed the whisperings of the inner voice. This is also why sincerity of heart is stressed. Views sincerely held may vary as souls differ in their experience, progress and capacity, but sincerity there must be, the yearning for a truthful life to the extent of present possibilities. A man accustomed to speak the truth at all times is untrue to himself if he utters but one lie; while another, by a single effort at speaking the truth, raises himself to that extent.

Once the desire springs in the heart of an individual to improve his lot spiritually, he sees the necessity of self-examination, and the teachings of Theosophy provide him with a balance and a measuring-rod.

An earnest desire to know oneself, as one is at the core, is in itself an achievement of some importance, because, for the fulfilment of this desire one needs all the sincerity, honesty, humility and courage of which one is capable. Such a desire implies not only courage to face one by one one's own creations of the lower

self—the elusive skeletons in the cupboard. It implies also that one is resolved to lay hold of them, to pull them out of hiding and to crush and kill them.

If we energize ourselves we can set up an inner court of inquiry, with most of the constituents of a mundane Court of Law. There is each one's Divine Self to preside as judge. If the incarnated ego be divided into its component parts, the animal soul is the accused on trial; and the human soul is the complainant. The Voice of Conscience—the connecting link between the lower and the higher selves—assumes the role of prosecutor.

But there must be no advocates, with their excuses, arguments and specious pleadings of extenuating circumstances. A just and compassionate Karma takes care of all the extenuating circumstances that we can justly plead. There is no occasion to vitiate a self-induced honest inquiry into one's inner condition by making excuses for the accused. The subtle lower self will not fail to take advantage of the slightest leniency on the part of the prosecutor, to frustrate the purpose of the self-examination. What is discovered with courage must be honestly placed before the Divine Self for judgement, and the verdict received in all humility by the ego, who has then to carry out the court's decree.

Humble acceptance of responsibility for what we are saves us from many a pitfall and much bitterness. It opens out vast vistas of the upward path of life. It broadens our sympathies and makes us view with forbearance and generosity faults and foibles in others. It makes us more responsive to the cry of suffering from far and near and thus takes us towards the realization of Universal Brotherhood. It composes the inner conflict and is indispensable to that true concept of life, based on altruism and non-attachment, which is the harbinger of the peace and the bliss for which all yearn, but which only those who give up all can hope to achieve.

As we think, so we will become, tomorrow or after many days. While the desires that ruled us were unbalanced and lacked one-pointedness, the propelling force of Will was allowed to dissipate. When the lower personality has been put under check, thoughts and desires become inevitably focused on a higher and nobler way of life. When service is recognized as the means and self-effacement as the end, the concentrated Will will bring us through the raging sea of worldly ambition, egotism and passion, to a safe anchorage in the port of peace.

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## ARE OUR THOUGHTS OUR OWN?

H. P. BLAVATSKY never tired of declaring that the philosophy she gave out was none of her invention; that she but reiterated what she had been taught; or, in the words of Montaigne quoted by her in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, xlvi), "I have here made only a nosegay of culled flowers, and have brought nothing of my own but the string that ties them."

No true spiritual Teacher has ever claimed to be a revealer of a new doctrine that had not been known and taught before his time. Even in our own day and age when "originality" is made much of, profound thinkers have corroborated the vital idea that there is nothing new under the sun, that nothing can be said or written, or even imagined, that has not been anticipated by men in the past. "As soon as we are born, the world begins to work upon us," writes Goethe, "and this goes on to the end. If I could give an account of all that I owe to great predecessors and contemporaries, there would be but a small balance in my favour." And, according to Voltaire, "originality is nothing but judicious imitation. The most original writers borrowed one from another." Literature is full of "coincidences" which some call plagiarism. But just as, in the words of Montaigne, "the bees pillage the flowers here and there but they make honey of them which is all their own," so also a truly creative writer transforms and mixes up what he has borrowed from others into a work all his own.

Literary piracy has only lately been considered wrong at all. The concept of property rights in works of the mind dates back no farther than the printing-press. The Roman law provided quaintly, as Blackstone points out, that anything written on another's paper or parchment was the property of the owner of the blank materials! It seems absurd to us today, but is it any more so than some of the views current on the subject of plagiarism?

What constitutes plagiarism? According to Webster, a plagiarist is "one who plagiarizes, or purloins the words, writings or ideas of another, and passes them off as his own; a literary thief." Obviously an unauthorized edition of a living author's book, an unacknowledged reprint of his article or poem, constitutes literary piracy. Even a particularly felicitous and characteristic combination of words, which in its brief completeness constituted a motto or a maxim, would be claimable as the brain property of the author, and the giving out of it by another as his own would properly be stigmatized as plagiarism. But we have a quarrel

with Webster's sweeping definition on two counts: first, the fantastic implication that can be read into it that certain words *qua* words can belong to one man who may forbid their use by others, and secondly, the no less debatable assumption that a man's thoughts are exclusively his individual production and his own private property.

The former could be stretched to bring under Webster's condemnation every man who puts his pen to paper. For who does not depend on others' words for his own self-expression? What a world it would be if men could fence off words as they have fenced off land, and forbid the rest of us to trespass on their property! Obviously, Webster's definition must not be stretched too far in that direction.

