

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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THE SEAT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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IN trying to observe the injunction "Man, Know Thyself!" the Theosophical student comes upon a line of thought about the states of consciousness.

What creates the delusion perpetuating the dire heresy of separateness? What is implicit in the teaching that the personal self is non-existent in reality? What makes the discerning mystic say that, because his mind of desires is dead, because the universe of objects has no attraction for him, therefore he is as one dead? And yet he lives on, singing the praises of immortality, because he has found that in his true nature he is indestructible. When all that is divisible is fully controlled, he knows himself as the immortal and indivisible being. He loves the fount and spring of that being, the All, the Whole, the Most High. In that state he also perceives how the mortal world is sustained by mortal men, and his love flows out to them in pity.

The study of our states of consciousness is important. Consciousness exists; it *is*; it manifests, however, numerous states. Man is consciousness and has attained the state of self-consciousness. That self-consciousness lives and functions in the waking state, in the dream state, in its own pure impersonal state, or attains to universal self-consciousness. There are other and intermediate states, *e.g.*, waking-dreaming; it is that state of consciousness in which the individual has not lost the sense of bodily existence and yet has a sense of dream pictures seen or dream sounds heard.

Again, in the waking state of self-consciousness he may be a

its natural death. As incarnated existence proceeds, our lines of ideation and imagination converge more and more to a point—material or spiritual, demoniac or divine. When death comes to deliver us from the prison-house of flesh and heal us of our present foibles and infirmities, our last thoughts determine our near, and even in some ways our distant, future. Last thoughts at death have a strength and a potency all their own. The *Bhagavad-Gita* (Chapter VIII) makes this quite clear.

No one, however, can suddenly invoke the thought of the Divine within him and sustain the memory of it unless by practice he has accustomed himself to doing so. Other thoughts which make up his line of life's meditation will otherwise overtake his aspiration and dominate it. We have, therefore, to learn to take care of our states of consciousness from day to day and season to season.

As we activate the personality more and more to become porous to higher influences and to become receptive to the impresses of the Silent Thinker and the Constant Watcher, the Inner Manasic Ego which is our true Self, our waking life is brightened by the light of wisdom. Sordid death has begun to die in us and the Majesty of the Excellent Death has commenced to arrive. Study of the grand moral verities and their metaphysical counterparts, application of what we gain by study and the humble but confident promulgation of the one true philosophy will fully prepare us to bid good-bye to the world of mortality when our Friend calls us to ascend to our Heavenly Home. For this reason, for the Theosophical student this saying of Muhammad regarding our states of consciousness has a special message:

That person who shall die while he is studying in order to revive Knowledge of Religion, will be only one degree inferior to the Prophets.

HE that never changed any of his opinions, never corrected any of his mistakes, and he who was never wise enough to find out any mistakes in himself, will not be charitable enough to excuse what he reckons mistakes in others.

—BENJAMIN WHICHCOTE

WHAT SHE TAUGHT US

[The thoughts of all students of Theosophy are turned towards H. P. Blavatsky as we approach the hundredth anniversary of her passing, which falls in May 1991. From this issue onwards, THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT will be reprinting some of the memorial articles that appeared in *Lucifer*, the magazine founded by her, after her death. These were written by a few of her contemporaries, who knew her personally, and their memories and appreciations of the Teacher should be of interest and value to the present generation of her students.

The article reprinted below, which appeared in *Lucifer* for July 1891, was contributed by William Kingsland, author of *The Real H. P. Blavatsky*. — EDS.]

IF I were to write this short memoir simply as an imperfect expression of what H.P.B. was to me personally, and of the influence of her life and teachings upon my own life and aspirations, I should merely be adding one more testimony to that affection and reverence which she inspired in all who learnt to understand her in some degree. There were those who were attracted to her by the magnetism of her personal influence, by her extraordinary intellect, by her conversational powers, and even by her militant unconventionality. But I was not one of these. It was her message that attracted me; it was as a teacher that I learnt to know and love her. Apart from her teachings I might have looked upon H.P.B. as an interesting and unique character, but I do not think I should have been attracted to her, had not her message spoken at once right home to my heart. It was through that message that I came to know H.P.B., not as a mere personal friend, but as something infinitely more.

Let me dwell therefore upon H.P.B. as a teacher, let me endeavour to express what it was that she set before me, and before so many others, the acceptance of which united us by ties which death cannot sever.

First, and above all else, she showed us the *purpose of life*.

And when I say this I mean much more than might be commonly understood by this phrase. I mean much more than that she gave us an interest and a motive in this present life, and a belief or faith with regard to the next. Those who have learnt the lesson of the illusory

nature of that which most men call *life*, whether here or hereafter, need to draw their inspiration from a deeper source than is available in the external world of forms. But to the born Mystic there is often a long period of waiting and seeking before that source is found. Many years are spent in testing and rejecting first one system, then another, until it seems perchance as if life could be naught but a hopeless problem. And perhaps just when all seemed darkest and most hopeless, when it even appeared best to abandon the quest, to take up the position, "we do not know, and we cannot know," just then it has been that the light has dawned, the teacher has been sent, the word has been spoken, which has recalled the lost memory of that hidden source of truth for which we have been seeking; and we have taken up once more, at the point at which we dropped it in a previous lifetime, that great task which we have set ourselves to accomplish.

And thus she did something more than teach us a new system of philosophy. She drew together the threads of our life, those threads which run back into the past, and forward into the future, but which we had been unable to trace, and showed us the pattern we had been weaving, and the purpose of our work.

She taught us *Theosophy*—not as a mere form of doctrine, not as a religion, or a philosophy, or a creed, or a working hypothesis, but as *a living power in our lives*.

It is inevitable that the term *Theosophy* should come to be associated with a certain set of doctrines. In order that the message may be given to the world it must be presented in a definite and systematic form. But in doing this it becomes *exoteric*, and nothing that is *exoteric* can be permanent, for it belongs to the world of form. She led us to look beneath the surface, behind the form; to make the *principle* the real motive power of our life and conduct. To her the term *Theosophy* meant something infinitely more than could be set before the world in any *Key to Theosophy* or *Secret Doctrine*. The nearest approach to it in any of her published works is in *The Voice of the Silence*; yet even that conveys but imperfectly what she would—had the world been able to receive it—have taught and included in the term *Theosophy*.

The keynote of her teachings, the keynote of her life, was—*Self-sacrifice*.

But stay, Disciple...Yet one word. Canst thou destroy divine

COMPASSION? Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal....

Now bend thy head and listen well, O Bodhisattva—Compassion speaks and saith: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

And thus though doctrinal Theosophy speaks of *Devachan* and *Nirvana*; of rest for the weary storm-tossed pilgrim of life; of a final goal of bliss past all thought and conceiving; yet, to those who are able to receive it, it says that there is something higher and nobler still, that though thrice great is he who has "crossed and won the Aryahata Path," he is greater still who, having won the prize, can put it aside, and "remain unselfish till the endless end."

And so H.P.B. often pointed out to us those men and women who were true Theosophists, though they stood outside of the Theosophical Movement, and even appeared antagonistic to it. Already in the world a *Theosophist* has come to mean someone who believes in Reincarnation and Karma, or some other distinctive doctrine. But the term was never so limited in its application by the great founder of the Theosophical Society. She taught these doctrines in order that men might dissociate themselves from *all forms* of doctrine, and reach "Alaya's Self." There is no older doctrine than this of Divine Compassion, of Universal Brotherhood. It is the essence of all the teachings of all the Buddhas and Christs the world has ever known. It is above all doctrines, all creeds, all formulas; it is the essence of all religion. Yet men ever miss it, miss the one principle which alone can save the world, and take refuge instead in the selfish desires of their lower nature.

