

# 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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### “HOPE DEFERRED IS NO HOPE LOST”

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, January 1959.]

“Why feel ‘unhappy’ and ‘disappointed’? My good, my *faithful* friend, remember that hope deferred is no hope lost.”

THESE gracious words of one of our great Masters hold a world of comfort for the older student who for many years has aspired to and dreamed of fitting himself for discipleship, but without any appreciable advance towards the inner change—of condition, not of conditions—that would fit him for the inestimable privilege of selection. And, “until a man has become, in heart and spirit, a disciple, he has no existence for those who are teachers of disciples.” (*Light on the Path*, p. 75)

There is no getting away from the fact that the failure of any sincere aspirant to achieve his highest possibilities is a tragedy, not only for himself but also for the Cause which needs the best from all its votaries whom the Teachings have inspired. This tragedy has been put by the Irish Theosophist and mystic poet George William Russell in unforgettable lines:

He who might have wrought in flame  
Only traced upon the foam.

Aspirants to chelaship are told in *Letters That Have Helped Me*:

...if your patience and faith are not strong enough to bear you through an *unlimited* (so far as you know) period of unselfish work for humanity, you had better resign your present fancy, for it is then no more than that. (p. 63)

The old saying, moreover, that “hope deferred makes the heart grow weary” should never be uttered by the genuine aspirant, convinced in the core of his being of the existence of the Higher

Self, of the unerring Law and of the Masters, the embodiments of charity, justice and universal love. He knows that he himself is responsible for his lack of visible progress and none other. Has not the Master written:

I can come nearer to you, but you must draw me by a purified heart and a gradually developing will. Like the needle the adept follows his attractions. . . . If you hear seldom from me, never feel disappointed, my Brother, but say—"It is *my* fault."

It has been said that the unexamined life is not worth living. At least it cannot have yielded its full potential fruitage. But if self-examination day by day has been neglected, at least it can be undertaken now. Let those who realize that they are marking time, that early zeal has yielded place to dispirited plodding, put themselves a few plain questions before the tribunal of their own Higher Nature, which no subterfuge deceives and from whose judgment there is no appeal.

"Has the Path been aspired to for its own sake or has the thought been chiefly of one's own feet that would tread it?"

"Has the motive been consistently altruistic and the service free from the taint of seeking recognition, power or place?"

A Master has written:

. . . in our view the highest aspirations for the welfare of humanity become tainted with selfishness if in the mind of the philanthropist there lurks the shadow of desire for self-benefit or a tendency to do injustice, even when these exist unconsciously to himself.

And Mr. Judge reminds us that

. . . as *all* Their work and aspiration are to the end of helping the race, no one of Their chelas can hope to remain. . . such, if any selfish desire for personal possessions of spiritual wealth constitutes the motive for trying to be a chela. . . and in the case of one trying to become a chela it acts as *a bar*.

A disinterested and unselfish stand should have been taken at the outset. If it has not yet been taken, at least now at long last let us wash out of our souls all desire for reward, all hope that we may attain; these prevent our realizing our oneness with the Self.

But there are hopes and Hope. Ambition and desire for gain have to be abandoned, but "there is also another Hope—the true; and he is a wise man who comes to the knowledge of it." This is the Hope that Mr. Judge called "Sister to Patience," the two together being "the Godmothers of Right Living." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36, p. 8*)

Hope in its higher, impersonal sense is but an aspect of confidence in the Law, conviction based on faith and on experience. And it is indeed a beautiful hope which Theosophy holds out to the earnest aspirant—that of rising to conscious nearness to the Masters, of studying Their Philosophy with heart insight, of serving Their Humanity with wisdom and devotion, quietly, efficiently, without a shadow of the thought, "Behold, I know," or "Behold, I serve."

Continuing our self-examination, let us further ask:

"Has there been more dwelling on the desire for intimacy with the Mahatmas than upon deserving it?"

"Have worldly interests taken the edge off the earlier hunger for Spiritual Wisdom, with a resulting neglect of study and application?"

"Has a faithful attitude been maintained—'an abiding, settled faith that nothing may shake,' or has a feeling of disheartenment been allowed to come up because achievement seems time-barred, so few are probably the remaining years of life in the present body?"

Let any who may be feeling that disheartenment turn to the reassuring words of Krishna to Arjuna in the Sixth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Arjuna is anxious to know the fate of one who, "although having faith, hath not attained to perfection in his devotion because his unsubdued mind wandered from the discipline." Krishna assures him that one whose devotion has been broken off by death comes in contact in another incarnation with the knowledge which belonged to him in his former body, and "from that time he struggles more diligently towards perfection."

*The Voice of the Silence* plainly tells us: "No Arhan, O Lanoo, becomes one in that birth when for the first the Soul begins to long for final liberation" (p. 43). If this one life were all, discouragement might seem justified, but we have the positive assurance that "if the 'Secret Path' is unattainable this 'day,' it is within thy reach 'tomorrow.' . . . In the 'Great Journey,' causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World." (p. 37)

The discouraged aspirant can draw strength also from these compassionate words of the Master: ". . . despond not, for it is all but a matter of time. The world was not evolved between two monsoons. . . ."

It is something to hearten the self-retarded aspirant to reflect that at least his face is still turned towards the heights, that if his

plodding is slow it is still in the right direction, and that the Masters recognize no irrevocable failure but ceasing to try. Though we stumble and fall a hundred times we are not defeated in the struggle with our lower nature so long as we pick ourselves up and fight on.

If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless fighter, yet lose not courage: fight on, and to the charge return again and yet again.

The fearless warrior, his precious life-blood oozing from his wide and gaping wounds, will still attack the foe, drive him from out his stronghold, vanquish him, ere he himself expires. Act then, all ye who fail and suffer, act like him; and from the stronghold of your Soul chase all your foes away—ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire—when even you have failed. (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 68)

Seven are the duties of a Kshatriya enumerated by Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*: "Valour, glory, strength, firmness, not to flee from the field of battle, liberality and a lordly character" (XVIII, 43). Not to flee from the field of battle, taken by itself, may seem to enthusiastic new recruits a poor and negative achievement. But let not fresh comers to the field glory by anticipation in laurels yet unwon! They can no doubt learn from their predecessors' errors of omission or commission how to excel their achievement, but perhaps they can learn a positive lesson also from the dogged perseverance of the fagged and wounded veterans who, though they have fallen behind in the race, yet have stayed the course.

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GUARD your head against the stumblings of your tongue.

The heart is the treasurer of the tongue, and it, the interpreter of the man.

Consider not who speaks, but what is said.

Be on your guard against listening to exaggerated praise of yourself; an odour spreads therefrom that corrupts and debases the heart.

One reaps as one sows, and one is rewarded according to what one has done.

Great qualities confer nobility, and not the decayed bones of ancestors.

Anger is a species of madness, since repentance succeeds to it; or if it does not, it means that the madness is too firmly established.

Whosoever aspires to reach high places must subdue his passions.

—*Maxims of Ali*

## THE SCIENCE OF LIFE

[The following article by H. P. Blavatsky first appeared in *Lucifer* for November 1887. It deals with a problem of science that remains unsolved now as then, in spite of current attempts to study life in the laboratory and scientists' claim to have found "the key of life." The article has a practical, ethical bearing and embodies truths which all earnest minds will recognize and welcome.

H. P. Blavatsky was ever keen to show that the teachings she presented to the world under the name of Theosophy were but reverberating echoes of Words of Power chanted by the Fathers of the human race, when it was young; and, moreover, that there were other faithful echoes. In this article she translates the ideas of the great Tolstoy and shows "how near his views are to the esoteric and philosophical teachings of higher Theosophy." Elsewhere she calls him "the greatest psychologist of the 19th century," who was, moreover, "an exemplar of Christ-like altruism and self-sacrifice."

It is the duty of every real student of the ancient Wisdom-Religion to look out for and welcome Theosophical echoes in current pronouncements, as H.P.B. did. To the student of science, of religion, of philosophy, her article brings a message. Those who yearn to live the Higher Life will find in it much food for thought and many hints of a practical nature. H.P.B. remarks that the real science of life consists in transmuting baser metals—"the animal mass"—into gold and silver. Alchemy as an Occult Art is but a reflection of that Higher Alchemy. Of this she has written fully and students will do well to refer especially to *The Theosophical Glossary*.—EDS.]

WHAT is Life? Hundreds of the most philosophical minds, scores of learned, well-skilled physicians, have asked themselves the question, but to little purpose. The veil thrown over primordial Kosmos and the mysterious beginnings of life upon it has never been withdrawn to the satisfaction of earnest, honest science. The more the men of official learning try to penetrate through its dark folds, the more intense becomes that darkness, and the less they see, for they are like the treasure-hunter who went across the wide seas to look for that which lay buried in his own garden.