But what about ideas? Does the lapidary who cuts and polishes the precious stone steal credit from the man who brought it from the mine? And the goldsmith who in turn sets the jewel, does he rob the lapidary of his due? Or, to borrow a simile from skiing, does it constitute a theft to use another's thought as the ramp from which to soar off into space?

The changes have been rung so many times upon a charge of plagiarism that one who hurls the epithet of "plagiarist" today almost inevitably lays himself open to a *tu quoque* retort. The accused, moreover, finds himself in most distinguished company. Has it not been proved that even Shakespeare's plays did not all spring, Minerva-like, full-panoplied from the brain of the Jupiter of English letters? Some are of humbler ancestry, tracing their plots, their incidents and their characters to the fancies of probably deservedly obscure Italian writers. Their dross was turned by Shakespeare's genius into gold. Was any man the poorer for that unacknowledged borrowing?

Longfellow likewise drew without acknowledgment upon the German translation, then but little known, of the Finnish saga, the *Kalevala*, for *Hiawatha*, his inspiring epic of the legendary hero of the North American Indians. Was the *Kalevala* or were its bards the poorer for the opening of its treasures to the English-speaking world without the label of their country of origin? For *Hiawatha* was not a translation in the strict sense; it was an adaptation of the *Kalevala* to an alien land and an alien people, and the greatness of a national epic is never more vividly evident than when such a successful adaptation proves the universality of its appeal.

The Hindi *Ramayana* of Tulsidas, to take an example from Indian literature, is no mere translation but deservedly ranks as

a great original composition, though owing its main inspiration to the genius of Valmiki who gave the world the Sanskrit *Ramayana* in its present form. The gold has been melted and poured into a fresh mould; a new stamp has been put upon the coin; that is all. Men do not ask from what mine gold has come before they will accept it and add it to their wealth.

Cases could be multiplied of gifted authors being taxed with using as their raw materials thoughts partly processed by their predecessors. What obligation lies upon an author to proclaim each book that he has ever read, to docket, as it were, the source of every thought? We are reminded of a reflection of sage Epictetus which seems apposite:

As sheep do not bring their food to the shepherds to show how much they have eaten, but, digesting inwardly their provender, bear outwardly wool and milk, even so do not thou, for the most part, display the maxims before the vulgar, but rather the works which follow from them when they are digested.

Is not the fact as Dr. Cromwell stated it, that "true talent will become original in the very act of engaging itself with the ideas of others"? Or, as Milson wrote: "Such kind of borrowing as this, *if it be not bettered* by the borrower, is accounted plagiary." Judicial interpretation of the English copyright law, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* tells us, has set up as the criterion of originality in a literary production "whether the author or compiler has really put his own brain-work into it."

What is an *original* idea, and are any thoughts in very truth our own? The whole conception of thought piracy, it seems, springs from a shopkeeping mentality and from ignorance of the laws that govern thought. "My" and "mine" and their equivalents in every tongue are ugly words at best, but they are nevermore repellent—nay, more false—than on the lips of artist or of thinker. Either, by his greater sensitiveness than most men possess, is enabled to catch a clearer reflection from the world of ideas than is vouchsafed to the average man. The West has had no conception of that world except from such vague hints as it has gleaned from Plato's Archetypes and from the Astral Light of the Western Kabalists, of which Eliphas Levi particularly wrote so mysteriously.

The hypothesis of such a supersensuous medium, where all men's thoughts are stored to be reflected thence into receptive minds, seems to offer a valuable clue for research into thought transference, which has of late been engaging the attention of

sober scientists. It would explain, for instance, as apparently nothing else can, why "literary doubles" are so common a phenomenon, why so often two or more independent authors start almost simultaneously to write biographies of the same individual, sometimes of one little in the public eye. Especially it gives a hint worth following up for many cases of apparent pilfering of others' thoughts, in which the "plagiarist" stoutly denies that he has ever seen the work he is accused of copying.

From a slightly different point of view, the frequency of plagiarism innocent of fraudulent intention affords a striking proof of the fact of human solidarity. Our minds are "bibulous of the sea of thought" in which we move and which is so much our native element that we are no more aware of it than fish may be supposed to realize that they are in the sea. A thought is no man's individual production but each man, like a worker in the assembling-plant of a great factory, may add what he can to a thought as it passes him. Carlyle has seen it in a flash of intuition thus:

Beautiful it is to understand and know that a Thought did never yet die; that as thou, the originator thereof, hast gathered it and created it from the whole Past, so thou wilt transmit it to the whole Future.

Let us take all knowledge to be our province, for truth is the monopoly of no individual. Let him who would be an original thinker follow the example of the Wise Men of the early Fifth Race who passed *lives* in learning the laws and principles of life handed down by their Predecessors. Original thinking in the true sense, therefore, is the tracing back of all thought to *origins*, to first principles, and the conscious evaluation of every proposition on that basis. It is not "something new" that is needed, but a new way of looking at what is before us.

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A MORAL lesson is like a liniment in a bottle: it helps nobody till after it is rubbed in around the sore spot. And the best way to rub it in is to handle the job yourself. If you let other people do it, they take the skin off.

—H. WINSLOW

## A MEDIAEVAL MYSTIC

### John Scotus Erigena

[This concluding part of Dr. Margaret Smith's series is reprinted from *The Aryan Path*, December 1936.]