Individualism is the keynote of modern civilization; competition and survival of the fittest, the practical basis of our morality. Our modern philosophers and scientific teachers do all that is possible to reduce man to the level of an animal, to show his parentage, his ancestry and his genius as belonging to the brute creation, and conditioned by brutal laws of blind force and dead matter. What wonder then that one who believed so ardently in the divine nature of man, in the divine law of love, should oppose with scornful contempt the teachings of both religion and science which thus degrade humanity.

And she paid the inevitable penalty. Misunderstood, slandered, and vilified to the last degree, she lived a hero's life, and died a martyr's death. Only those who were her intimate friends knew how she suffered, mentally and bodily. The man who dies with his face to the foe, fighting to the last though covered with wounds, is accounted a hero. But in the heat of battle there is oblivion of pain, there is a superhuman strength of madness and frenzy. How much more should she be accounted a hero who could hold on to life, and work as no other woman has worked, through years of physical and mental torture.

Some few years ago she was at death's door. Humanly speaking, she ought to have died then. She was given up by the doctors; she herself knew she was dying, and rejoiced greatly. But the Master came to her, showed her the work that must still be done, and gave her her choice—the bliss of dying or the cross of living.

She chose the cross. And thus not merely did she teach us the meaning of Theosophy by precept, but also by example. She was herself the greatest of the Theosophists, not merely because she founded the movement, and restored to the world the treasures of ancient wisdom, but because she herself had made the "*Great Renunciation*."

—WILLIAM KINGSLAND

WE have been accused of following a person because we speak so much of H. P. Blavatsky as we knew her. That is not, with us, the following of a person; it is the recognition of a great Fact in Nature, and that fact has to have a name. The fact is valuable because it points to the Source of Message. Many others have sprung up since she passed from among us, who have taken to themselves the credit of her message, who have used and misused what she brought to them, and have sought to elevate themselves by virtue of its delivery. So it is essential that the one who brought the message of Theosophy should be recognized, should be known, by all Theosophists, should be presented to all those who would study Theosophy, for in no other way can the truth of that Message be obtained, undiverted and uncorrupted.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE

THOUGHT is a force and like all forces can be trained and directed to particular ends. The greatest canalizer of thought is knowledge which, if rightly applied, checks the fissiparous tendency of thought and helps to conserve and concentrate its energy. Yet, with our present-day advance in "knowledge" we seem to have lost the art of wielding our thought-energy and directing it to nobler ends. Our education is responsible for this to a great extent. The hardening tendencies of modern social life demand that knowledge subserve the economic needs of the individual and the nation; and the universities, though they still retain the classics, have been forced to bow to the popular demand for knowledge which can be easily converted into cash. Thus, while people are seeking to augment their knowledge of material things, the wisdom that is concerned with the deeper and more hidden aspects of man and of nature finds hardly any devotees to undertake the strenuous discipline necessary for its acquisition.

What, then, is the province of knowledge? That it must give us clues to the understanding of the manifested world is evident. It is not so evident, however, that even the least of manifested things has several aspects—basically seven—each of which yields a special type of knowledge. Perhaps a simple illustration can make this clear. A piece of stone yields different types of knowledge in the hands of a physicist, a geologist and and a chemist. It yields quite another kind of knowledge to the psychometer, the sensitive and the Sage. To the Initiate, it is an open book which can reveal not only the knowledge obtainable by the experts but also that stone's place in the scheme of things, its ultimate unity with himself and with the All. It will thus be apparent that sensuous perception can be used only for very limited delving into knowledge. To reach that aspect of knowledge which lies beyond the external forms, one has to transcend one's senses and develop those faculties which have long lain dormant for lack of exercise.

That this supersensuous knowledge has been available to humankind at all times is seen from the fact that personages so far apart as Hermes and Buddha, Plato and Lao Tzu and Zoroaster, knew it and

helped, each in his own way, to indicate its perennial source. Why, then, has this fountainhead of knowledge remained a secret, not only to the ordinary person, but even to some outstanding figures in the scientific and other spheres? The reason is evident. If true knowledge is universal and comprehends all existing things, then it follows that one who desires to possess that knowledge must search for it in the totality of manifested Being. Therefore, till the Self of All is recognized, till the neophyte saturates his soul with the unifying essence, he but sets himself up as a thing apart and refuses—though it be involuntarily—to touch any knowledge that disturbs his exclusiveness. Universal knowledge cannot be his because his nature shrinks from universality.

But this is not all: to the acquisition of the higher knowledge, immorality becomes a bar. And this disqualification applies not only to the grosser sins and appetites of the flesh; it applies no less to lapses on the inner planes of one's life. Any desire for self-glorification, the slightest wave of longing to get powers for personal ends, immediately stops the inflow of spiritual knowledge. Not only that; it makes the knowledge already acquired stagnant, so that the power to benefit humankind is lost or weakened till the temptation is overcome.

But, given the altruistic motive and the moral stature, how does the neophyte proceed towards the acquirement of this higher wisdom? Before the sum total of knowledge can be reached, the physical, mental, psychic and spiritual faculties must be developed to the utmost possible degree. For the unprepared, no recognized teacher exists under whose guidance these faculties can be unfolded, for the simple reason that the teacher reveals himself only when the neophyte is ready. The teacher lives in complete seclusion from idle importuners. "No voice penetrates to his inner hearing till it has become a divine voice, a voice which gives no utterance to the cries of self."

The method of approach is left entirely to the disciple. His primary duty is to serve humanity as best he can. It is only when that service does not withhold its bounty from any, when it sets its face against no man whatsoever, that the disciple can expect to have the higher knowledge revealed to him. To the aspirant, however, the call to service is not irksome. His greatest impediment is in the senses. Their insidious spell brings a lure and a fascination to bear upon him, making him lean more and more towards the pleasures of material

As the *Bhagavad-Gita* says, "He who hath his senses and organs in control possesses spiritual knowledge."

Great help in disciplining the senses comes from study of the metaphysics and ethics of Theosophy. These, if dwelt upon assiduously, purify and cleanse the mind and then, as knowledge deepens and strengthens the desire to serve, the aspirant kindles in himself the light of the Spirit. That light is always perceived and help comes from the hidden planes of being, making it unmistakably clear that he has been known and his effort recognized. Further avenues for acquiring knowledge and for rendering service are now opened to him and it becomes his task to build up fresh reserves of strength to draw upon. He cannot look backwards. He cannot rest. Yet he has to understand that in the very toil and tears of the fight is the promise of strength and of hope.

The mind has to be exercised in new fields of endeavour and, as practice matures into ever greater control of one's instruments, the mind learns to drop at will all its earthly luggage and to wait in an attitude of positive expectancy at the threshold of the Spirit. Then from the silence a voice "speaks where there is none to speak" and intuition floods the soul with the light of true knowledge. As each learner touches this knowledge, he understands that he has a yet more solemn duty to discharge towards those who have heard not the divine melody. It becomes his responsibility now to translate the divine knowledge for those who sit starving for the bread of Wisdom. But in so doing he must efface his personality. Wise among the ignorant, he still remains undivided from any. He shuts out egotism, yet is his stature exalted. He becomes, like those who have preceded him, "a window through which the light shines."

THE greatest pride or dejection is the greatest ignorance of self.