What is then this Science? Is it biology, or the study of life in its general aspect? No. Is it physiology, or the science of organic function? Neither; for the former leaves the problem as much the riddle of the Sphinx as ever; and the latter is the science of death

far more than that of life. Physiology is based upon the study of the different organic functions and the organs necessary to the manifestations of life, but that which science calls living matter is, in sober truth, *dead matter*. Every molecule of the living organs contains the germ of death in itself, and begins dying as soon as born, in order that its successor-molecule should live only to die in its turn. An organ, a natural part of every living being, is but the medium for some special function in life, and is a combination of such molecules. The vital organ, the *whole*, puts the mask of life on, and thus conceals the constant decay and death of its parts. Thus, neither biology nor physiology are the science, nor even branches of the *Science of Life*, but only that of the *appearances* of life. While true philosophy stands (Oedipus-like before the Sphinx of life, hardly daring to utter the paradox contained in the answer to the riddle propounded, materialistic science, as arrogant as ever, never doubting its own wisdom for one moment, biologizes itself and many others into the belief that it has solved the awful problem of existence. In truth, however, has it even so much as approached its threshold? It is not, surely, by attempting to deceive itself and the unwary in saying that life is but the result of molecular complexity, that it can ever hope to promote the truth. Is vital force, indeed, only a "phantom," as Du-Bois Reymond calls it? For his taunt that "life," as something independent, is but the *asylum ignorantiae* of those who seek refuge in abstractions, when direct explanation is impossible, applies with far more force and justice to those materialists who would blind people to the reality of facts by substituting bombast and jaw-breaking words in their place. Have any of the five divisions of the functions of life, so pretentiously named—Archebiosis, Biocrosis, Biodiaeresis, Biocaenosis and Bioparodosis,<sup>1</sup> ever helped a Huxley or a Haeckel to probe more fully the mystery of the generations of the humblest ant—let alone of man? Most certainly not. For life, and everything pertaining to it, belongs to the lawful domain of the *metaphysician* and psychologist, and physical science has no claim upon it. "That which hath been, is that which shall be; and that which hath been is named already—and it is known that it is MAN"—is the answer to the riddle of the Sphinx. But "man" here does not refer to *physical* man—not in its esoteric meaning, at any rate. Scalpels and microscopes may solve the mystery of the material parts of *the shell of man*: they can never cut a window into his soul to open the smallest vista on any of the wider horizons of being.

<sup>1</sup> Or Life-origination, Life-fusion, Life-division, Life-renewal and Life transmission.

It is those thinkers alone, who, following the Delphic injunction, have cognized life in their *inner* selves, those who have studied it thoroughly in themselves, before attempting to trace and analyse its reflection in their outer shells, who are the only ones rewarded with some measure of success. Like the fire-philosophers of the Middle Ages, they have skipped over the *appearances* of light and fire in the world of effects, and centred their whole attention upon the producing arcane agencies. Thence, tracing these to the one abstract cause, they have attempted to fathom the Mystery, each as far as his intellectual capacities permitted him. Thus they have ascertained that (1) the *seemingly* living mechanism called physical man is but the fuel, the material, upon which life feeds, in order to manifest itself; and (2) that thereby the inner man receives as his wage and reward the possibility of accumulating additional experiences of the terrestrial illusions called lives.

One of such philosophers is now undeniably the great Russian novelist and reformer, Count Leo N. Tolstoi. How near his views are to the esoteric and philosophical teachings of higher Theosophy will be found on the perusal of a few fragments from a lecture delivered by him at Moscow before the local Psychological Society.

Discussing the problem of life, the Count asks his audience to admit, for the sake of argument, *an impossibility*. Says the lecturer:

Let us grant for a moment that all that which modern science longs to learn of life, it has learnt, and now knows; that the problem has become as clear as day; that it is clear how organic matter has, by simple adaptation, come to be originated from inorganic material; that it is as clear how natural forces may be transformed into feelings, will, thought; and that finally, all this is known, not only to the city student, but to every village school-boy as well.

I am aware, then, that such-and-such thoughts and feelings originate from such-and-such motions. Well, and what then? Can I, or cannot I, produce and guide such motions, in order to excite within my brain corresponding thoughts? The question—what are the thoughts and feelings I ought to generate in myself and others, remains still, not only unsolved, but even untouched.

Yet it is precisely this question which is the *one* fundamental question of the central idea of life.

Science has chosen as its object a few manifestations that

accompany life; and *mistaking*<sup>2</sup> the part for the whole, called these manifestations the integral total of life. . . .

The question inseparable from the idea of life is not *whence* life, but *how one should live* that life: and it is only by first starting with this question that one can hope to approach some solution in the problem of existence.

The answer to the query "How are we to live?" appears so simple to man that he esteems it hardly worth his while to touch upon it. . . . One must live the best way one can—that's all. This seems at first sight very simple and well known to all, but it is by far neither as simple nor as well known as one may imagine. . . .

The idea of life appears to man in the beginning as a most simple and self-evident business. First of all, it seems to him that life is in himself, in his own body. No sooner, however, does one commence his search after that life, in any one given spot of the said body, than one meets with difficulties. Life is not in the hair, nor in the nails; neither is it in the foot nor the arm, which may both be amputated; it is not in the blood, it is not in the heart, and it is not in the brain. It is everywhere and it is nowhere. It comes to this: life cannot be found in any of its dwelling-places. Then man begins to look for life in Time; and that, too, appears at first a very easy matter. . . . Yet again, no sooner has he started on his chase than he perceives that here also the business is more complicated than he had thought. Now, I have *lived* fifty-eight years, so says my baptismal church record. But I know that out of these fifty-eight years I slept over twenty. How then? Have I lived all these years, or have I not? Deduct the months of my gestation, and those I passed in the arms of my nurse, and shall we call this life, also? Again, out of the remaining thirty-eight years, I know that a good half of that time I slept while moving about; and thus, I could no more say in this case whether I lived during that time or not. I may have lived a little, and vegetated a little. Here, again, one finds that in time, as in the body, life is everywhere, yet nowhere. And now the question naturally arises, whence, then, that life which I can trace to nowhere? Now—will I learn. . . . But it so happens that in this direction also what seemed to me so easy at first, now seems impossible. I must have been searching for something else, not for my life, assuredly.

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<sup>2</sup> "Mistaking" is an erroneous term to use. The men of science know but too well that what they teach concerning life is a materialistic fiction contradicted at every step by logic and fact. In this particular question science is abused, and made to serve personal hobbies and a determined policy of crushing in humanity every spiritual aspiration and thought. "Pretending to mistake" would be more correct.—H.P.B.

Therefore, once we have to go in search of the whereabouts of life—if search we have to—then it should be neither in space nor in time, neither as cause nor effect, but as a something which I cognize within myself as quite independent from Space, time and causality.

That which remains to do now is to study *self*. But how do I cognize life in myself?

This is how I cognize it. I know, to begin with, that I live; and that I live wishing for myself everything that is good, wishing this since I can remember myself, to this day, and from morn till night. All that lives outside of myself is important in my eyes, but only in so far as it co-operates with the creation of that which is productive of *my* welfare. The Universe is important in my sight only because it can give *me* pleasure.

Meanwhile, something else is bound up with this knowledge in me of my existence. Inseparable from the life I feel, is another cognition allied to it; namely, that besides myself, I am surrounded with a whole world of living creatures, possessed, as I am myself, of the same instinctive realization of their exclusive lives; that all these creatures live for their own objects, which objects are foreign to me; that those creatures do not know, nor do they care to know, anything of my pretensions to an exclusive life, and that all these creatures, in order to achieve success in their objects, are ready to annihilate me at any moment. But this is not all. While watching the destruction of creatures similar in all to myself, I also know that for me too, for that precious *me* in whom alone life is represented, a very speedy and inevitable destruction is lying in wait.

It is as if there were two "I's" in man; it is as if they could never live in peace together; it is as if they were eternally struggling, and ever trying to expel each other.

One "I" says, "I alone am living as one should live. all the rest only seems to live. Therefore, the whole *raison d'être* for the universe is in that *I* may be made comfortable."

The other "I" replies, "The universe is not for thee at all, but for its own aims and purposes, and it cares little to know whether thou art happy or unhappy."

Life becomes a dread thing after this!

One "I" says, "I only want the gratification of all my wants and desires, and that is why I need the universe."