JOHN the Scot (Johannes Scotus), known as Erigena, was a Celt, who was born, most probably in Ireland, between A.D. 800 and 815, and he was still living in A.D. 877. The details of his biography are very scanty and little is known of his early life. It is said that he travelled widely, in Greece, Italy and Gaul, and that he studied not only Greek, but Arabic and Chaldean. His appreciation of Greek thought and his knowledge of the philosophy of the Alexandrian school lend some support to the view that he may have travelled in Greece. He appears to have been neither priest nor monk, but a layman, though he was the most eminent doctor of his time. The story that he was invited to France by Charlemagne and was one of the founders of the University of Paris is not supported by trustworthy evidence.

Charles the Bald, the youngest son of Louis the Pious of France, who was made King of Aquitaine in A.D. 832, aimed at being considered a great patron of learning, and to this end invited to his court some of the most distinguished scholars of the time, so that it was popularly asserted that Greece was deserted of her learned men and Ireland denuded of her philosophers, through their attraction to the Frankish Court. Among those who were drawn to this centre of intellectual life was John Scotus, later called Erigena, who settled there about A.D. 843, probably at the invitation of Charles the Bald, who gave the Irish scholar a warm welcome. Scotus came to be on terms of intimate friendship with his enlightened patron, by whom he was appointed to the Mastership of the Court school (*Schola Palatina*) at Paris, which though not yet the ordinary seat of government, was a favourite residence of the king. At the Court of Charles he lived and wrote. There was a story current in later years, but not well authenticated, that in A.D. 882 he was invited by Alfred the Great to Oxford, and William of Malmesbury, writing in the first half of the twelfth century, tells of the coming of John Scotus to Malmesbury Abbey as master of the monastic school, and of his being murdered by his pupils there; but the historicity of this is also somewhat doubtful.

Not long after his arrival at Charles's Court, the Irish scholar,

who was recognized as a man of wide learning for his times, was given opportunity to prove the value of his scholarship to his adopted country. In 827 the Byzantine Emperor Michael had sent to Louis the Pious a copy of the works of the Syrian monk Dionysius, the so-called Areopagite, whose mystical theosophy, though Christian in form, was based mainly on Neo-Platonist sources. The gift was deposited in the Abbey of St. Denys (near Paris), who was identified with Dionysius the Areopagite, and search was made for a translator who could make known to the Western world the contents of the books. Erigena, with his reputation for Greek scholarship, seemed marked out for the task, and he was therefore commanded to translate the Dionysian writings into Latin. He was responsible for the translation of *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, *The Divine Names*, *The Mystical Theology*, and the *Letters* of Dionysius.

The introduction of these books to the West was momentous in its ultimate consequences, but it was no less so in its immediate effect upon their translator, for it was after this that he appears to have made a study of the teachings of Plato, Aristotle and Porphyry, as well as the writings of Maximus, Gregory of Nazianus, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine and Boethius.

Erigena, in addition to translating the writings of the pseudo-Dionysius, wrote commentaries on them, and also treatises on *The Soul's Coming Forth from God and Its Return to Him* and on the *Vision of God*, but his most famous works were those on Nature (*De Divisione Naturae*) and Predestination (*De Divina Praedestinatione*).

Erigena's system is a combination of Neo-Platonic mysticism, emanationism and pantheism, linked up with Christian doctrine in a metaphysical scheme which he has succeeded in making very complete. In his methods of thought, in his opinions, and in his style of setting them forth, he stands alone in his age, in which, says one writer, "he appears as a meteor, none knew whence." In his originality and his uniqueness he is to be compared to that earlier Neo-Platonic mystic, Iamblichus (c. A.D. 284 - c. A.D. 330).

In his treatise on Predestination, Erigena states his view that true religion and true philosophy are identical, and that the solution of religious problems can only be effected by the study of philosophy—a re-echo of Iamblichus—and true philosophy, he holds, rests on the basis of the Unity of God. In his teaching on the nature of the Godhead, the Ultimate Reality, Erigena insists on this truth from first to last. "Nature," by which he means all

that has existence, of which the mind can take cognizance, he divides into four classes: Firstly, that which is creative but not created, the First Principle, the Absolute Godhead, Ultimate Reality; secondly, that which is both creative and created, the prototypes or primordial causes, which are identical with God, the Divine attributes of goodness, wisdom, power, majesty, which are united in the Godhead and diffused in the world of phenomena; thirdly, that which is created but not creative, reality, emanating from God, the Absolute Reality, passing through the ideas into the region of the sensible world and becoming subject to multiplicity, change, imperfection and decay; fourthly, that which is neither creative nor created, the Ultimate Reality under the aspect of rest, when all things have returned into the primal Unity, and God shall be All in All.