—SPINOZA

THE WORLD IS ONE

THE World is One. This is a statement of fact. Many people live without any recognition of the fact. Some understand the fact but do not perceive its full implications. But recognize it or not, the fact is there—the World is One.

Geographically, our globe is a unit. Its surface is divided into land and water, but these two do not conflict with each other. Continents do not club together against the oceans. Only when human beings appear on the scene, competition between land and land arises and spheres of influence are formed. When men sail into the open seas they leave trade routes in their wake—causes of future wars.

The human kingdom on the surface of the globe is one, and its many races and nations are knit together by Nature in a single unit. But pride, egotism, forces of competition rooted in selfish greed refuse to recognize this fact. Nature and Nature's laws compel us all, however, to show recognition. The greatest lesson of the wars fought in our century has emerged clearly: the World is One; the World has been One. The victorious nations face calamities as do the vanquished nations. The suffering and plight of the victors are proportionate to their disregard of the fact of the Oneness of all. The strength with which they try to crush the enemy recoils on the victors.

In every field, economic, scientific, religious, literary, and so on, links exist which bind humanity in one single unit. The difficulty is not that thinkers today do not fully see this fact. The difficulty arises with the politician who, in every land, still works for the "national sovereignty" of his own country. What the world needs today is a moral philosophy of life. No one can destroy false notions of patriotism in politics when false notions of loyalty to class and race, of fidelity to creed and sectarianism, are allowed to prevail, even to flourish. The moral philosophy needed should have Universal Brotherhood as its basic principle. Not religious or social brotherhoods, not caste or racial brotherhoods, but Universal Brotherhood.

Three propositions, highly practical, naturally arise like a stately edifice on the foundations of Universal Brotherhood. They are:

- I. One Deity is in all and behind all things.
- II. One Law of absolute Justice is active everywhere.
- III. One Goal exists for every human being.

Some may regard these propositions as impractical idealism or as abstruse philosophy. But without philosophy there is no vision. Even a cursory examination of the three ideas reveals them to be the Trinity of Good, and these noble concepts need to be propagated in every land in East and West alike. What do they imply?

I. *One Deity is in all and behind all things.* The human individual is spiritual in fact, but thinking himself material and separate from the rest, and acting in accordance with this thinking, he brings about the battle between the two natures within himself. This archetypal war is the greatest of all wars; and more—it is the one womb from which all wars spring. He who has conquered his own anger is the real pacifist, an active pacifist; he is the soldier for peace. People fight others and rebel against their circumstances because they do not see themselves as divine Spirit-Beings. This is because they have been obsessed with the idea that something or someone outside themselves, be it God or government, rules them. The second truth will set them free.

II. *One Law of absolute Justice is active everywhere.* Each one of us carries the law within himself or herself. We suffer from our own errors. The hands that strike us are our own. The Great Buddha taught that the cause of all sorrow and suffering, individual as well as national, is *Tanha*, the thirst for sense-life. We indulge in sense-life and attract pain to ourselves because we do not realize that the goal of life is not personal happiness but the elevation of the race, the whole of humanity.

III. *One Goal exists for every human being.* The clash in every sphere of life will vanish when people see that goals of life are not many but one; that happiness itself is realizable by any one of us when we see that we are not isolated as individuals or as nations, that we are indissolubly linked with the All, with the Whole, and that the World is One. Peace and progress depend primarily on the application of the Law of the Family to the largest family, Humanity. That can only be done when the elders who have capacity labour to earn and to sacrifice for the youngsters, when the strong protect the weak.

Therefore, we say, that unless every man is brought to understand and accept *as an axiomatic truth* that by wronging one man we wrong not only ourselves but the whole of humanity in the long run, no brotherly feelings such as preached by all the great Reformers, pre-eminently by Buddha and Jesus, are possible on earth (*The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 46-47)

INDIVIDUAL REFORM FOR WORLD IMPROVEMENT

ONE of the fundamental teachings of Theosophy is that there can be no world improvement without individual improvement; only through self-reform of individual units can humanity *en masse* be uplifted and made whole. It is the collectivity of individual ignorance and selfishness, with its triple progeny—lust, anger and greed—that is responsible for bad socio-economic conditions, that finds an outlet in the war-spirit of nations, and breeds caste and creed and race hatred. As all this was self-generated by the individual, it can only be cured in the same way—individually. No forced reform, legislation or change of outer conditions alone will prove to be a panacea, and the cause of the failure is lack of true knowledge of the spiritual condition of the human individual, his aim and destiny.

It is therefore the individual who needs to be educated so as to make him aware of his own responsibility. True ideas are the crying need of mankind. Unless our ideas are changed, unless the concepts of Universal Unity and Causation, Human Solidarity, Karma and Reincarnation come to be widely accepted and acted upon by the individual units composing Humanity, it is futile to expect the most noble and heroically unselfish acts from whole nations. The very basis of our present-day competitive world is not conducive to such acts. And what more can be expected when very early in life children are given a dwarfed concept of duty and are taught that "might is right" and that success in life depends on safeguarding one's own interests? With such ideals of worldly success and the selfishness implicit in them instilled into the young from the very start, they cannot be expected to grow up to be practical philanthropists devoted to the interests of others. Transformations of thinking and attitude must therefore begin with the young, and this would require the restructuring of the whole educational system.

If few there be today who convert ethics into acts instead of merely talking about them, who practise their duty towards all and for duty's own sake, it is because Karma, the doctrine of responsibility, and Reincarnation, the doctrine of hope, are no longer the foundation of such ethics and such duty. It is the practical realization of the fundamental verities of Reincarnation and Karma, of the unity of all and the solidarity of mankind as immortal beings, that alone can

alleviate the collective ills that are the symptoms of the soul-sickness of the age. In *The Key to Theosophy*, H.P.B. gives the instance of the millions of poor and uneducated in some cultures, to whom Karma and Reincarnation are solid realities and who have viewed their duty towards others in terms of these laws, besides feeling in themselves the true dignity of human nature. Justice, kindness and unselfishness are looked upon by them as obligatory, as that which is due to Humanity, and murmuring and dissatisfaction with life are unknown to them. On the other hand, history bears out that where Karma and Reincarnation are not believed in, there selfishness, crime, immorality and other evils are rampant, because it is felt that one can escape the consequences of one's acts. These fundamental truths can be grasped and applied by the simplest mind with transforming and regenerating effect. Theosophists work for this, knowing that the universe is ruled by rigid justice which rights every wrong in the process of time, and that one can make of oneself a conscious agent for speeding up that process.

Theosophy does not make its votaries run to feed a hungry person there, to clothe a naked one there, to aid social service institutions and to be active in a hundred places, and the reason why has been explained by H.P.B. in her article "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 31*), in *Five Messages*, in *The Key to Theosophy* and elsewhere. The fundamental task of Theosophy is to serve human Souls. This does not mean that in our capacity as individuals we shall not feed the hungry body or nurse the sick mind; but we recognize that unless the Soul is served the agonies of body and mind will continue. The Path of Soul-service is very definite in its programme and its policy, and it is this policy and programme that students of Theosophy try to follow in all their work.

Theosophy therefore aims at reforming humanity by changing the Manas and Buddhi of the *race*, not merely of the intelligentsia. That work may seem vague and impracticable to the casual observer, since it cannot be assessed in terms of statistics. Yet it is productive of far greater effects than the same amount of energy expended on the physical plane. The leaven of Theosophy is spreading, slowly but none the less surely. Its main object, as H.P.B. puts it in *The Key to Theosophy*, is to sow germs in the hearts of men, which may in time sprout, and under more propitious circumstances lead to a healthy

reform, conducive of more happiness *to the masses* than they have hitherto enjoyed."