The other "I" replies, "All animal life lives only for the gratification of its wants and desires. It is the wants and desires of animals alone that are gratified at the expense and detriment of

other animals; hence the ceaseless struggle between the animal species. Thou art an animal, and therefore thou hast to struggle. Yet, however successful in thy struggle, the rest of the struggling creatures must sooner or later crush thee."

Still worse! life becomes still more dreadful. . . .

But the most terrible of all, that which includes in itself the whole of the foregoing, is that:

One "I" says, "I want to live, to live for ever."

And that the other "I" replies, "Thou shalt surely, perhaps in a few minutes, die; as also shall die all those thou lovest, for thou and they are destroying with every motion your lives, and thus approaching ever nearer suffering, death, all that which thou so hatest, and which thou fearest above anything else."

This is the worst of all. . . .

To change this condition is impossible. . . . One can avoid moving, sleeping, eating, even breathing, but one cannot escape from thinking. One thinks, and that thought, *my* thought, is poisoning every step in my life, as a personality.

No sooner has man commenced a conscious life than that consciousness repeats to him incessantly without respite, over and over the same thing again. "To live such life as you feel and see in your past, the life lived by animals and many men too, lived in *that* way, which made you become what you are now—is no longer possible. Were you to attempt doing so, you could never escape thereby the struggle with all the world of creatures which live as you do—for their personal objects; and then those creatures will inevitably destroy you." . . .

To change this situation is impossible. There remains but one thing to do, and that is always done by him who, beginning to live, transfers his objects in life outside of himself, and aims to reach them. . . . But, however far he places them outside his personality, as his mind gets clearer, none of these objects will satisfy him.

Bismarck, having united Germany, and now ruling Europe—if his reason has only thrown any light upon the results of his activity—must perceive, as much as his own cook does who prepares a dinner that will be devoured in an hour's time, the same unsolved contradiction between the vanity and foolishness of all he has done, and the eternity and reasonableness of that which exists for ever. If they only think of it, each will see as clearly as the other; *firstly*, that the preservation of the integrity of Prince Bismarck's dinner, as well as that of powerful Germany, is solely due: the preservation of the former—to the police, and the pres-

ervation of the latter—to the army; and that, so long only as both keep a good watch. Because there are famished people who would willingly eat the dinner, and nations which would fain be as powerful as Germany. *Secondly*, that neither Prince Bismarck's dinner, nor the might of the German Empire, coincide with the aims and purposes of universal life, but that they are in flagrant contradiction with them. And *thirdly*, that as he who cooked the dinner, so also the might of Germany, will both very soon die, and that so shall perish, and as soon, both the dinner and Germany. That which shall survive alone is the Universe, which will never give one thought to either dinner or Germany, least of all to those who have cooked them.

As the intellectual condition of man increases, he comes to the idea that no happiness connected with his personality is an achievement, but only a necessity. Personality is only that incipient state from which begins life, and the ultimate limit of life.

Where, then, does life begin, and where does it end, I may be asked? Where ends the night, and where does day commence? Where, on the shore, ends the domain of the sea, and where does the domain of land begin?

There is day and there is night; there is land and there is sea; there is life and there is *no* life.

Our life, ever since we became conscious of it, is a pendulum-like motion between two limits.

One limit is an absolute unconcern for the life of the infinite Universe, an energy directed only toward the gratification of one's own personality.

The other limit is a complete renunciation of that personality, the greatest concern with the life of the infinite Universe, in full accord with it, the transfer of all our desires and good will from one's self to that infinite Universe and all the creatures outside of us.<sup>3</sup>

The nearer to the first limit, the less life and bliss, the closer to the second, the more life and bliss. Therefore, man is ever moving from one end to the other; *i.e.*, he lives. *Thus motion is life itself.*

And when I speak of life, know that the idea of it is indissolubly connected in my conceptions with that of *conscious* life. No other life is known to me except conscious life, nor can it be known to anyone else.

We call life, the life of animals, organic life. But this is no life at all, only a certain state or condition of life manifesting to us.

<sup>3</sup> This is what the Theosophists call "living *the* life"—in a nutshell.—H.P.B.

But what is this consciousness or mind, the exigencies of which exclude personality and transfer the energy of man outside of him and into that state which is conceived by us as the blissful state of love?

What is conscious mind? Whatsoever we may be defining we have to define it with our conscious mind. Therefore, with what shall we define mind? . . .

If we have to define all with our mind, it follows that conscious mind cannot be defined. Yet all of us, we not only know it, but it is the only thing which is given to us to know undeniably. . . .

It is the same law as the law of life, of everything organic, animal or vegetable, with that one difference that we see the consummation of an intelligent law in the life of a plant. But the law of conscious mind, to which we are subjected, as the tree is subjected to its law, we see it not, but fulfil it. . . .

We have settled that life is that which is not our life. It is herein that lies hidden the root of error. Instead of studying that life of which we are conscious within ourselves, absolutely and exclusively—since we can know of nothing else—in order to study it, we observe that which is devoid of the most important factor and faculty of our life, namely, intelligent consciousness. By so doing, we act as a man who attempts to study an object by its shadow or reflection does.

If we know that substantial particles are subjected during their transformation to the activity of the organism, we know it not because we have observed or studied it, but simply because we possess a certain familiar organism united to us, namely the organism of our animal, which is but too well known to us as the material of our life; *i.e.*, that upon which we are called to work and to rule by subjecting it to the law of reason. . . . No sooner has man lost faith in life, no sooner has he transferred that life into that which is no life, than he becomes wretched, and sees death. . . . A man who conceives life such as he finds it in his consciousness, knows neither misery, nor death; for all the good in life for him is in the subjection of his animal to the law of reason, to do which is not only in his power, but takes place unavoidably in him. The death of particles in the animal being, we know. The death of animals and of man, as an animal, we know; but we know nought about the death of conscious mind, nor can we know anything of it, *just because that conscious mind is the very life itself. And Life can never be Death.* . . .

The animal lives an existence of bliss, neither seeing nor knowing death, and dies without cognizing it. Why then should man

have received the gift of seeing and knowing it, and why should death be so terrible to him that it actually tortures his soul, often forcing him to kill himself out of sheer fear of death? Why should it be so? Because the man who sees death is a sick man, one who has broken the law of his life, and lives no longer a conscious existence. He has become an animal himself, an animal which also has broken the law of life.

The life of man is an aspiration to bliss, and that which he aspires to is given to him. The light lit in the soul of man is bliss and life, and that light can never be darkness, as there exists—verily there exists for man—only this solitary light which burns within his soul.

We have translated this rather lengthy fragment from the Report of Count Tolstoi's superb lecture, because it reads like the echo of the finest teachings of the universal ethics of true theosophy. His definition of life in its abstract sense, and of the life every earnest theosophist ought to follow, each according to, and in the measure of, his *natural* capacities—is the summary and the Alpha and the Omega of practical psychic, if not spiritual life. There are sentences in the lecture which, to the average theosophist, will seem too hazy, and perhaps incomplete. Not one will he find, however, which could be objected to by the most exacting, practical occultist. It may be called a treatise on the Alchemy of Soul. For that "solitary" light in man, which burns for ever, and can never be darkness in its intrinsic nature, though the "animal" outside us may remain blind to it—is that "Light" upon which the Neo-Platonists of the Alexandrian school, and after them the Rosecroix and especially the Alchemists, have written volumes, though to the present day their true meaning is a dark mystery to most men.

True, Count Tolstoi is neither an Alexandrian nor a modern theosophist; still less is he a Rosecroix or an Alchemist. But that which the latter have concealed under the peculiar phraseology of the Fire-philosophers, purposely confusing cosmic transmutations with Spiritual Alchemy, all that is transferred by the great Russian thinker from the realm of the metaphysical unto the field of practical life. That which Schelling would define as a realization of the identity of subject and object in the man's inner Ego, that which unites and blends the latter with the universal Soul—which is but the identity of subject and object on a higher plane, or the unknown Deity—all that Count Tolstoi has blended together without quitting the terrestrial plane. He is one of those few

*elect* who begin with intuition and end with *quasi-omniscience*. It is the transmutation of the baser metals—the *animal mass*—into gold and silver, or the philosopher's stone, the development and manifestation of man's higher Self which the Count has achieved. The *alcahest* of the inferior Alchemist is the *All-geist*, the all-pervading Divine Spirit of the higher Initiate; for Alchemy was, and is, as very few know to this day, as much a spiritual philosophy as it is a physical science. He who knows nought of one, will never know much of the other. Aristotle told it in so many words to his pupil, Alexander: "It is not a stone," he said, of the philosopher's stone. "*It is in every man and in every place, and at all seasons, and is called the end of all philosophers,*" as the *Vedanta* is the end of all philosophies.