The fundamental thought in Erigena's doctrine is that Nature, the Universe, the Totality of existence, is God, the Only Reality manifested in plurality in the world of individual existence, which is in truth but a theophany, a showing forth of the Divine Essence in the things created. "All things are from God," he writes, "and God is in all things and nothing has been made apart from Him, since from Him and by Him and in Him are all things [made]."<sup>1</sup> His pantheistic trend is made even plainer in his statement that "God is everything that truly is, since He makes all things and is made in all things."<sup>2</sup> Real being and absolute perfection belong to God alone—all else has only derived and imperfect being. "The being of all things is the Over-being of God." But the Absolute Reality is above all categories and therefore it is safer, Erigena holds, to use regarding that Reality the negative mode of predication, and say what God is not, rather than what He is; and it is not improper to call Him Nothing (*Nihil*), being Incomprehensible Essence. Only in this sense can creation be considered as a making of something out of Nothing, for actually all proceeds from God, who is predicateless Being. "Creation" is the manifestation of the Divine Thought, the unfolding of the Divine Nature, and as the Ideas which emanate from the Infinite Essence are eternal, manifesting themselves in the world of creatures, so also creation is eternal, timeless.

Erigena deals very fully with the problem of evil, in his consideration of the Nature of God. What is good, he declares, cannot be the cause of evil, nor can the Totality of Being be the cause of what destroys being—misery, sin and death. Therefore things have reality only if they are good: "being without well-being is

<sup>1</sup> *De Divisione Naturae*, III, 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 4.

nought." Evil possesses no substantial existence; it does not come within the knowledge of God. Since there is no necessity above God, what is true of the Divine will is true of predestination and there can be no movement of the Divine will towards evil. Predestination, which Erigena distinguishes from foreknowledge, is therefore in one direction only, not towards sin and punishment, but towards grace and eternal happiness. The only sense in which Determinism can be accepted is that of God's permission of what happens to the creature through His gift of free will, but God cannot know of evil, for if He did, He would be its cause; the Divine knowledge cannot be separated from the Divine will, which is the cause of all things; evil, then, in relation to God, is simply the negation of good.<sup>3</sup>

Erigena conceives of the Nature of God as a Trinity in Unity, representing Being, Wisdom and Energy, but these are only nominal distinctions, not representing distinctions, not representing distinction of essence in the Godhead.

Man is the culmination of the process of being from God, for he is the summing up of Nature, being possessed of reason, understanding and sense, combining the highest and the lowest elements, the "meeting point" between creation and the Creator.

He understands and reasons as an angel; he has senses and administers the body as an animal.

Man is made in the image of God and the soul partakes of celestial being, but the union of Divine and human can only be adequately contemplated in the Heavenly Man, the Word Incarnate, the supreme theophany.<sup>4</sup> Man, then, in his inmost essence, is one with God.

In so far as man participates in the Divine and heavenly life he is not [an] animal, but by means of his reason and intellect and his thoughts of what is eternal, he partakes of celestial being. In that part of him, then, is he made in the image of God, whereby alone God holds converse in men who are fitted for it.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Cf. R. Browning:

"The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound;  
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much good more;  
On the earth the broken arcs, in the heaven, a perfect round."

<sup>4</sup> The doctrine of the Heavenly Man, or the Primal Idea of man, was found in Proclus and later, as the Perfect Man, the copy of God, and the archetype of Nature, uniting the Creative and the creaturely aspects of the Divine Essence, manifesting the oneness of Thought with things, in the teaching of the Sūfi al-Jīlī (A.D. 1365 - A.D. 1406).

<sup>5</sup> *De Div. Nat.*, IV, 5.

Erigena regards man also as representing a trinity in unity, for he says that there is a threefold motion or rotation of man about the Divine Centre. The first and innermost circle is that described by the Intellect, that power of intuition which recognizes God as the Principle of its attraction, and the Source of its enlightenment, but recognizes Him as the Absolute and Incomprehensible Reality. The second circle is that of Reason (the Logos or discursive faculty) which recognizes and acknowledges God as the primary Cause of all that exists, and realizes His action through the primordial ideas. The third motion is that of the "senses," which is the perception of the working out of those ideas in individual action.

Man has free will as part of his nature, whereby he is made in the image of God, and this leads him to sin when it is attracted to what is outward and lower rather than to the inward and the higher. Erigena quotes the case of two men looking at a golden vase, in one of whom it arouses feelings of admiration and in the other of envy, but there is no evil in the vase which is the object of these feelings.

The evil, therefore, is not implanted in human nature, but it is caused by the perverse and irrational action of his reasonable and free will.<sup>6</sup>

The senses are attracted to what appears to be good, and so the inner man "wherein naturally dwelleth truth and all good" becomes corrupt and sins. Evil, then, exist only in the perverted tendency of the human will, which is in itself good. But as it cannot be said that God knows of evil, so also man when he assumes the Divine point of view and considers the All in its entirety, sees nothing evil, and the Divine part of man must in the end reassert its power. Evil, therefore, will come to an end and will not remain, since in all the Divine nature will manifest itself.

Our nature, then, does not remain fixed in evil: it is ever moving forward and seeks naught else but the highest good, from which as from a beginning its motion takes its source and to which it is hastened as to an end.<sup>7</sup>

The soul, therefore, seeks to return whence it came; and it begins the ascent when it discovers the illusion of the evil at which it has been aiming, and so is delivered from sin. Since the whole

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 16.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 25.

realm of created nature is a theophany, the soul can attain thereby to a knowledge of God, recognizing His Being through the being of created things, His Wisdom through their order and harmony, His life-giving Energy through their activity and movement. So, to Erigena, all Nature is instinct with God, all is sacramental, the material pointing to the spiritual.