Remembering that *we* are the people who have lived in ages past and in bygone civilizations, and that there is what H.P.B. calls the "wider track of the Karmic law," we should be able to appreciate that the aggregate of individual Karma becomes that of the nation to which those individuals belong, and further, that the sum total of national Karma is that of the world. So the good that individuals would do is offset by the Karma of the race as a whole. As a Master of Wisdom put it, "Patriots may burst their hearts in vain if circumstances are against them." As the individual has his storehouse of Karma, so has the nation and the world as a whole. While this Karma can be mitigated to some extent by present efforts, no power on earth can completely efface it; and so we can see why there are limits beyond which even the Great Ones cannot go in the good that They would do.

THE great foundation of justice is faithfulness, which consists in being constantly firm to your word, and a conscientious performance of all compacts and bargains. The vice that is opposite to justice is injustice, of which there are two sorts: the first consists in the actual doing an injury to another; the second, in tamely looking on while he is injured, and not helping and defending him though we are able. He that injuriously falls on another, whether prompted by rage or other violent passion, does, as it were, leap at the throat of his companion; and he that refuses to help him when injured, and to ward off the wrong if it lies in his power, is as guilty of injustice as though he had deserted his father, his friends or native country.

It is observable that the limits of justice are not fixed. Respect must be had to general rules as the ground and foundation of all justice—first, that no injury be done to another; and, secondly, that we make it our earnest endeavour to promote the good of all mankind: so that our duty is not always the same, but various, according to circumstances.

—CICERO

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

WE are all very much aware of the amount of suffering that pervades the whole of modern society. This misery may be of a physical, mental or moral nature, but it is born, lives and dies in the realm of ignorance. Men and women have it in their power either to learn from the misfortunes that fall upon them or to become embittered by them. The latter seems to be the most prevalent nowadays. People are keen to lay the blame for their supposedly unmerited suffering on others, instead of realizing that they are but reaping the effects of causes that they themselves set in motion. They cannot meet the "monster" face to face and delve into the depths of their consciousness to discover the whys and wherefores of the dark clouds that often obscure the bright sunlight of their lives. This is a result of the materialistic education system that teaches us to catalogue facts, but neglects the essential duty of society to provide conditions in which the individual can relate to his fellow human beings on a level that is productive of a richer understanding of the relationship of humanity in general to the world around and to the Universe that modern education convinces us is "somewhere out there." Small wonder then that frustration and pessimism are all around us and fear breeds war and dissension.

Theosophical literature abounds in good advice as to how we can promote and exercise a true Universal Brotherhood of Humanity regardless of race, creed, sex, caste or colour, but the vast majority of people merely scoff at such a concept, believing that science and technology have all the answers to life's problems. The truth is that man has changed very little over the centuries. In fact it is tempting to say that he has actually retrogressed morally, even from the times that we class as the "dark ages." For, even in those days, great cathedrals arose in honour of their "God," and artists inspired by the religious fervour produced works of great beauty. This is largely lost nowadays. True, the intense bigotry that existed then does not exist today to the same extent, or in the same form, but we can learn much even from periods of time regarded as infertile by modern thinkers. We are faced with a great problem—the increasing inability of the populace to think and act in a genuinely constructive manner.

There may be many readers who will regard this as a too pessimistic point of view and draw attention to various positive trends

across the world that are leading towards the ideal of Brotherhood. Such efforts should be warmly welcomed by all students of Theosophy as they are the fruition of the self-sacrificial struggles of countless noble souls over the last few decades and stretching backwards into the "dim and distant" past. Overshadowing the Herculean task of all these elevated individuals is the undying support of the Mystical Brotherhood whose only concern is the welfare of the human race.

The fact remains, though, that among the masses in general there is a definite lack of communication and ability to translate their deepest feelings into modes of action that will help to alleviate the insecurity of life in a fast-moving world. There has been a vast increase in the number of suicides over the last few years as well as a substantial rise in the number of individuals committed to mental institutes. The insistence of society that manhood is to be measured by the ability of the individual to perform the sex act has led to various terrible crimes, *e.g.*, rape, child abuse and incest. Mankind abhors the "perverts" who indulge in these crimes, unaware that they are the product of that very way of thinking that is otherwise praised as being "liberated." Erroneous viewpoints are the scourge of contemporary culture and lead to various *cul-de-sacs*.

It is a problem that is of great concern to all truly altruistic and compassionate beings that tread the earth or dwell in realms where they are voluntarily in touch with human suffering. They wish to call us forth into their domain, but know that it is a choice that must be made by us alone. We spend too much time trying to preserve our ephemeral personalities; we inflict untold pain on ourselves and others in the frantic attempt to isolate ourselves, our families, or our countries from other individuals, families and countries. It is a strange state of mind that does not stand up to intense contemplation. A grotesque masque of sadism and masochism is being enacted on the stage of life and we are convinced that this is normality. A person brought up in a dungeon, where he undergoes daily torture, will eventually regard this as a legitimate way of life and may be terrified if suddenly exposed to sunlight, or if he catches even a glimpse of light through a chink in the prison wall. This is the greatest and most profound sadness of all, that humanity can fritter away centuries in delusions that entangle it more and more in the web spun from its own ignorance of the sacredness of *real* life. It is summed up in this

verse from *The Voice of the Silence*:

Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them!

Despite all of this, there is something deep in the human soul that is intuitively aware of its oneness with all other living things. What else can explain the fact that most of us feel a warmth in the heart when reading or seeing some act of heroism or compassion? Why do we bleed inwardly when scenes of suffering are passed before our eyes, and why do we feel such "righteous anger" at acts of atrocity? It is unfortunate that we allow such feelings to run away with us and translate them into the language of the lower self, thereby calling for revenge and an "eye for an eye." These destructive patterns of thought will only become the vicious circle that will strangle the best intentions of a society that cares but does not know how to speak the words that have their genesis in the Higher Self, in states of consciousness beyond words and even beyond thought.

Few people are able, or willing, to compromise. We are taught to win at all costs, no matter what the consequences. The humiliation of an "opponent" is a cause for rejoicing, whether it takes place in the office, on the sports field, in the classroom, or on the battlefield. We are not informed as to how we can truly *love*. That word is given so many false interpretations nowadays that few are able to comprehend the sacredness of its real meaning and how it has roots in eternity. Fortunately there are those rare people who do not turn their backs on pain and are intuitive enough to give themselves to something larger than their fleeting personalities. These constitute the army of light who have true concern for the plight of the weak, suffering and lonely members of the human race. They may have no conscious knowledge of Theosophy, but inwardly they are pledged to a great task. Doctors, nurses, writers, actors and actresses may all belong to this undying band of optimists, as well as the tramp, the cripple, the mental patient and the "man in the street." In some way they wish to help their fellow human beings. Who can understand the deepest and purest thoughts of all these individuals? They may appear to us as shadows traversing a world external to ours, but in reality they are part of us and a conscientious study of our own hearts may lead us to an

understanding of the collective heart of humanity.