To wind up this essay on "The Science of Life," a few words may be said of the eternal riddle propounded to mortals by the Sphinx. To fail to solve the problem contained in it, was to be doomed to sure death, as the Sphinx of life devoured the un-intuitional, who would live only in their "animal." He who lives for Self, and only for *Self*, will surely die, as the higher "I" tells the lower "animal" in the Lecture. The riddle has seven keys to it, and the Count opens the mystery with one of the highest. For, as the author on "Hermetic Philosophy" beautifully expressed it: "The real mystery most familiar and, at the same time, most unfamiliar to every man, *into which he must be initiated or perish as an atheist, is himself*. For him is the elixir of life, to quaff which, before the discovery of the philosopher's stone, is to drink the beverage of death, while it confers on the adept and the *epopt*, the true immortality. He may know truth as it really is—*Aletheia*, the breath of God, or Life, the conscious mind in man."

This is "the Alcahest which dissolves all things," and Count Tolstoi has well understood the riddle.

—H.P.B.

Most educators have no idea of man except that his only reason for existence is to get on in this world and have as good a time as possible.

—ERIC GILL

## "IN FULL ACCORD WITH ALL THAT LIVES"

So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

IT is fairly easy to feel "in full accord with all that lives" when all that lives is in full accord with oneself, but it is difficult to feel so when all, or part of all, that lives, is not in full accord with us!

It is easy to feel that all men are sons of one sweet Mother when they act as sons towards that Mother, but it is difficult to feel in full accord with an undutiful son who harms the Mother, and the depth of discord with the undutiful one is in proportion to the depth of our devotion to the mother.

It is easy to be in full accord with those who think and feel and act as we do, but very difficult when our thoughts, feelings and actions are moving in a direction contrary to theirs.

Yet we must get to the point where, no matter how others feel and think and act, we can treat them in our own thought, feeling and action as still sons of our common Mother. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," said Jesus while being tortured to death by some other sons of the One Father. Shall we, in our pride, upon the hilltops of self-righteousness, act otherwise?

The millions of years that the human being needs to travel from the self-centred man, the human-animal man, to the SELF-centred Man, the glorious state of a Buddha, shows how hard and thorny is the Path. The student of Theosophy *should* be in the intermediate stage, that of a human being, not a human-animal being, nor yet a divine Being, but a truly human being, Manas freeing itself from Kama and uniting itself to Buddhi. H.P.B. in *Five Messages* has told us how a truly human being should think and act.

To understand the qualities of Kama and of Buddhi will help towards this accomplishment. Let us remember that Kama is still, in us, desire, for even our feelings of love and sympathy are rooted in desire, as are those of hatred and self-righteousness. Buddhi is also Desire—for our aspirations and spiritual devotion are rooted in Desire. The difference lies in the clear-seeing of the *nature* of the desire we foster, and here our mind can be the judge; our reasoning power, freed from desire, can be trained to see which desire will further the end of the great desire that we have at our true heart centre. So we must analyse our desires, good and bad, and analyse them in terms of Knowledge.

Theoretically we all know that there is but One Self, that there is no separation between any two points in Space, no separation between the saint and the sinner, and that good and evil deeds, thoughts and feelings are as infectious as the most virulent contagious physical disease. Not one of us can mount a step higher without lifting up the whole of manifested Nature; not one of us can fail without dragging it down a little. To see our individual *responsibility* in this and get beyond the stage of recriminations against those who hinder, is a great step forward.

For the practical application of this, perhaps our greatest help is to have a model to follow, a model as superior to us as the great Buddha, or one nearer at hand whom we love and admire and whose knowledge is greater than ours. Was the Buddha ever angry, even when rebuffed by the ignorant? Was he ever impatient? Did his love for the "poor woolly mother" show as anger against the shepherd or later against the priests with their instruments of death? Was it not his greater knowledge that made him change from the one who "wept with all my brothers' tears" to the One who could "laugh and be glad"? The key to the understanding of this change lies perhaps in the next few words—"For there is liberty."

If there is liberty, who are we to be angry at the liberty taken by others? Who are we to try to impose our own ideas, to infringe their liberty? Most of us have got beyond the point where we fight these differences out with swords and daggers, but feelings and evil thoughts are stronger and more potent than steel. Because we do not see their effects, we think they will in time change the course of those toward whom they are directed. Thoughts are more reprehensible than deeds, says H.P.B., and to fight another, however much that other may be wronging our own sweet Mother, is only emphasizing the evil.

What attitude are we then to adopt? Surely a twofold attitude—example and reclamation. Example is the most potent of all actions, and herein lies our greatest "weapon" for the harmonizing of all Nature; it lights a fire which can never be dimmed, whose warmth and sweet smell reach those in need. No one can stop us in this but ourselves, and the practice should be simple, based on the great virtue of harmlessness. Could we but see behind the scenes we would see two vast forces at work, one bringing harmony and the other discord, the White and the Black side of Nature, the good and the evil forces at work. We are told never to allow ourselves to be agents of the evil forces, but to make ourselves agents of the good. We soil ourselves when we become

agents for that which hurts another, however justifiable it may seem to us that they should be hurt, and though we may think we can thus stop them in their evil ways by showing our hatred of them and their path, the actual fact is that we add our force of hatred and anger to theirs and make it more potent against the very Mother we are seeking to shield. "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred." But it does cease by Love.

Reclamation of a lost soul can only be accomplished when we realize this last fact. Can we not try to put into operation the great law that there is "more joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth" than for us in our self-imposed self-righteousness? Can we not try, through loving-kindness and helpfulness, to be one of those who reclaim the sinner? It will be a hard uphill fight, but we must steadily press on. To kill the criminal is not to destroy him; hatred cannot be destroyed; but it can be transformed into love. To put our feeling, thought and action on reclamation, through however many disappointments, is a positive task of joyful service, and though we may fail in this life, who knows but that we are, here and now, making of ourselves steps in the ladder of progress for the poor misguided evil son of our Mother?

For ourselves it is easier to bear rebuffs and cruelties, for we should know that nothing happens to us save that brought about by ourselves, and that therefore it is we who injure ourselves, though the agent may seem to be outside of us. The same is true even of our sweet Mother—She has either earned the cruelties of the erring son, or has voluntarily accepted them for his preservation, so to Her what can we show but greater love and helpfulness, greater strength and calmness? Let us not add to Her troubles by our own erring ways, but work to bring the erring son back into the fold. The Light that is in us must shine forth on all, and Mr. Judge tells us: "Cast no one out of your heart." Thus is Kama transformed into Buddhi; thus is our mind centred in Buddhi, Universal Compassion; thus our one Desire is to "help Nature and work on with her," until the day dawns when "All Nature thrills with joyous awe," for a "new Arhan is born." What matters it whether that new Arhan is our own Real Self or whether it is the reclaimed erring brother? We too are part of Nature and we too shall feel the thrill of joy at his success.

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No one who deserves confidence ever solicits it.

—JOHN CHURTON COLLINS

## ASPECTS OF MEMORY

“Kill in thyself all memory of past experiences.”

“Getting back the memory of other lives is really the whole of the process.”

“From me come memory, knowledge, and also the loss of both.”

HOW shall we reconcile these statements so that they become of practical value in our lives?

The definitions of memory given in *The Key to Theosophy* give us three ideas on which to work.

(1) When we meet something we have met before we immediately repeat the former impressions. That is, our reaction to it comes up again. In this aspect the physical senses bring the incident again to our notice, either by the actual incident being repeated or by some correlated aspect coming before us.

(2) When, without any outer stimulus, the picture of the incident rises in the mind and, with it, the old impression and reaction.

(3) When we try to recall the incident, building it up and recreating it deliberately, with the past impression and reaction.

Therefore, if we want to banish a memory we can dismiss (3), because there is no need for us to recall an unpleasant incident and its impressions. This is a plain statement of fact, so plain and simple that we ignore it! With (1), the objective incident or correlated fact being repeated, our only armour against the revival of the former impressions is to be aware of alternative impressions, which we deliberately recall. We can deal with (2), the automatic arising in the mind of the past incident and impressions, if we catch it as it arises and immediately change the current of impressions. All this implies, not only that we wish to banish the memory, or to alter our impressions, but also that we have given prior thought to the need of a change.