The human soul itself is the chief manifestation of the Divine, wherein His Presence may be known and felt.

As many as are the souls of the faithful, so many are the theophanies.<sup>8</sup>

So the soul realizes that its chief end is to become one with God through becoming like Him, an end to be attained by purification, enlightenment and completion. The stages of the return to final unity, corresponding to the stages in the creative process, are numerous and are reached and passed by degrees. Sin is selfishness and selfishness is the destructive influence which keeps man from realizing his capacities, so that he must first be cleansed from self-centred sin, and then, by the contemplation of virtue, the soul can be changed into that which it contemplates,<sup>9</sup> and the growth and establishment of the virtues means the gradual deification of the soul. By the help of the Divine grace man can rise superior to the needs of the animal body, and learn to place the demands of reason above those of the bodily desires. From the stage where reason is uppermost he can ascend through contemplation to the sphere of the primordial ideas, and thence by intuition—that gnosis which is insight into the Divine mysteries—to God Himself.

Reason, contemplation and intuition are the three degrees by which perfection is attained, and man must pass through these if he is to free himself finally and completely from that bondage into which he has been cast by sin, and attain to that union with the Divine in which salvation consists. That ultimate goal is deification; theosis, resumption into the Divine Being, when the individual soul is raised to a full knowledge of God and there is no more opposition of thought and being, for knowledge and being have become one. In the contemplation of the Absolute Nothing, the pure and perfected soul at last loses itself, yet this is not annihilation, for its individuality is preserved.

This therefore is the end of all things visible and invisible, when all visible things pass into the intellectual and the intelec-

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 8, 9, 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 9.

tual into God, by a marvellous and indescribable union, but not, as we have said before now, by any destruction of essences or substances.<sup>10</sup>

The soul has now attained to that full knowledge of God in which the knowing and known are become one. And this deification is to be not only of the individual soul, but of the universe, for all things are to return unto God, and in this restoration and redemption of the universe, evil vanishes away.

After all things have been restored to the Divine unity, there is no further creation. The ultimate unity is called the end of all things. This is the fourth class of those into which Erigena divided Nature, that "which neither is created nor creates," for after all things have returned into it, nothing further will proceed from it by generation in place and time, in kind or form, since all will be at rest within it and will remain an unchanged and undivided One, for God has become All in all.

Erigena's teaching, therefore, rests on a pantheistic basis, a philosophical system derived from Neo-Platonism, the result of the profound influence exercised upon him by his study of the pseudo-Dionysius. Like Origen before him, he endeavoured to lay a philosophical foundation for his theology, and he was, in fact, a Christian theosophist.

Though the doctrines of John the Scot appeared sufficiently unorthodox to draw upon him ecclesiastical censure, they were so far in advance of the ideas of his time that they were not generally understood in his own age. He left some few disciples, but it was not until much later that the value of his writings came to be realized. It was through him that the influence of the so-called Dionysius was transmitted to the West and it was in the speculative spirit of John the Scot that both the scholasticism and the mysticism of the Middle Ages had their rise.

—MARGARET SMITH

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 20.

For the life of John Scotus Erigena, *cf.* William of Malmesbury; A. Gardner, "Studies in John the Scot."

For his teaching, *cf.* his *De Divisione Naturae* and *De Praedestinatione* (Migne. *Patrologia* XXII); F. D. Maurice, *Mediaeval Philosophy*; R. L. Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediaeval Thought*.

## THE PROCESS OF GROWTH

AS children learning to walk, we have all endured falls and hurts; bruised knees and twisted ankles are all a part of that learning. But from these stepping-stones have we gained a stronger and firmer foothold. Bitterly have we wept for our shattered toys; their broken pieces have left us broken-hearted. But over the dead baby self have we risen to reason. Then why not from reason to reality? The disappointments of love and despairs of life have aroused the responsibility of age and sense, and have tightened the chord of dispassion. Then why not from there onward and upward to perfect balance and unity supreme?

Failures, dejection, and sorrow—what lessons have they not taught? How have we climbed the stepping-stones? We have come to strength from mental suffering, to sympathy from heart anguish, to endurance from injustice, to faith from doubt, to song born of gloom; to golden virtues of patience and of perseverance forged on the anvil of grief by the hammer of resignation. But in none of this process of growth have we been the mere passive recipients of impressions, whether from outer events or from inner fluctuations of mood. For it is not the experiences through which a person passes that build desirable qualities into his character, but rather his own assimilation of those experiences that enriches him. Any given experience may be for anyone a stepping-stone—but it may equally well be a stumbling-block. Which it shall be depends in every case upon the person himself. One may pass through grief after grief, experience bereavement of one object of attachment after another and may suffer no less intensely at each successive loss, until from within oneself one evokes the recognition that *all* objects of desire are illusory and that real and lasting satisfaction can be found only in the eternal. How many, how many, go through experience but learn not, and so “change the place, but keep the pain”!

Death of hopes which are illusions gives birth to reliance and trust in permanent things; death of false notions brings in its train the birth of true ideas; death of diseased mind and heart creates true understanding; death of fancy and day-dreaming leads to creative faculties. From dead selves does one rise to higher things. “Storms of disappointment or terrible upheavals from tremendous sorrows bring about those silences in which the Voice of the Soul has perchance a better opportunity of being heard.”