The most urgent need of humanity is to learn how best its units can relate to one another. It may be the inherent frustration caused by the inability to do this that leads to a great deal of suffering in society today. Because of ignorance of spiritual truths, there is a general feeling of dissatisfaction that runs through humankind like a virus. Many are tortured by the idea that "no one understands them," although in most cases they themselves have made no attempt to understand others. There is lack of comprehension of what exactly constitutes depth. This is because material education leaves a void. There is a chasm between what people wish to understand and what they are fitted to understand as a result of the facts that they have garnered regarding the world around them. No one really wants to suffer, and very few want to inflict suffering on others, unless they are suffering from some mental perversity. Each tries to do what he considers "best." He fails to understand the law of Karma and believes that violence will bring an end to certain unsavoury situations. He considers it a duty to strike the one who insulted him. The alternative solution that requires him to find out *why* he was so insulted does not occur to him. The illogical reasoning that makes someone suppose that breaking a person's nose will bring a speedy end to a dilemma is extremely curious and bizarre, to say the least. By analogy, we can apply the same reasoning to matters on a global scale and wonder why the world's leaders have always regarded conflict as a way to end conflict.

Countless wise beings of various stages of spiritual development have all advocated the sensible and logical path of peace. Why, then, does mankind refuse to listen? It is time that Theosophical education should enter our schools in a non-dogmatic and informative manner to free people from the multitude of delusions that prevent them from becoming truly *human* beings. If the purveyors of materialistic concepts have succeeded, then it is only right that the time should arrive when the spiritually minded will turn the tables and be "given" the chance to air their views. But all this will not come about until the world in general begins to realize the folly of modern so-called "civilization," puts to one side its technological toys, and goes to work in an effort to understand the old maxim, "*Man, know thyself.*"

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

EVEN those who are staunch believers in the abstract power of philosophy often do not believe in its potency as a practical instrument to be used in our daily lives and in our hourly toils. It is a truism that men and women in their millions live without any objective in life, any goal to attain. Yet, each one lives according to some ideas which, however vague and shadowy, are innate in his or her consciousness. These innate intuitions persist, and though they are hemmed in by outer environment and wordly events, they do not fail to assert themselves from time to time. Outer influences from religion, from science, from literature, penetrate our minds and hearts and unbeknown to us affect our outlook on the world and our behaviour with others, though the intuitive urge is still there.

A more direct influence is that of politics. Politicians are in a position to wield their power directly on the mind of the masses. Be they overbearing dictators or persuasive democrats, they are looked upon by the masses as practical instruments for the improvement and betterment of life; and so politicians have today a greater following than popes and purohits, or doctors and engineers, or poets and writers. The power and influence of the politician is so great that religious leaders and many men of science as of letters, become his servile instruments. The politician calls out the tune of blessings or curses from religious preachers; the politician commands the scientist to manufacture poison gases and deadly weapons; the politician has even tried, and has succeeded in certain countries, to order the writers to supply the particular demand he creates.

Ours has been rightly called the Age of Science. While the influence of the politician is more direct, that of the scientist is more lasting. Scientific achievements have convinced the senses and the brains of men and women to such an extent and in such a manner that they have learnt to rely on science for their emancipation and enlightenment. Science has emphasized the mechanistic and the materialistic aspects of life and has created in the people the desire for what is called a high standing of living, by which is meant physical conveniences, bodily comforts and enhanced sense existence.

But the strongest feature of developments in the past few decades is the experience of frustration by the masses in face of knowledge

and inventions of the men of science. In spite of greater knowledge and more inventions, masses everywhere are disillusioned. But they are gaining a deeper insight into affairs and are fast coming to the conclusion that something more than scientific knowledge and inventions is necessary. Even when a high standard of physical life is established, men and women feel the need for something more so that they may use and enjoy the leisure which increase of knowledge and scientific inventions is forcing upon them. Mere physical comforts and conveniences do not bring the satisfaction that they crave.

And so the tide is turning.

Idealists in every country, be they scientists or artists or philosophers, are beginning to recognize that unless the politician himself becomes an idealist and broadens his vision and deepens his insight, the religion of nationalism will destroy the nations and therefore civilization itself.

Among these idealists there are many men of letters. The influence of the pen may not directly penetrate the consciousness of the people as the word of the orator-politician does; it may not produce as quick a response as the word of the scientist does; but it does filter through, making a more permanent dent in the heart of the race.

There is a mental revolution in progress, though it is obscured by the economic and political turmoil. The masses are struggling not only for more money but also to free their minds and their hearts of old beliefs and notions. They are struggling to create a new social order in which class competitions and nationalistic rivalries will disappear; they are struggling to establish a mode of living in which all the constituents of their being play their legitimate parts, including the urge within their minds and the aspirations of their hearts. How can the creative artist best help in guiding the emergence of a new idealistic philosophy? H.P.B. wrote in her article "The Tidal Wave" (reprinted in *She Being Dead Yet Speaketh*) of the role the writer can play:

Literature—once wrote a critic—is the confession of social life, reflecting all its sins, and all its acts of baseness as of heroism. In this sense a book is of a far greater importance than any man. Books do not represent one man, but they are the mirror of a host of men....

It is not he who repeats obstinately and parrot-like the old

literary formulae and holds desperately to publishers' traditions, who will find himself answering to the new needs; not the man who prefers his narrow party discipline to the search for the long-exiled Spirit of man and the now lost *truths*; not these, but verily he who, parting company with his beloved "authority," lifts boldly and carries on unflinchingly the standard of the *Future Man*. It is finally those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests and *selfishness*, will have bravely fought for human rights and *man's divine nature*, who will become, if they only win, the teachers of the masses in the coming century, and so their benefactors....

If asked, what is it then that will help, we answer boldly: Theosophical literature; hastening to add that under this term, neither books concerning adepts and phenomena, nor the Theosophical Society publications are meant. Take advantage of, and profit by, the "tidal wave" which is now happily overpowering half of Humanity. Speak to the awakening Spirit of Humanity, to the human Spirit and the Spirit in man, these three in One and the One in All....It is not authors writing for wealth or fame that are needed in our day of reawakening, but fearless apostles of the living word of Truth, moral healers of the pustulous sores of our century.

Creative writers are often moved by the feeling aspect of Nature which expresses itself as Compassion and Altruism. Just as men of science seeking and pursuing truth contact the hidden mind of Nature and gather knowledge, so writers are fitted by temperament to touch the comely heart of Mother Nature and to feel the Presence of Compassion which functions everywhere and at all times.

Freeing himself from the limitations of the effete forms of life, leaving the scientist to work with that aspect of Nature which is red in tooth and claw, and specializing in feeling the Divinity which works graciously in gentleness everywhere in Nature, the creative Artist is in an excellent position to help our civilization. He can take modern humanity away from the crushing soul-denying doctrines of modern science, away from the warring, nationalistic creeds of the politician, away from the narrowing, illiberal sectarianism of the church, the synagogue, the mosque—and whither? Towards the Truth that the Spirit in man is alive and functioning, towards the Goodness born of the realization of the Brotherhood of all men, towards the

Beauty that sees order in chaos, and harmony in the manifold differentiations of great Nature.

The creative writers must of course decide the form their message should take, but if they are true to their own vocation of inspiring all men, irrespective of their country and creed, their prides and prejudices, they will begin to strike the purely spiritual note. To achieve that purpose they have first to get rid of that blot on the fair name of literature which is made by the expression of that which is undignified and ugly. Expression of licence should not be allowed to pass off as freedom in feeling and liberty of thought. Lust should not be allowed to masquerade as holy love. Nor should eroticism be permitted to be described as a true appendage of man's best and highest nature.