Practical help can be drawn from a study of the conditions after death, which are analogous to those in sleep. At every new birth we come without any detailed memory of the past and are therefore able to face the new life without fear. We are not burdened with the detailed memory of our past failings and are not therefore inhibited in the present; we do not feel ashamed of ourselves when we meet friends, nor do we feel that we cannot do this or that because of the memory of our incapacities. This is because after death the memories of the past life have been divided into those that are of permanent value to the soul, and those that have to be changed in another birth. The former are built into faculties of the soul; the latter form our new bodily,

emotional and mental environment. Of these latter memories there are two kinds, those which warn us not to do something because it will bring pain and those which we are still toying with, unaware of their being wrong.

If sleep is analogous to death and reawakening to a new life, we can apply this process consciously and deliberately. We are told that every night before sleeping we should review the day, just as the life is reviewed at death, and therefore we must allow the highest part of ourselves that we know, to shine on the day's sum total of impressions and reactions. Having done so, we should divide them into those that we need to dwell on and assimilate during sleep and those that we have recorded as needing to be changed; and there will still remain many wrong reactions of which we are unaware.

In the morning when we glance over the coming day, as before birth also there is such a preview, we should visualize what our reactions ought to be in all thought-of coming incidents. We should not, however, let the memory of the previous day's failures prevent our forward movement in the new day, but be ready, forearmed, to put our highest into practice. Unless we do this, we shall repeat the old mistakes, and memory will play its part and poison our whole consciousness and therefore our reactions to the day's incidents, both external and internal.

Just as between Devachan and rebirth there is the linking up in the Soul of all its past incarnations, so, during sleep, we can gain the benefit of the whole memory of the past. To strive to understand any incident, to seek for deeper and deeper meanings in life, to struggle to apply that which seems beyond us, brings us back the memory of the past so that we need not repeat the same mistakes for ever.

To go one step further and realize that the faculty of memory, in all its stages, is a faculty of the Spirit, of Krishna, puts our review and preview, as our reactions during the day, on a spiritual level. When we do lose our memory, lose the faculty of knowing, however little, right from wrong, we do indeed lose Krishna, the indwelling spirit, for we lose awareness also.

We can employ all three aspects of memory with regard to spiritual memory, for Krishna advises us to read the scriptures, and to ponder over them. When we deliberately recall both the words and the ideas, when we ponder over them, we gain further enlightenment; when we apply them we create in ourselves further faculties and powers, until the whole past becomes turned into knowledge—and knowledge must ever grow.

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## THE WEB OF LIFE

IN this world, no two human beings look at life from the same point of view. Each has his own concept of the purpose of life, and the life he leads is in the light of his understanding. Furthermore, each is different from the others, not only in features and appearance, not only intelligence and understanding, but also in the circumstances and environment one is placed in. Thus, one finds in life disparities in birth and fortune, inequalities in intellect and capacities, seeming injustice in circumstances and surroundings.

What is the root cause of all this? Many have a perverted understanding of the cause of every incident in life. Some put the blame for their weaknesses and limitations on their parentage or heredity and their environment. Others attribute the cause of all seeming injustice to the whims and fancies of some entity—whether called God or by any other name—who is separate from man and who, they fancy, breathes life into every new-born babe.

Theosophy says that God is an all-pervading Divine Presence, ever shooting forth its effulgent beams on all alike, ever energizing and vivifying all that lives and breathes. Furthermore, that this is a universe of Law, in which there is no room for chance or chaos or miracles. Everything that happens to us, pleasant or unpleasant, favourable or unfavourable, is the exact consequence of the operation of Law. This recognition is of utmost importance for a truer realization of the meaning of life and an understanding of the appropriate place of everything in the scheme of evolution.

In the kingdoms of Nature below the human, the law of harmony prevails. The characteristic of the fire to burn, of water to wet, of the air to dry, is according to natural law. The sun, the moon, the earth, the stars, the ocean, are all governed by the natural law of periodicity, which operates unerringly. The lives in the mineral, the vegetable and the animal kingdoms of Nature evolve in accordance with natural impulse, the natural law.

Because man has Manas, the thinking, reasoning, argumentative faculty, because of his free choice and free will, he can obey or disobey Nature's laws of harmony; but the Law moves on, ever working justly, unerringly, ceaselessly, yet all the time mercifully, ever bringing each effect back to its producer, the cause, thus restoring the disturbed equilibrium and preserving the harmony of the Cosmos. Therefore, the cause of disturbance in the harmony of the universe lies in the human kingdom, with man

paying heed most of the time to the voice of the senses and silencing the voice of the Spirit within. But the wheel of Law, with its mighty sweep of never-erring action, brings to man the life of weal or woe, in accordance with previous causes sown. Wrapped up in every seed of thought is the effect, the nature of the effect depending on the motive of the individual in sowing the seed.

This brings us to the fundamental basis of life: the present is the progeny of the past, and, likewise, the future is the efflorescence of the present. The circumstances we are placed in, however unfavourable, unpleasant and uncomfortable they may be, are nothing but the just consequence of our own actions in the long or immediate past. As a spider spins its web, climbing by itself, along the thread spun by itself, the thread made up of its own substance, so too we move along the path of perfection, in just accordance with our past karmic thoughts and deeds.

Thus we live in the world of our own creation, the consequence of our free choice and free will, which faces us as fate now, but by the same free choice and free will we can mitigate the effects of the past and face the future with faith and fortitude, with patience and perseverance, with courage and calmness. Man is ever caught up in the web of life, but he need not be discouraged. Just as he had the power in the past to create the hundred cords of desire which fetter him in the present, so he has sufficient power in the present to free himself from all these fetters so as to live in the future, no more caught up in the web of the personal life. Each one is the designer of his own destiny; within his own self deliverance must be sought; his karma becomes the force that moves the ceaseless revolutions of the wheel of Law, Law of ever-moving, never-erring action.

This law therefore, instead of punishing man, affords him an opportunity for the adjustment of his karmic debts, for the betterment of his future. Every incident has to be made use of as an avenue for revealing the highest and the greatest in each, with reliance in the harmonious working of the wheel of law, which will bring only the just dues, the reward or punishment one deserves. Therefore, it is not the Law that rewards or punishes man, but man himself. He rewards himself for having abided by the harmonious law, and likewise punishes himself for having worked against Nature and disturbed the harmony in the universe.

Thus man stands at an important place in the scheme of evolution. He is the link between the highest and the lowest. He is the bridge between the manifest and the unmanifest, the conditioned and the unconditioned. But he has failed to recognize this impor-

tant position he occupies in life. He is ignorant of the greatest and the highest within himself, and looks for it outside of him. He fails to grapple with the mocking demon of illusion, and becomes a victim to the dazzling flame of the personal life. He is tossed by the fierce waves of pleasure and pain, gain and loss; he is chased by the gale of pride and ambition, envy and vanity, selfishness and sense of separateness. He is caught in the web of life.

The only way he can free himself from the fetters is to recognize his own true nature as an aspect of the One Spirit, whose radiance is shining within the inmost nature in each. He has to discern the real from the false, the permanent from the perishable. He has to become aware of the constant war being waged within his own self, between the lower nature and the higher nature in him, the demoniacal and divine powers. He can win this battle only by taking a firm position in the eternal, changeless Sat, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions. He has to bathe in the sunlight of the Spirit within, merge in the beam of light immaculate, by giving up the life of the personality, sacrificing the personal to Self impersonal, passion to compassion, emotion to devotion, blind rituals to the light of Eternal Verities.

Therefore, at no time, in no way, should we work against Nature's laws. We cannot live for ourselves, forgetting others. We cannot turn a deaf ear to the cries of humanity's pain and sorrow, because, whether we like it or not, others live in us, and we in them. There is perfect unity in the midst of diversified expressions of the One Spirit in different departments of Nature. Nature is triune; likewise man is also triune. Each has to attune his mind and heart to the One Spirit, One Light, One Master. Each must act in such a way as to synchronize with all the others, in the spirit of unity and brotherhood. Then only, not till then, is he reborn in the real world, the world of Spirit, where all barriers are unknown, and his perception extends to endless space. He becomes more porous to the spiritual influences from within, more compassionate in his outlook, more charitable in his feelings, more humble in his actions. Thus he fulfils his obligation to all Nature—to raise it to the nature, stature and dignity of conscious godhood.

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HAPPINESS is a how, not a what; a talent, not an object.

—HERMANN HESSE

## PREPARING FOR FUTURE INCARNATIONS

THERE are many who aver that they believe in reincarnation. Millions in India accept it as a tenet for which they do not require proof. Yet, even among these believers there are very few who actively plan their present actions so as to acquire the luggage that will best serve them during their next sojourn upon earth. It is not too difficult to realize that long-term causes now planted will reach their fruition and ripening only in a future life. The difficulty lies in sustaining efforts which by their very nature bring no presently visible dividends. Therefore, unless the gaze is rivetted to the distant objective, a sense of frustration or despondency may act as a disrupting force and nullify all effort.