“No man is your enemy; no man is your friend. All alike are

your teachers." Apparent enemies, our unknown and unrecognized friends, have led us on, each one step forward. It is a lesson in itself that has to be learnt—to cease to look upon some as personal friends and personal enemies and to begin to value them as impersonal teachers; then comes the experience—none remains unknown to us, all become brethren.

Clinging affection, sacrificing love, impersonal compassion are the stepping-stones of the path that winds upwards from childish impulse to manly reason, from maturing judgment to challenging intuition, from mystic insight to full realization.

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FOR a kindness as small as a drop of water one should give in return a whole spring. (Chinese)

If you know what hurts yourself you know what hurts others. (Malagasy)

The garment in which you clothe another will last longer than that in which you clothe yourself. (Arabic)

Our own sacred—neighbour's more sacred. (Czech)

He that loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law. (Hebrew)

You will meet your good deed again. (Estonian)

If we could all be courteous for even a single day, the hatreds of humanity would turn to love. (Chinese)

After the game, the king and the pawn go into the same bag. (Italian and English)

The beginning and the end reach out their hands to each other. (Chinese and other countries)

Half an orange tastes as sweet as a whole one. (Chinese)

What flowers are to garden, spices to food, gems to a garment, and stars to heaven, such are proverbs interwoven in speech. (Hebrew)

—ANCIENT PROVERBS

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Embracing as it does both the scientific and the religious spheres, Theosophy has rightly been defined by W. Q. Judge as "a scientific religion and a religious science." At one time there was thought to be an impassable chasm between the two. The gap has narrowed over the years, and leading lights in their respective fields are now talking in terms of a "synthesis."

Some distinguished scientists, philosophers, theologians and scholars from all over the world met in Bombay in mid-January for a four-day World Congress for the Synthesis of Science and Religion, organized by the Bhaktivedanta Institute. The Congress was inaugurated by the Dalai Lama and the participants included Dr. George Wald, biologist and Nobel laureate from Harvard University, Prof. Joseph Weizenbaum, computer sciences expert from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Dr. Richard L. Gregory, director of Brain and Perceptions Lab, Bristol University, Prof. Harvey Cox of the School of Divinity, Harvard University, Dr. Raja Ramanna, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and Prof. E. C. G. Sudarshan, noted physicist and director of the Institute of Mathematics Science, Madras.

In his inaugural address the Dalai Lama said that science needed right motivation which spiritual values could supply. Science without compassion could lead to disaster. Narrow specialization was harmful, as everything in nature was correlated. The problems facing us called for a solution within the framework of the "whole"; hence the need for a synthesis of science and religion. The relationship between matter and mind, or consciousness, needed to be explored. "This will result in new conceptions leading to universal responsibility in all areas," the Dalai Lama opined.

Delivering the key-note address on "Cosmology and Mind," Prof. George Wald said that Consciousness is not approachable by science and it is going to stay that way, for consciousness cannot be located in the brain or the central nervous system since it has no location. However, he discounted the view that consciousness was something personal and did not belong to science; no science could exist if there was no consciousness. "Every good scientist is also a philosopher. Science is ultimately a religious vocation," he remarked; but this has nothing to do with institutionalized religion. Mind or consciousness was not, as hitherto believed by scientists, a late product of evolution; mind had always been there and mind and matter were complementaries

of reality, Prof. Wald said. Eastern philosophers knew it millennia ago and spoke of the "thought" of the universe, and modern physicists are rediscovering what was known of old.

"Science is one of the paths to approach the universal questions: what are we, where are we, where have we come from and where do we go; and anyone living with these questions is religious," Prof. Wald concluded. After a century-long controversy between science and religion, particularly in the West, science no longer needed to keep the controversy alive at the present juncture in human history.

Dr. Karan Singh called for a constant dialogue between scientists, mystics and thinkers. They should form a world network and re-examine the intellectual concepts in the post-nuclear age. "There was no soft option and we must all come out of our own shells; there must be an immediate movement for peace and disarmament," he said.

Prof. Joseph Weizenbaum was scathing in his attack on the establishment scientists as on institutionalized religion. Many of the evils of the world can be directly traced to these two, he maintained. "The historical record of religion has unfortunately been much worse than that of science," according to India-born Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios, the vice-president of the World Council of Churches. Religions must shed their pretentious claims and do a lot of soul-searching before they can attempt any synthesis with science, he argued.

For many of the participants at the Congress, a real dialogue and synthesis between science and religion meant an open discussion on the entire gamut of human experience and predicament. For the average person who may have hopes of some respite in his condition from a coming together of science and religion, there is perhaps a lot of waiting to be done.

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Prof. Joseph Weizenbaum, a member of the faculty of the department of computer sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) said while in Bombay that "a lot of important people in the United States, including researchers at MIT, are convinced that we have created our successors in computers, which are revered as deities of the religion which is science." He added that this new religion, which maintained computers as idols, had all the trappings of a contemporary religion. (*The Times of India*, January 13)

These researchers also believed that the purpose of the universe had been served when man invented the computer. Objecting to these "silly" beliefs, Prof. Weizenbaum, an expert on "artificial intelligence," said that while computers do have intelligence of sorts, so do dogs, dolphins and horses; but their capability was entirely different from human intelligence. It was possible to communicate with dolphins, he claimed, "but, in a dialogue with them, they will have nothing to tell us." The two sets of intelligence had no "meeting ground." Animals possessed a different *kind* of intelligence.