"As one thinks, so he becomes," said the Buddha. Masses of men and women are given mental food by the writers. Creative writers cannot take lightly their responsibility towards the mind of the people—and at the present hour those people are looking out for ideas and thoughts that will go towards their own formulation of a philosophy of life. Men of letters can offer a thousand applications phrased in forms of loveliness and beauty, and the truths to be so phrased may be tabulated thus in the opinion of some of us:

I. Each of us is a Spiritual Being, a God in the making, who is divine in essence and in substance; the human soul may be compared to an artist who creates with the hammer of reason and the chisel of will a self-consciousness more and more free to think for itself, more and more able to sing the Chant of Unity, Harmony and Compassion.

II. Humanity is one indivisible whole: some of us are hands and feet in the body of the Race; others are heads and still others are hearts; but each is here to fulfil his own mission, to maintain health, prosperity and harmony in that human Family to which we belong.

III. Nature is not purposeless; her movements are not aimless and fortuitous. Justice operates in the moral world as causation does in the material world. Our ideation elevates Nature when we labour with the aid of that Law of Justice.

The Spirituality of the human individual, the Solidarity of all humankind, the Justice of the impersonal Law of Compensation—these are the philosophical Truths which can make the lives of all inspiring, beneficent, contented.

CYCLIC EFFECTS

WE have all come to realize that cyclic law or the law of periodicity exists and that it affects us. Sometimes we say, for example, "The period of hot weather always makes me irritable." Fewer times do we deliberately plan for an expected return of a cycle and this is, to some extent, not entirely unfortunate. A businessman knows that his accounts must close on such-and-such a date; a housewife knows that her ration card must be used by a certain day. Due forethought, not last-minute rush, is required. On the other hand, because the businessman, the last time, had to spend hours searching for some small error in order to strike a balance, or the housewife, when going for the grain on an earlier occasion, had lost her bag, this should not give rise to too much apprehension and anxiety. Such anxieties are self-productive and their causes can be reanimated. By the power of ideation, some types of disasters may *unnecessarily* be made to reproduce themselves. So a balanced and wise cautiousness in our attitude towards our previous mistakes and our future legacies therefrom is required.

Some rivers are given to annual flooding of the flat country through which they flow. Protective embankments may have been erected, but even with this safeguard sometimes a heavy rainfall produces sudden disaster. So in our personal life.

All ordinary men and women have some weaknesses. Some realize their failings only when disaster overtakes them. They are "wise after the event." Some take inadequate precautions or procrastinate, and they too become eventual victims. Some take such elaborate precautions that they receive cyclic reactions in an entirely unexpected manner, and are unable to see why they receive such reactions. Others, seasoned by trials and tribulations, by choices made of the right rather than the pleasant, have learned to balance, evaluate and forecast. They have learned through experience that mistakes and errors of judgment must be met and paid for. Such mistakes and errors may not be wholly of their own personal making. But, in the slow march of humanity, reactions to each one's share in the wrongdoing cannot be met simultaneously by all concerned. When the reactions do overtake us, suffering and repentance should not, however, be allowed to drag on indefinitely.

Theosophy teaches a short cut to the meeting of our Karma, *i.e.*,

the return of cyclic effects. It is implicit in the axiom that forces of evil can always be turned to forces for good. How is this to be done? Certainly neither by bemoaning our fate, being passive, nor by going to some church or temple or priest to get a temporary emotional solace. Better than that is even the forgetfulness of alcoholic intoxication, for, on awakening with a splitting headache, at least we *know* that we had taken only temporary relief measures. It is more difficult to see the bad effects of a mental or an emotional intoxicant.

A cyclic effect falls upon us. What should we do? Try to evaluate it, completely, accurately and impersonally. What was lacking in our moral outlook or our actions that caused this effect? Were we rash, conceited, impulsive, angry, envious, revengeful, too slow, too sure of our course being a virtuous one? Above all, what is our *present* motive for wanting to find a remedy? Is it for *our* convenience, comfort and mental equipoise? If we are students of Theosophy, let us ask what our mishap, rashness or wrong action has done to the Sacred Cause to which we are devoted and which in greater or lesser degree we represent to the people we contact and who therefore judge Theosophy by our conduct.

Having settled the point of motive to our inner satisfaction, let us turn to H.P.B.'s article "Psychic and Noetic Action," in *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*. We shall find that each action can be performed from the impersonal or from the selfish (not necessarily evil but, rather, personal) point of view. Permanently overcoming the Karmic effects depends on our attempts to make our thoughts noetic or Higher Manasic.

This can be applied *immediately*. We can immediately try to bring all our thoughts, feelings and acts in accord with Theosophical principles, which are always strictly moral ones. Our tongue, one of the creative organs in us, can be curbed and silenced. Calm will result. We can try to dress, eat, write, drink, sleep, walk, work, play, as Eternal Pilgrims—as Egos who have of deliberate purpose involved themselves in personality after personality so that they might learn to perfect themselves while dealing with matter.

Once this attitude is adopted, and we have, as the modern phrase has it, "come clean" with ourselves and with those Exemplars of Perfect Living whom we revere and try to emulate, the "chains of Karma" fall away from us, sometimes with startling suddenness,

sometimes after long, for we have to learn not only valiancy but also patience. Still we shall have the inner satisfaction and that something—undefinable yet tangible to ourselves—which gives energy, fortitude and wise action.

There is the plane of Archetypal Ideas, of True Morality—the science of *Gupta Vidya*, the secret science. Theosophy offers the practitioner the possibility of contacting the great Akasic Records and of seeing their reflections in the field of relative knowledge. At the same time, there is the reverse of the medal: the dark waves of the Astral Light reflect our sins, failings and temptations, to which each, with his freedom of choice, can likewise be attracted.

"Which will you choose?" is a question for strenuous heart-searching and application, not weekly, daily, or hourly, but minute by minute. It is proverbial that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Desiring to do good and rushing to do it without knowing what we are about may lead to dire, though not necessarily immediate, consequences. It is always the narrow path of balance that we must follow, undaunted when checked by Karma, courageous enough to admit our mistakes, humble enough to know when we have been fools, although we might have prided ourselves on being at least embryonic Saviours.

It is a difficult path—age-old and well-trodden, dangerous yet trustworthy, precipitous yet leading to the heights. If we try to tread it for ourselves we tumble—the sooner the better. If we try for the sake of others, but lack competence, the falls may be used as awakeners and strengtheners. But "try and ever keep trying" is the axiom that must continually sound in our heart and mind. Eventually the fogs will lift, strength will be gained, the warrior within will begin to fight for us, and we shall gain the Vision Splendid of an emancipated Humanity—no longer servers of Time and slaves of cyclic effects, but those who take their destiny in their own hands with prevision and forethought. All this is implicit in the Doctrine of Cycles and we can begin, humbly but quickly, to learn it when our self-made destiny bids fair to overwhelm us.

THERE is no knowledge that is not power.

—EMERSON

THE PROMULGATION OF THEOSOPHY

[The following is from an address given by W. Q. Judge in London, at the close of the European T.S. Convention, on July 15, 1892.]

TOO much attention has been paid by several to the opinions of men in the world who have a reputation in science and in scholarship. Their opinions are valuable in their respective fields, but the ideas of the world should not be permitted to dwarf our work or smother our heart's desire. These owners of reputations do not entirely govern the progress of the race.

The great mass of mankind are of the common people, and it is with them we have chiefly to deal. For our message does not come only for the scholar and the scientific man. In spite of scholars, in spite of science, the superstitions of the people live on. And perhaps those very superstitions are the means of preserving to us the almost forgotten truth. Indeed, had we listened only to those learned in books, we would long ago have lost all touch with our real life.