What do we desire our next incarnation to be? As the twig is bent, so is the tree inclined, is a truism in life, and our present desires, though hidden from us, will inevitably seek their expression on the physical plane in the time and under the circumstances required for their growth. The daisy grows in its own time, the cedar and the oak in theirs. "But," asks the average man, "if I have to make my choices and choose my seeds, I will certainly indulge a desire which gives me joy, soothes my appetite and inflates my ego. If joy and pleasure exist, why can I not have my fill of them, aye, even to the point of surfeit?"

Were men bereft of the higher emotions, the point were well taken. But because there is the joy of giving up life for a friend, or the joyous exultation of the martyr who mounts the faggot, a doubt comes to becloud the materialistic outlook. Patience, self-abnegation, martyrdom and sacrifice have a lure of their own. Men have craved for these with as much yearning as others have for the satisfaction of earthly appetites. What are faith, hope and charity that they should preside on my choices? Why should I sacrifice when it but diminishes my hoard? Why endure austerity when plenty in love, wealth and pleasure attend on my very wish and thought? No reasoned answer can be given if only material considerations are brought to bear upon the problem. The true answer takes us behind the tinsel show of things into the realms of reality, and those realms can be entered only after one has answered to oneself the question: Who am I?

Man has raised this query down the centuries, and though men like Ammonius and Plato have left the answer as their bequest to humanity, very few have sought to profit by it. With very little perception, indeed, anyone can understand that there are certain circumstances which birth imposes on him and which he cannot

change. The configuration of the planets at birth; race, family and parentage; incurable physical deformities; skin pigmentation and deep-rooted mental deficiencies are a few examples of this type of unalterable circumstances. There are others, however, which one has the power to change within limits. Some of these are: weaknesses of the brain and the organs, attractions and aversions, the ratio of the *gunas* carried forward from previous lives. All these circumstances we drew together at birth. All these with adjustments up or down we will abandon at death to pick up again at the next incarnation. They are our creations, the earthly progeny of our deeds and thoughts, and we can no more do away with them than we can the succession of effects upon causes.

One fact, however, emerges, namely, that by exertion we can overcome our destiny within limits. If we labour rightly and, uprooting poisonous growths, plant fair seedlings in their stead, our life will become a fruitful and fair and clean *Kshetra* for the reaping of a rich harvest. So the dullard can bloom into a keen intellect; the feeble can transcend his own weakness; the morally lax can become pure and upright. How is this transformation achieved? In the same manner by which the average man sinks by degrees into the mire of sin—by the forming of habits. But, whereas in the case of the sinner the path of formation of wrong habits may be high and wide and easy of approach, the path of good habits is arduous and progress is slow and the going cumbersome.

When we think, we unconsciously draw upon and use forces stored in the great reservoirs of nature. When an intense desire guides the thought, the forces drawn, worked upon and emanated by the laboratory of the mind are in that proportion more powerful for good or for evil. The brooder of evil, the miser and the criminal have established themselves in vice because their insatiable thirst for ignoble things has been perpetuated by prolonged habit until it has become ingrained in them and is as much a part of their being, molecule by molecule, as any other appendage of the living man. If a change for the worse is so wrought, a transformation towards virtue can be effected in the same manner and with equal intensity. Good character is formed by good habits and the latter become established by ceaseless repetition of acts of goodness backed by an indomitable will which has to be sustained and energized by a strong desire. If the desire to move towards righteousness be weak, if the craving for good waxes and wanes with changing circumstances, the results

will in like measure be insipid.

If, therefore, we can generate a desire and keep its fires burning, we will in time achieve success. There are no limits to effort. So the weakling struts the stage of life as an athlete; one born in poverty amasses wealth; the plodding student becomes a tycoon of keen intellect; the street urchin transforms himself into a leader of men. Each reached the fulfilment of desires which were nurtured and fed into flame over long periods of time. The results of these efforts will be left here at death, and when the Soul returns to earth it will be hampered and hedged in by an over-saturation, an excess as it were of mortal things which even in their bloom carry the odour of death. The Soul has garnered no harvest during its earthly existence which is congenial to its nature, and it is the poorer to that extent. Therefore, when once the student is convinced of the fact of reincarnation as also of the other fact that by his desire-backed exertions he can change circumstances and manipulate them as he will, it is then that he desires to know what particular aromas he can distil on earth and carry away with him at death. Madame Blavatsky gave the indication in no uncertain terms. She said:

...psychic laws and facts...relate wholly to the material and evanescent part of the septenary man, *but the Ethics sink into and take hold of the real man—the reincarnating Ego* [italics ours]. We are outwardly creatures of but a day; within we are eternal. Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, and teach, practise, promulgate that system of life and thought which alone can save the coming races. Do not work merely for the Theosophical Society, but *through* it for Humanity.

In these few lines is contained the Code of Conduct for the would-be disciple of future incarnation. If he abjures vices and even excesses merely to become a first-rate athlete, a figure in society, or a much sought-after bachelor, he has but wasted his opportunities of the incarnation. The fury and force of his resistance to evil is oriented to worldly ends and the effort of years will have hardly kindled that ray of sublimation which alone can touch the Soul. The target was the attainment of perishable ends, and since the Soul takes count of no mortal factors, no lasting good is achieved.

There are cases also where discipline and austerity are undertaken for a purely personal advancement in the spiritual life. The seeking for liberation for oneself alone is the highest aspiration of this group. Here, the worship is not made to perishable things, and yet, under some deep-seated misapprehension, the

goal set is much lower than the homage to the Highest. The soul may achieve its target and surround itself with bliss for an immensity of years, but the effort aimed at the liberation of oneself alone as distinct from all others must have its toll. For, the personal or even the individual cannot stand alone and isolated. It cannot enlarge itself to encompass the whole. The virus of the glorified selfishness must at some time release its long delayed and pent-up force; and as soon as the energy that plunged the soul into bliss is exhausted, it is forced back into the matrix of life to learn that nothing that is short of the eternal can cognize the eternal.

How, then, does one so modulate life that the ethics *do* sink into and take hold of the inner man? Further, are we sure that we know the ethics of which Madame Blavatsky speaks? There are rules and laws which govern the divine life just as there are rules and laws which exist for the mortal aspects of man and his circumstances. The former deal with the eternal and the changeless, the latter with but the ephemera of a day. *Light on the Path* explains this difference in its own way. Says the text:

The most absolute and universal laws of natural and physical life as understood by the scientist will pass away when the life of this universe has passed away and only its soul is left in the silence. What then will be the value of the knowledge of its laws acquired by industry and observation?

Therefore, although it becomes our duty to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and for the proper discharge of that duty to understand the laws and rules of Caesar, we have a higher and more paramount duty to honour the transcendental laws that govern the unchanging aspects of life—laws which are eternally applicable in any sphere of existence where a human mind undertakes its sacred crucifying pilgrimage. The true ethics have always been known and the student of Theosophy is well conversant with them as formulated by *The Voice of the Silence* in the divine *Paramitas*. In Sanskrit, with slight variations they are known as *bhava-pushpas* or "flowers of sanctity." There are eight such flowers mentioned in the *Glossary* under "Sama." These are: (1) Clemency or charity; (2) Self-restraint; (3) Affection or love for others; (4) Patience; (5) Resignation or repression of mental perturbation; (6) Devotion; (7) Meditation; and (8) Veracity. These constitute ethics and not even the dullest can say he does not know of them in one form or another.

Now that we know that these have the power to percolate through to the Soul, what should our practice be? One thing

appears evident from the start. There cannot be any action, however simple or humdrum, which cannot lend itself to the controlling and harmonizing influence of one or another of the *Paramitas*. Any action done by a person, unless it be reflex or automatic, can be impelled by a stronger or a weaker force proportionate to the strength or weakness of the thought and desire that made the action possible. To link the force of the imperishable *Paramitas* to perishable things is to invest a mortal capsule with an ensouling energy. The sweeping of a floor, the bathing of a body, the helping of lame dogs over stiles can become actions potent for the growth and the flowering of the Soul. Use of the *Paramitas* in controlling and guiding our reactions to poverty, hardships, pain, estrangement and personal injustice can enrich the Soul and give it additional strength in the next incarnation to undertake a larger service and a greater sacrifice.