Similarly, it was possible to programme a computer to give intelligent answers to human questions, on the basis of instructions fed into them. But their basis for "thinking" was dissimilar from human thinking. Their capabilities extended over a very limited area of human concern, the professor said.

The subject of "computer intelligence" is of importance to students of Theosophy since there prevail today as many misconceptions about the concept of mind as of matter. A good "thinking" machine can remember, classify, choose between alternatives on the basis of logic and, acting on past experience, can even correct itself; but the activity of any one machine is strictly limited to the instructions with which it is fed. In spite of its speed, precision and infallibility, the most "intelligent" computer *cannot* correlate dissociated ideas and events spread out in time and space, or present an original thought, or answer an unexpected query. Truly creative thought must forever remain in the province of the human mind.

The thoughtful scientist is more likely to sympathize with this Shakespearean picture of man than with the naive mechanistic view of mind:

What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!

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The pineal gland has always been a mystery with regard to its exact function. It was held in respect by antiquity and the 17th-century philosopher René Descartes considered it to be the "seat of the soul." He thought the pineal capable of secreting "animal spirit," leading to the activation of nerves. His writings

imply that this gland might be controlled by messages from the eyes. This intuition has to some extent been borne out, 300 years later, in a flurry of intensive investigation in the past two decades into the function of the pineal.

The insight, vague though it still is, that researchers are gaining into the functions of this gland is the subject of Josephine Arendt's article in *New Scientist*. Among other things, the pineal sets our biological clock, affects our moods, regulates the activity of the reproductive organs. The author, who is a senior lecturer in biochemistry at the University of Surrey, writes of the pineal's great importance to survival in animals and in humans:

Its role is indeed concerned with co-ordination, and its functions are essentially important in the fourth dimension: time. The pineal can convert neural information from the eyes about the length of the light-dark cycle, or photoperiod, into a biochemical output: melatonin. The gland produces melatonin in the dark, but not in the light, and it is fundamental to the ability of many animals to "tell time." In some animals, the levels of this hormone in the blood influence—through a variety of ill-understood intermediaries—everything from hair follicles to sex organs. Its role in humans is much less well understood, but is currently the focus of much research and even more speculation. . . .

The pineal does more than produce the daily rhythm of melatonin. It can also sense, so to speak, what season it is, in some animals at least. Information about the photoperiod—the length of day and night, which of course varies, in most places, with season—is encoded in the duration of the nightly secretion of melatonin. . . .

We have as yet very little information as to the effects of photoperiod or melatonin on human circadian rhythms. . . . If melatonin can synchronize circadian rhythms in people, its therapeutic potential is considerable. . . . A number of pathological conditions are accompanied by disturbed circadian rhythms: diseases affecting mood, such as depression, are probably the most thoroughly investigated. . . .

From being an obscure corner of neuroendocrinology, the study of pineal function has led to major insights into the relationship of physiology to environment. It has aroused an interest in the properties and uses of biological rhythms in disciplines such as clinical medicine, where chronobiology was previously considered jargon-ridden and rather unimportant. Most of all, it has provoked thought as to our own adaptation to our environment. A residual

human sensitivity to photoperiod could conceivably link depression and neurosis to the incompatibility of our biology with our culturally imposed behaviour.

From the true Eastern psychology, as set forth in our day in the genuine teachings of Theosophy, one might learn something of the function and significance of the pineal gland, and of the brain in general as well as other portions of the human anatomy about which modern medicine knows so little. H. P. Blavatsky, after enumerating and explaining the principles which go to make up the *complete* man, wrote in *The Key to Theosophy*:

Of course no physiologist or biologist will accept these principles, nor can he make head or tail of them. And this is why, perhaps, none of them understand to this day either the functions of the spleen, the physical vehicle of the Protean Double, or those of a certain organ on the right side of man, the seat of the above-mentioned desires, nor yet does he know anything of the pineal gland, which he describes as a horny gland with a little sand in it, which gland is in truth the very seat of the highest and divinest consciousness in man, his omniscient, spiritual and all-embracing mind.

The section, "The Races with the 'Third Eye'," in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 289-306) will reveal many truths on the subject of the pineal gland. It was once an "Eye," and is still referred to in occult literature as the "Third Eye":

If the odd "eye" in man is now atrophied, it is a proof that, as in the lower animal, it has once been active; for nature never creates the smallest, the most insignificant form without some definite purpose and use. It was an *active* organ, we say, at that stage of evolution when the spiritual element in man reigned supreme over the hardly nascent intellectual and psychic elements. And, as the cycle ran down toward that point when the physiological senses were developed by, and went *pari passu* with, the growth and consolidation of the physical man, the interminable and complex vicissitudes and tribulations of zoological development, that median "eye" ended by atrophying along with the early spiritual and purely psychic characteristics in man. (*S.D.*, II, 298)

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What is the creative impulse? Is it a talent, a gift, perhaps even an obsession? In a recent issue of *Horizon*, six artists talk

about what drives them to create. David Kaufman sums up his findings thus:

The creative process can be nourished, but it cannot be manufactured. It is in some respects an impulse, located somewhere between instinct and intuition, a geography that has no map but invites many travellers. . . .