If we believe in our message and in the aim of the Society, we ought never to tire telling the people that which they can understand. And the rich as well as the poor are the people to whom I refer. They need the help of Theosophy, for they are wandering very close to the marshes of materialism. They must have a true ethic, a right philosophy. Tell them of our great doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Tell of these with confidence, unshaken by opinions of others, and that confidence of yours will beget confidence in the hearer. Science and exact scholarship are factors in our progress, but although they are important, the mass of the people are more important still. You cannot scientifically prove everything. But if you are sure, as so many of us are, that we are immortal pilgrims, then tell the people plainly and practically how they have been here before in other bodies, and will be here again to suffer or enjoy just as they may have decided in their other life, and they will believe it. They will soon come to that belief because these laws are facts in nature, facts in their own real experience. Were I to attend only to scholars, I should be able to do no other work, while all the time my fellow-creatures—not scholars and in the vast majority—would be deprived of the spiritual help it was my duty to give them.

We are really working for the future, laying the foundation for a greater day than this. We are all coming back together to carry on this work if we now take up all our opportunities. We must act from duty now, and thus be right for the future.

Our duty is to recognize the great human soul with which we have to deal and for which we should work. Its progress, its experience, its inner life, are vastly more important than all our boasted civilization. That civilization could easily be swept away, and what would be left? Your country could be frozen up solidly in a few weeks, were the Gulf Stream deflected from these shores. Mines have honeycombed your land, and a good earthquake might easily shake all your material glories to destruction beneath the sea. What then could remain save the human experience, the experience of the soul? But no cataclysm can destroy your thoughts. They live on. And so all the work that you do for the inner life of man can meet with no destruction, even though records and books and all the ingenious works upon this outer plane were swept out of existence. If then you believe in this mighty doctrine of Reincarnation, do not be afraid to tell it.

But do not, as Theosophists, confine yourselves to the intellect. The dry or the interesting speculations upon all the details of cosmogony and anthropology will not save the world. They do not cure sorrow nor appeal to those who feel the grinding stones of fate, and know not why it should be so. Address yourselves therefore to using your intellectual knowledge of these high matters, so as to practically affect the hearts of men.

Our debt to science is very great. It has levelled the barriers and made freedom of thought a possibility. Science is our friend, for without its progress you would now, at the order of the bigot, all be in the common jail. It has combated the strength and cut the claws of bigoted churches. And even those iconoclasts, such as Robert Ingersoll, who often violate the sentiment and ideals of many good men, have helped in this progress, for they have done the tearing down which must precede the building up. It is our place to supply the new structure, for the churches are beginning to find that they must look into subjects which once were kept out of sight. A sign of this was seen at a recent Council of the Methodist Church in America, where their brightest lights declared that they must accept evolution, or they would go down. The only church which does not publicly as yet

proclaim on these matters is the Roman Catholic. It is so sly that I should not be surprised ere long to hear of its throwing its mantle over all our doctrines publicly, and saying that such had always been its doctrine. But if that step be taken it will be the fatal one. So even that need give us no fear.

We are working with and for the great unseen, but actual, Brotherhood of Humanity, and in our efforts, if sincere, will have the aid of those our Brothers who have perfected themselves before us and are ever ready to help on the human family. So if we are firmly fixed in that belief, we can never weaken.

I have heard some words about our pretending to be undogmatic, or that our claim to freedom is against the fact. I do not hold such an opinion. Our Society is, as a body, wholly unsectarian. It must always be so. But that does not affect the inevitable result of so many joined in one effort. A large number of us must have come at last to a common belief. This we can boldly say, and at the same time also that no enquirer is obliged to subscribe to those beliefs. For this we have the warrant, not only of our own statutes, but also that of the oft-repeated declarations of H. P. Blavatsky. If I have a belief which works with all the problems that vex us so much, then I will tell it to my fellow who has joined these ranks. If wrong, the interchange of thought will correct me; if right, the truth must at last prevail. In this Brotherhood means toleration of opinion, and not a fear of declaring the beliefs you hold, nor does that declaration negative in the least the claim to unsectarianism.

This Society is a small germ of a nucleus for a real outer Brotherhood. If we work aright the day must come when we shall have accomplished our aim and formed the nucleus. If we had five hundred members in the Society loving one another with true hearts not criticizing nor condemning, and all bent on one aim with one belief—we could sweep the whole world with our thoughts. And this is our work in the future, the work traced out for us by those Masters in whom so many of us firmly believe.

If we only have patience, what a glorious, wide, and noble prospect opens up before us!

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Changes in value systems over the past two decades or so is a worldwide phenomenon. People are more self-centred, narcissistically oriented. "My needs come first and if that conflicts with society, that's too bad," is the general attitude. George A. Panichas's editorial, "Metaphors of Violence" (*Modern Age*, Spring 1990), refers especially to American conditions, but he goes to the root of the matter when he says that the real causes of violence and anti-social behaviour go deeper than the immediate causes and that short-range solutions which ignore metaphysical and moral considerations seldom help. It is futile to turn to political theory and action for the appraisal of and solutions to problems affecting the total quality of life. Panichas writes:

Thus, for one to look at the remedies for the crisis of modernity is for one to become more aware of remedies that basically lack substantive content precisely because most ignore moral values as the metaphysical matrix of any solution for human problems or the alleviation of the human condition....Before any social-political solution evolves, a demanding metaphysical reorientation will be necessary, one that stresses standards of public virtue, the idea and hierarchy of value, and a ground of being in both the moral and the ethical life....

The acts of violence on the highways serve as an acute metaphor of compulsion and self-abandonment and also remind us that we have an urgent need to recognize absolute sovereignty and to accept absolute values in the framework of what Romano Guardini, in his *Power and Responsibility* (1961), perceives as essentials: "There is no greatness which is not grounded deep in self-conquest and self-denial. Man's instincts are not of themselves orderly; they must be put (and kept) in order. Man must master them, not they him."....

No less than India the United States is prone to disorder, the consequences of which can be fatal....For these consequences to be arrested it will be necessary to have the kind of leaders who have the integrity and vision to resolve problems not merely in a political but in a metaphysical sense by isolating that "faith in drifting," as Paul Elmer More calls it. In the modern era we have turned almost exclusively to political action as we have come to believe that the machinery of politics can rectify any problem. In effect, we misread external meanings for internal ones, and there is no let-up in this inclination....

Perhaps the best identifiers of the disorder-pattern of modern society are the increasing number of acts violating the moral order of rule and breaking loose from any measure of restraint or bounds of moderation. Contemporary metaphors of violence graphically remind us of the unusual extent and depth of the disintegration of our time as crystallized in the absence not only of what George Santayana called "that essential trait of rational living: to have a clear sanctioned ultimate aim," but also in what he listed as "the virulent cause of this long fever": subjectivism, egotism, and conceit of mind....Even cultural conservatives who are troubled by our social disarray, as Stephen J. Tonsor notes, "dither in the halfway house of modernity and offer us technical solutions that touch the symptoms but never deal with the causes of contemporary disorder."

The question that remains to be answered is, how are we going to end the process of discivilization of which acts of violence are a continuing symbol? It has again and again been found that merely advocating the practice of the moral virtues is no solution. It needs to be realized that without real knowledge people cannot be actively good and virtuous. Organized religions, which encourage resignation, passivity and subtle pride in one shape or another, are of little help. Such virtue as is displayed by the religiously inclined "good" person is rooted in inertia, *tamo-guna*; it is devitalizing and sooner or later creates disappointment.