To help the student in the formation of the habit of referring back to the divine part of himself, numerous aids have been laid down and Patanjali's Yoga Sutras give valuable instructions for each stage of endeavour. By way of encouraging *vairagya* and *abhyasa*, Theosophy enjoins the taking stock of one's actions at the close of a day by analysing them in the light of the *Paramitas* and the Higher Self. But this by itself will achieve nothing unless by repetition of the discipline the student learns to place the *Paramita* behind the act just before the action emerges on to the objective plane. Thus, the mere outward manifestation of action is not manipulated. What the student has to seek to accomplish is the ensouling of that which produces action by thoughts which will be powerful for good alone. So, when adverse circumstances are encountered, they can be turned to use by the linking of the appropriate ethical precept to the unwelcome events. Thus can the soul build up its luggage for the future life, and this for the simple reason that the mundane has even for an instant of time been touched by the eternal and the Alchemy of life will transform its lead into gold.

If, then, the outside stimuli can by occult processes be distilled into essences which the Soul can accept, it must follow that a far greater generation and conservation of energy must result where again in the light of the *Paramitas* the person plans and executes actions for the leading of other Souls from out of the slough of mortal despondencies. For, from the very first rung of the ladder, it is his duty to serve. If he aspires to call upon the higher Ego—leave alone the Higher Self—for its guidance, he at the same time constitutes himself a healer of those whose incarnated Souls

are in profound gloom and who know nought of the higher Ego or of the Higher Self of man. Ethics, when linked to the knowledge and the desire to heal, have the power to transform. They have the power to carry away out of the regions of the earthly something which could be grafted on to the tree of life eternal. The future life can thus be built up and a new incarnation aspired to with all the fervour of the exultant missionary.

It becomes the solemn duty of the companions to promulgate the lofty ethics, first by the example of their own lives, and next by seeking all opportunity to promulgate them. The Lodge provides the media of instruction and propagation. The teachings give a grounding in the *Paramitas*, the magazines provide perhaps the best avenues of impersonal service. Speaking about the magazine *Lucifer*, H.P.B. used these significant words:

In its pages, month by month, I give such public teaching as is possible on Theosophical doctrines and so carry on the most important of our Theosophical work. . . . I should be glad to see a larger increase in the number of regular subscribers, for I regard these as my pupils, among whom I shall find some who will show the capacity for receiving further instruction.

H.P.B. left her physical body in 1891, but she still remains the Head of the Movement and further instructions and help do come to those who deserve them, through the region of the Higher Mind.

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IF a man has to part with something he cherishes, and he sells it or accepts something in exchange, he loses both the physical and the spiritual ownership of it. But if he gives it away, he retains the spiritual ownership of it forever.

We own nothing in this world. The things we may possess are merely entrusted to us as custodians; and the measure of our stewardship is the helpful and unselfish use we have made of them.

True gratitude is the heart's ever remembering.

Many people believe that there can be no harmony without identity and unanimity. This is harmony in its most elemental conception. The higher form of harmony is spiritual agreement amid earthly differences.

He has true spiritual greatness who does not delight in triumphs, great or small, over other men.

—MERTON S. YEWDALE

## SELF-EDUCATION AND SELF-DISCIPLINE

IN the effort to apply and to promulgate Theosophy we should not neglect self-education, which implies both the gathering of knowledge and the discipline of the personality in terms of that knowledge.

We do not always realize that there are two aspects of self-education: one, where we know that we are ignorant of a subject and begin to look for a teacher or a book that will enlighten us, and, having found, apply our minds to the task of learning; the second, where we do not know that we are ignorant but have the duty of finding this out.

We fail, not because we are unable as yet to apply fully what we are learning, but because we do not know that we are ignorant of other teachings and their application. There is no blame attached to mistakes made while learning, but there is blame when self-examination as to our ignorance does not take place, for that is, or should be, the kernel of self-education. Only if we practise self-analysis will our actions be self-induced; only so shall we be active in devising ways and means to educate ourselves, because though the Path is one, each treader of the Path has his own character and his own individual approach.

Just as when studying a book on any mundane subject we pay attention to details, or, if we are dealing with practical subjects, we follow the instructions given, so we should follow the instructions given and pay attention to the details in our spiritual books. One such is the *Gita*. We fail to turn it into a practical book of instruction for living the spiritual life because we do not pay attention to details.

One piece of instruction in that book is very helpful with respect to self-education and self-discipline. Krishna says in Chapter XVIII that we should perform three types of actions: deeds of sacrifice, of mortification and of charity. These should be performed not only at times, but every day. In our daily living few of us can escape doing such deeds, for life certainly makes us sacrifice our personal wishes almost every day in some respect or another, and it brings mortification to us, while few live so wholly unto themselves as not to think some charitable thought or do some charitable action every day. So why does Krishna tell us to perform these deeds?

Is it not that what good we do today, almost automatically, is the result of lessons already learnt, and that what is needed is to apply what is *now* being learnt? Our automatic good actions

should be put before the bar of our present knowledge and experience, and in terms of what we now know we should perform such acts with full deliberation and for a set purpose—even if but one such act a day.

The *Gita* analyses in detail what Krishna means by sacrifice, mortification and charity. To sum up the ideas, we can say that every day we should deliberately do, in His name, one act of sacrifice, whether it be offering a glass of water to the thirsty, or a greater deliberate sacrifice of oneself, in time, money and work, for His sake, *i.e.*, for the Spirit throughout all Nature, or for the manifested separative aspect of the One, humanity itself.

Some deed of mortification must be performed. How shall we know what to mortify in ourselves? Those faults in us which are known to us we already are trying to overcome, so it is those faults that we do not yet know that we must find out. This we can do by visualizing ourselves in our daily duties. How do we walk, talk, appear, what do we do, what are our feelings and our thoughts? Are we each day more aware of *ourselves* and of what we do? This self-analysis must become part of our nightly review until we find out what it is in us that needs mortifying. Then a deliberate effort should be made, even once a day, to remember our fault and to try to rectify it.

Charity is not just the giving away of something to another; once a day at least we can deliberately ensoul some action with love, whether it be the giving of an object or of time or of good thought.

The result of such deliberate actions will be, not only that we shall improve, personally and spiritually, but also that we shall become integrated, that is, our outer actions will keep pace with our inner study and knowledge. At present we know theoretically much more than we practise and there is a constant war within us, so that there is no harmony within; we are not well-knit; we have not yet taken charge of the personality. But if these special actions are deliberately performed every day there will in time be built a firm centre within—the prerequisite for the Inner Ruler in the heart to function as an active power.

For the good of the whole Theosophical Movement it is necessary that some at least begin this definite work on themselves.

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CHARACTER calls forth character.

—GOETHE

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“An occultist can produce phenomena, but he cannot supply the world with brains, nor with the intelligence and good faith necessary to understand and appreciate them,” wrote H.P.B. in reply to a query (*Lucifer*, February 1888). Whenever current scientific knowledge proves inadequate to explain the results of a new observation or phenomenon, there is a clear challenge to scientific understanding and orthodoxy. At times such challenges are welcomed and stimulate new research; at times scientists become emotional and confused and perceive abnormal or “anomalous” phenomena as heresies.

Peter Sturrock, professor of space science at Stanford University in California and president of the Society for Scientific Exploration, examines, in his article “Brave New Heresies” (*New Scientist*, 24/31 December 1988), how the scientific community views apparently anomalous phenomena today:

Sometimes scientists discount reports of strange phenomena because they appear to run counter to the known natural laws. It is, of course, prudent to require strong evidence before rejecting an established theory. On the other hand . . . in the past 300 years, we have seen Newton's theory of gravity give way to Einstein's theory of gravity. Should we not admit the possibility that, in the next 300 years—possibly less—this theory will give way to another theory of gravity that is even more accurate and comprehensive? . . .

In certain cases, a new idea may be damned as a heresy. Under the heading “Heresy,” the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1959 edition) contains the following observation. “Science has its orthodoxy as well as religion. There are things which a scientific man may not believe and other things which he may not disbelieve without treason to the brotherhood of his craft . . . a heresy is a proposition contrary to the body of belief but is not necessarily false . . . the history of science is partly the history of heresies becoming orthodoxies.”

Religious bodies have often labelled a belief as a heresy. In February 1616, the consulting theologians of the Holy Office in Rome condemned as heretical the theory of the Solar System, which places the Sun at the centre. Organized scientific bodies do not have inquisitions but, in recent years, we have seen the development of self-appointed committees that aim to save society from irrationality and science from irrational attacks. One of these is the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) in the US. In October 1632, Galileo was

summoned to Rome to be examined by the Inquisition for subtly but forcefully advocating the heliocentric theory. Today, a leading investigator of parapsychology, cryptozoology or UFO research may be politely invited to take part in a panel discussion at a CSICOP meeting. . . .