By its very nature, the creative process evades definition. But certain tendencies manifest themselves when professional creators discuss their experiences and attitudes. The tendency to question is pronounced, but so is the tendency to trust.

There are as many ways to describe the creative process as there are people who would give it consideration. Even after all of the possibilities have been narrowed, a certain mystery remains.

Creativity is closely allied to the image-making faculty—the plastic power of the imagination. Our present system of teaching, both at home and in the schoolroom, squashes creativity and imagination. “Education” literally means “drawing out” of powers within the mind. In most classrooms today it is anything but that. Instead of being taught to think for themselves, children are taught to parrot the thoughts of the “authorities”—which all too often turn out to be wrong.

There is a difference, of course, between creativity of a spiritual kind and creativity as ordinarily understood, but the fundamental process of creation is the same on all planes. There is a world of “unborn” ideas, and intuitive minds have access to the inexhaustible store of knowledge in the living Akashic or Astral-Light library. Each nature selects from this store, according to the motive, aspiration, purity and self-reliance of the seeker.

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A recent study of exceptionally talented people in various fields—Olympic champions, concert pianists, sculptors, world-class mathematicians and scientists—reveals a common pattern. Their talents may differ, but their childhood experiences tend to be remarkably similar. The strong influence of the home in nurturing talent is especially brought out by the study. (*Reader's Digest*, Indian ed., November 1985).

Noted educational researcher Benjamin Bloom and his team of research assistants at the University of Chicago found out, among other things, that

the great majority of children, given the right conditions, can learn

almost anything. "Human potential," Bloom insists, "is much greater than we can measure in IQ or aptitude tests." . . .

None of the parents in this study had a master plan. "If you set out to raise a great talent," warns Bloom, "you probably won't succeed, because you'll push too hard." Instead, at each step of the way, these parents simply did what they thought was good for the child at the time. . . .

A mother recalls family trips to art museums. The son of the art lovers grew up to be a famous sculptor. In almost all of the cases, that's how the twig was bent. The child tried the activity his parents seemed to enjoy. As Bloom says, "If there's music in the home, that doesn't mean the child will become a musician. But if there's no music in the home, he probably won't."

What these children *did* have, beyond the basic physical and mental requirements, were alert and caring parents. Thus the earliest signs of potential talents were quickly noticed and encouraged. . . .

There is a talent hiding in almost every child, according to Bloom, and parents can help nurture it into full flower. And even if super-stardom is never reached, the accomplished amateur—the lifelong lover of sports, music or intellectual pursuits—will have a better life for it.

Is it worth the time and energy? Yes, for the lessons of childhood become the instincts of adulthood. Whatever they end up doing in life, children who have mastered a skill have learnt to act like winners, doing and being their best.

It is a fact that impressions made on the white page of the child's mind often can and will endure a lifetime. Nor does this contravene Karmic law; the family atmosphere only fructifies the traits of the incoming Ego. The union of parents and child mutually affects both, even as it in turn has been effected by mutual acts from of old.

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It has been known for quite some time how honey bees returning to the hive with nectar tell other members of the hive in which direction to fly. Investigators are now realizing that the language of the bees is even more perfect than they had hitherto believed it to be. *The Times of India* (December 4, 1985) states:

The line of the vertical in the hive represents the direction of the sun. A bee returning to the hive loaded with pollen and nectar

inclines its figure of eight dance to the vertical by an angle which indicates the direction to the nectar, relative to the sun. The speed with which the bee dances indicates the distance to the source of nectar. All this is fine during the day when the sun is out. But how do honey bees seeing nectar on moonlit nights perform the same function? Since the sun is not there, do they use the moon as the reference point? No, says Dr. Fred C. Dyer of the University of Princeton.

Dyer found this by studying night-flying honey bees in South India. During the day, he noted that, as expected, the dance angle of the bees changed in relation to the movement of the sun through the sky. At night, he expected that if the bees were referring to the moon, their dance angles in the moonlight should change as the moon travelled in the sky. However, he found they were not doing that. Observation of bees flying before dawn showed that they were flying in relation to a predicted direction of sunrise. He, therefore, concluded that somehow honey bees flying on moonlit nights were able to estimate the position of the vanished sun, continuing to use that as a reference point for their dances.

Theosophy asserts that the bee, along with some other finished types, is not a product of the present evolutionary period, but "must have been produced and finished in some other from which it was brought over into this" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 141). Bees, then, are a living record of the social intelligence developed almost to perfection by beings who lived countless aeons ago. What H.P.B. says of the ant in *Transactions* (pp. 13-15) doubtless has equal application to the bee:

In relation to its own plane of conception and perception, the ant has as good an intellect as we have ourselves, and a better one; for though it cannot express it in words, yet, over and above instinct, the ant shows very high reasoning powers, as all of us know. . . . [However], man is a perfected animal, the vehicle of a fully developed *monad*, self-conscious and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even the higher animal, the higher triad of principles is absolutely dormant.

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# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

**T**HE 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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