Real morality or goodness is *sattvic*, rhythmic; its acts are rooted in understanding. A truly virtuous person tries to conform to the rhythm of Nature. The perception of the Impersonal Law which cannot be propitiated or prayed to must be obtained. That Universal Law in its relation to the human individual shows how we ourselves can and should become good. Reincarnation and Karma are the main factors and their true understanding energizes us to mould our own lives to real goodness. The Law of Cycles reveals the practical method that we can utilize to cure moral and other ills. The Law of Unity and Brotherhood shows that waves of moral uplift as outbreaks of moral epidemics are caused by the collectivity of human actions, and individuals possessing knowledge can become contributory causes for the former and can check the latter.

Morality and virtue are born of the intelligent heart. The science of Theosophy offers to the intelligent person rules and laws which enable him to guide himself to true morality.

"In the Light of Theosophy" for October 1990 dealt with what scholars are saying today about the concept of Time. The subject is of perennial interest and Randolph Hobler's article, "The Test of Time" (*Parade*, November 1990), contains further reflections on the illusory nature of Time.

There is general agreement that defining Time is no easy task. One is reduced to mumbling that "Time is a sort of vast, invisible, ethereal river coursing constantly through the universe." We have convinced ourselves that the hands of a clock rule our lives, and we are so conditioned that few among us bother to think of the unreality of Time. Too often we confuse the implements of Time with the reality of Time itself. "We have become an entire society of chronoholics," writes Hobler. A few excerpts from his article follow:

What does the scientific community have to say about the existence of Time?

Let's start from the beginning of authoritative discourse on the subject. About 58 B.C., Lucretius said, "Time...exists not by itself." Newton characterized Time as a mathematical assumption. In 1781 Kant wrote, "Time is not something that subsists of itself." Einstein wrote that Time has no independent reality—a view subscribed to by all reputable scientists today. Time authority Dr. Gernot Winkler of the U.S. Naval Observatory sums it all up: "Time as such and by itself does not exist."

Even if Time isn't real, isn't it practical?

Should we axe the grandfather clock? Abandon the 60-second rule? Fire the one-minute manager? Of course not. What's important is to conceive of Time as a convenience WE invented and WE control. Clocks provide us with synchrony. They enable us to be in sync with one another. To be at the same place as others at the same moment for a prearranged activity. And the durations of Time provide us with uniform standards of comparison....Humankind has invented all manners of eminently practical things, but just because these things are practical doesn't mean they exist independent in nature....

Is there a way for us to experience life without Time? Think back to those blissful occasions in your life when "Time stood still." Tensions and stress melted away as you became totally absorbed in an enjoyable activity. But Time didn't really "stand still" at all. You had simply allowed that self-induced concept of Time to slip away from your consciousness, leaving in its place something else. Some-

thing called "reality." The only barrier to many more such wonderful occasions lies within your own mind.

Hobler suggested that we reflect anew upon clocks, upon calendars, ageing, time travel, history, the rat-race rhythm of our lives and time-induced stress which contributes to high blood pressure, stroke, heart attack, suicide. Breaking our self-imposed bonds of belief in Time can introduced an extra measure of calm into our lives.

The electrical activity of the body is not as mysterious today as it once was. It has now long been known that living beings are both magnets and generators—and transformers as well—and that living matter has a relation with electricity unlike other substances. Not only the activity of the brain, but also every nerve impulse, every muscle contraction, every movement and function of the body, discharges electricity. Even each of the billions of red blood cells in man or animal is a tiny battery, carrying an electrical charge along with its life-giving oxygen as it courses through the body.

However, there are some "electrical people" who are overcharged, and "weird" phenomena occur in their presence—like spontaneous and inexplicable fires. There are cases of people whose peculiar powers cause compass needles to gyrate madly in their presence. More recently, paranormalists are studying electrical interference effects involving a human agent. According to a British researcher, Hilary Evans, author of *Alternate States*, there are people who seem to be "upright human eels, capable of generating charges strong enough to knock out streetlights and electronic equipment." Evans is probing such issues as whether the phenomenon is conscious or unconscious and whether it is accompanied by specific emotions or events. (*Omni*, September 1990)

"Normally, a human being contains the elements of all the four kingdoms in almost equal proportions, any slight preponderance of one or the other determining the so-called 'temperament,' " as stated in an Editor's Note in *The Theosophist* of August 1883. The so-called "electric people" perhaps come in the category of those who are "mediums for the fire elementals, and contain in themselves an unusual proportion of

Salandrine properties, the result of an abnormal combination of elemental forces in their foetal development."

Insects run the terrestrial world with such efficiency that most people take no notice of our close dependency upon them. Humans think of most insects as ugly and repellent, and are largely unaware of their vital importance to nature and to man.

Insects were among the first animals to evolve on the land nearly 400 million years ago. By Carboniferous times, 100 million years later, insects had developed into forms nearly as diverse as those existing today; and they have dominated the Earth ever since. As many as 30 million species are alive today, only 750,000 of which are known to science. Edward O. Wilson, Professor of Science at Harvard University, writes in the September *Omni*:

Insects comprise more species than all other organisms combined—including plants, animals, and microorganisms....The immense protoplasmic bulk and diversity of insects place them among the little things that run the earth, up there with bacteria, algae, and copepods (minute sea crustaceans). Consequently, humans depend on the vast variety of insects for survival; but they have little use for us. If all mankind were to disappear tomorrow, it is unlikely that a single insect would go extinct except for three kinds of body lice....

But if insects were to vanish, the terrestrial environment would collapse into chaos. Most of the flowering plants, lacking pollinators, would soon perish. The great majority of mammals, birds, and other land vertebrates, losing the specialized foliage, fruits, and insect prey on which they feed, would follow the plants into oblivion. The soil would remain unturned because insects—not earthworms—are the principal burrowers and renewers of the earth. Wind-pollinated grasses would spread across a deforested, impoverished world. Humanity would suffer terribly, pushed to the edge of extinction....

For millions of years, life on the land was locked into place and kept humming along by a partnership between insects, the most diverse members of the plant kingdom. Humanity then joined the partnership, with looming disaster for itself and the remainder of life. There are too many of us, and we still know too little about the living world to coexist with other species harmoniously. We are destroying

the habitats in which most kinds of organisms live, threatening thousands of plant and millions of insect species—more than perished at the end of the Age of Dinosaurs. We have not learned how to protect ourselves from the tiny minority of insects that harm us, at the same time preserving and making better use of the vast majority that sustain us.

Indeed, the task of entomology in the years ahead is one of the most important and complex challenges in all of science.

Dr. Thomas E. Lovejoy of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, U.S.A., writes in *Unesco Sources* for October 1990 about the "environmental myopia" from which humans suffer today:

The tropical forests not only constitute flywheels of regional and global climate, they are also the world's largest biological library. Just a single species has the potential to transform human society through application of knowledge about its unique set of biological systems. As living creatures ourselves, there is no library in which we have greater self-interest. Yet it is scarcely catalogued; I would guess less than five percent of the species even have names. There is something awry in our value system that has allowed us to get to the state of such destructive potential with such little appreciation of the other entities with which we share the gift and excitement of life. It is nothing short of intellectual arrogance which leads most of us to abhor book-burning but to ask, do we really need all those species? Until we have corrected this environmental myopia we will have solved almost nothing.

THE writer will reveal an aspect of beauty only if he can free himself from the chaos of his inner life and the upheavals of the outer world. When he is detached both from himself and from his contemporaries, he can direct them towards that light which he has the privilege of glimpsing, for his mission becomes more spiritual in proportion as his public's powers of perception are blunted by material cares.

—Y. DUPLESSIS

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each of 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 of 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, no formalities to be complied with.