Scientists become confused and emotional when someone appears to challenge both belief and the political structure. . . . The status of the psychological community, which has by and large rejected the claims of parapsychology, would necessarily suffer if someone were to show that the human mind can communicate with other minds other than through the known senses. Note that it is asserting the possibility of such a proposition that represents a heresy; proof converts a heresy into an orthodoxy. . . .

After discussing the problems with friends, we set up the Society for Scientific Explorations in January, 1982, and we launched our journal, the *Journal of Scientific Exploration*, in December 1987. The magazine will provide space for investigators to present their results, followed by critical analyses of that work.

The process of science, as described by the English physicist John Ziman, is that of building a rational consensus. Both the society and the journal aim to help the scientific community to arrive at a rational consensus concerning anomalous phenomena. That way, perhaps, challenges to scientific understanding can be used to expand our knowledge of the world.

In the same "Correspondence" column of *Lucifer* for February 1888 from which we have quoted above, H.P.B. explains that occult phenomena were performed in the early days of the Theosophical Movement in the hope that the manipulation of forces of nature which lie below the surface of things would lead to inquiry into the nature and the laws of those forces, "unknown to science, but perfectly known to occultism." The intention from the first was, not to incite idle curiosity, but to lead the thoughtful to the study of the philosophy and the science of whose truth and power the phenomena were but trivial illustrations. H.P.B. writes:

Modern science labours under disabilities with respect to the investigation of the Occult quite as embarrassing as those of Religion; for, while Religion cannot grasp the idea of natural law as applied to the supersensuous Universe, Science does not allow the existence of any supersensuous universe at all to which the reign of law could be extended; nor can it conceive the possibility of any other state of consciousness than our present terrestrial one. . . .

Never were the phenomena presented in any other character than that of instances of a power *over perfectly natural though unrecognized forces*, and incidentally over matter, possessed by certain individuals who have attained to a larger and higher knowledge of the Universe than has been reached by scientists and theologians, or can ever be reached by them, by the roads they are now respectively pursuing. Yet this power is latent in all men, and could, in time, be wielded by anyone who would cultivate the knowledge and conform to the conditions necessary for its development.

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Current medical research is trying to find out whether mind and body suffer in unison. Researchers at Leiden University in the Netherlands are compiling data to link physical symptoms with psychological factors, using consultative psychiatry methods. (*The Times of India*, January 1)

Scientists say that most people are aware of a relation between physical and mental pain, but there is very little scientific information to explain why. Expressions have gradually crept into the language that link body and mind. For example, people say that some physical symptom is "due to stress," or, "it must be psychological." Scientists say that such expressions convey that we are wrestling with a complicated problem that has taken up a good deal of mental and emotional energy.

"Mind and body may suffer in unison," according to the scientists, and this has given rise to the concept of consultative psychiatry which concentrates on the interaction between the two types of disorders. Specifically, this means that a somatic physician who cannot account for a patient's physical symptoms may refer him to a psychiatrist. The latter will talk to the patient, look at his medical history and lifestyle and use the information to determine whether there are psychiatric symptoms and if so, how they are related to the physical complaints. He then advises the consultant and the general practitioner about treatment.

Psychoanalyst Franz Alexander (1891-1964) developed the concept of psychosomatics which was based on the idea that certain conflicts in a person's psychological development could bring about associated "psychosomatic" illness like asthma, eczema, rheumatoid arthritis, stomach ulcers, high blood pressure, etc. Medical scientists are now trying to back up these assumptions with research data.

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Theosophy states that our senses actually inhere in the semi-metaphysical principle called the astral body; and further, that a vibration caught by consciousness on one plane of perception as sound, will appear on another as light or colour, etc.

Over the past ten years, high-frequency ultrasound has been used for everything from submarine detection to monitoring the health of an unborn foetus. Now a pair of chemists from the University of Illinois, U.S.A., report that ultrasound has yet another characteristic: It can actually cause the molecules of some liquids to emit light.

The chemists beamed ultrasound at small quantities of two organic liquids: dodecane and nitroethane. The high-frequency sound, they discovered, produced expanding bubbles in the liquids. When the frequency of the bubbles grew to match that of the sound waves, the bubbles imploded, releasing sudden bursts of heat. The heat, in turn, broke the liquid molecules into highly energetic carbon fragments that emitted a blue light, such as we see when we turn on a gas range. This phenomenon is known as sonoluminescence. (*Omni*, December 1988)

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A code of ecology enshrining a set of six principles, under which people would be working with and not against nature, was enunciated at the Indian Science Congress held at Madurai this January. Dr. T. N. Khoshoo, a leading environmentalist, said that there is an urgent need to adopt the code or "dharma of ecology" at all levels, starting from the individual to the entire globe, "so as to practise the cult of sustainability in development." (*The Times of India*, January 8)

Environment could no longer be divided into watertight compartments dealing with wildlife, pollution, etc., as it "encompasses the whole well-being of all life on the planet," Dr. Khoshoo said. Pointing out that the earth is a finite system in resources and carrying capacity, he warned that "future economic growth cannot be sustainable if it is at the expense of long-range ecological security." He called upon the people to develop a measure of reverence for nature and learn from tribal societies "which have developed an approach of harmony with nature."

Dr. Khoshoo said that life styles in developed nations had affected the resource base in developing countries, and illustrated it with the "hamburger connection" where 40 per cent of the forest cover of Central America was destroyed for making pasture land to supply cheap beef to North America.

That we are all united and that the earth is a unit though we compartmentalize it into nations, each trying to further its own economic progress, is brought home to us in various ways. The code of ecology would allow the peoples of the world to rise above narrow economic systems and owe allegiance to the life support system as a whole. The six principles of the code are:

—Regenerability of the life support system by protecting renewable resources and conserving non-renewable resources.

—Fair sharing of resources, means and products of development between and within nations of the world.

—Bringing about awareness regarding hidden social, economic and environmental costs of consumerism and overuse of resources.

—Adopting willingly sustainability as a way of life by encouraging frugality and fraternity.

—Meeting all genuine societal needs and legitimate aspirations of the people by blending economic and environmental imperatives to alleviate poverty.

—Halting and reversing the armament build-up for sustainable peace and environment.

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Writing in *Nutrition and Food Science* (U.K.) for September/October 1988, Professor Spedding calls for co-operation between those involved at different stages of food production, from farm to consumer. This was the theme of a recent conference held at Reading University.

In developing countries, food production, processing, preparation, cooking and consumption may all be carried out by the same people. They are therefore familiar with the process as a whole and would not ignore the implications of change in one part of the whole chain for other parts. In developed countries, however, a high proportion of our food is now processed by a seemingly separate food industry. There is therefore a natural tendency to think about the food industry and farming as isolated activities, carried out, as they are, by different people in different places and often at different times. The different people employed in these industries are trained and educated in their own trades and professions and may know little about the rest of the food chain.

“But, of course, their separate activities are not wholly independent,” says Professor Spedding, “and the interactions of different parts of the food chain are of considerable importance.”

It makes sense to think of it as a *chain* because it is a purposive series of processes designed, ultimately, to provide what consumers want and are prepared to pay for. . . .

In many instances now, the consumer is concerned, not only with what is in the food—its composition—and what part of this has been added to the original raw material, but also with how the latter was produced. . . . There are those who wish to purchase food produced on the farm without the use of manufactured fertilizers or agrochemicals, for example. Almost certainly, they will also wish to insist that chemicals have not then been added during processing, storage or distribution.

But many purchasers may also be concerned about these practices because of worries about pollution, effects on the environment, wildlife and their habitats. . . . So the consumer may well have an interest in the whole food chain. . . .

Research workers tend to specialize, but it is clear that their work also has to be assessed in the context of the whole food chain. This highlights the need to consider what impact this has on education. Currently, food scientists and agriculturalists take different university degrees and would not automatically think of themselves as much concerned about other parts of the total industry. The implications are not only technical and biological but also economic. . . .

The clear conclusion is that all concerned, whether research scientists, teachers, students, industrialists or farmers, need a greater awareness of the food chain as a whole.

As in the production of food so in other activities there is a clear need, not for specialization and compartmentalization, but for co-operation and interaction.

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## THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

### By H. P. Blavatsky:

ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.  
THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.  
INDEX TO THE SECRET DOCTRINE  
THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY  
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE  
THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY  
THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE  
FIVE MESSAGES TO THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS  
RAJA-YOGA OR OCCULTISM  
SHE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH  
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A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

### By William Q. Judge:

THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY  
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME  
THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
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H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

# 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 founder 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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