

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (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 PATH OF ACTION

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IN the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Krishna instructs Arjuna upon the nature of action, saying:

Even sages have been deluded as to what is action and what inaction; therefore I shall explain to thee what is action by a knowledge of which thou shalt be liberated from evil. One must learn well what is action to be performed, what is not to be, and what is inaction. The path of action is obscure. That man who sees inaction in action and action in inaction is wise among men; he is a true devotee and a perfect performer of all action. (IV, 16-18)

Karma, or action, is a very much misunderstood term, in spite of the fact that the *Gita* throws on it a light which is veritably dazzling. The exposition of *Karma-Marga*, the path of action, as given therein embraces the philosophy of what not to do as well as of what to do; yet the path of action must ever remain obscure to those who have not the proper key for understanding the *Gita*, and to those who fail to see that for actions to be truly righteous and beneficent they cannot be divorced from *Jnana*-Knowledge and *Bhakti*-Devotion.

In examining *Karma-Marga*, the Religion of Works, as it affects the individual in his own life and in his relationship to his fellow men, a few "do's" and "don'ts" have to be considered. Not to be inactive is the first of the rules on the negative side. Bodily laziness, moral lethargy, mental indolence, are grave dangers to the body, to the

character and to the mind of the Immortal Soul. But so strong is the cosmic principle of the perpetual motion or action of Life that no one can be truly inactive. Laziness itself is one kind of motion or activity. From the lowest to the highest, all must act. Krishna says in the *Gita* that though he is the Lord of the Universe and need not act, yet He is constantly in action, for otherwise all creatures would perish. (III, 22-24)

So act we must. But what actions shall we perform? Krishna says: Perform your own congenital duties, those duties which Karma has brought to you. Each one has to fight on *Dharmakshetra*, the field of duty, as a valiant *Kshatriya*. But duty is another very much misunderstood word. Often mere inclinations rooted in desires are mistaken for duties. Then there are those who believe that duty is what others think we should do. And how many there are who consider duty to be irksome, to be performed under duress and to be avoided whenever possible! Mr. Judge, who has in numerous places emphasized the importance of the performance of the routine, small duties of life, defines *Dharma* or duty as

"the sacred Law," the fulfillment of our karmic destiny through many incarnations, the working out and elimination of defects which have brought us into earth life under the conditions in which we find ourselves, which conditions we should feel and know to be the very opportunities needed for our further progress. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 235)

"If you can do no more than duty it will bring you to the goal," says Mr. Judge in another place, and he echoes the words of a great Master in naming duty "the royal talisman."

It may well be asked: "How shall we determine what are our congenital duties?" We have but to look at our own mental and moral capacity, our own environment, and get busy and energetic in the performance of our own proper duties. And that brings us to the second of the "don'ts" as pointed out in the *Gita* — "Don't attempt the duties of another." If only we followed this injunction we would avoid much suffering and waste of time. Those acts which it is not *necessary* for us to perform cannot be our obligatory duties.

There is still a third "don't" as to acts and duties which the *Gita* points out. In a strikingly memorable verse, Krishna says that all duties, all actions, are surrounded by desire. Our desires are many and

varied. Our whole life is one huge bundle of desires—fulfilled or unfulfilled. It is the power of desire or *Kama* which tempts man to run away from the path of duty, from the Religion of Works, for how many times have we not seen that trying to fulfil some particular desire, chasing some particular like or love or passion, we fail in our duty?

As against these "don'ts," the *Gita* puts forward certain positive rules of action. The first of these is: Renounce the fruits of action—very different from the renouncing of action or duty. Our business is with our duty, which has to be performed without calculating what good or harm will accrue to us from it. People say: "I will do this, for I want such-and-such a result"; or, "I will do this because I like it, it gives me pleasure; I will not do that, for it is painful." If we are trying to free ourselves from the temptation and the enslavement of *Kama*, we must do everything that has to be done without the desire to obtain or to avoid this or that result. A very difficult task indeed! At first our whole life loses its motor-force. All along we had been guided entirely by likes and dislikes; now we cannot consider our own wish; we seem lost.

For those who find it impossible to act thus, Krishna gives a more positive and concrete goal when he says: "In acting, in performing your own duties, commit all unto Me, the Supreme Self." Everything that we do, whether personal or impersonal duties, has to be offered as a sacrifice, *yagna*, to the Highest we can conceive of. It naturally follows that that which is not pleasing to Krishna, that which we know we cannot offer unto Him, must not be done by us. Freedom from the fetters of desire, ignorance, illusion and delusion immediately results if we ask before acting: "Is this action of mine going to please Krishna, the Supreme Self of the Universe, who is also the Highest Self in me?" In other words, "Is this action true, good and beautiful?"

Even this dedication of everything to Krishna, the Supreme Spirit, may seem difficult to many, because to most people Krishna seems to be far, far away; His Divine Power is not perceived by them. Therefore we are asked to see in each act and in every duty a deep significance, an occult meaning. This looking into the spiritual side of things would make our acts sacraments.

Further, the *Gita* states that for the aspirant the discharge of duties is not the only factor. Deeds of duty are obligatory, to which must be

added deeds of sacrifice-*Yagna*, of mortification-*Tapas*, and of charity-*Dana*, as self-chosen obligations. These acts, says Krishna, "are not to be abandoned, for they are proper to be performed, and are the purifiers of the wise" (XVIII, 5). Such special actions assist the Inner Ego in its efforts to express itself through the personality. Also through such actions we enhance our own sense of brotherhood and assist others to do likewise.

"Self-knowledge is of loving deeds the child," those deeds which are pleasing to the *Ishwara* within us. He who is engaged in sacrificial labours—labours which are our duties, revealed to us by our own soul, by our own mind, by our own righteous effort—will in due course find that Krishna is very near, nearer to him than anything else. He is a right performer of actions; he is a true *Karma-Yogi*.

To die—for this into the world you came.

Yes, to abandon more than you ever conceived as possible:

All ideals, plans—even the very best and most unselfish—all hopes and desires,

All formulas of morality, all reputation for virtue or consistency or good sense; all cherished theories, doctrines, systems of knowledge,

Modes of life, habits, predilections, preferences, superiorities, weaknesses, indulgences,

Good health, wholeness of limb and brain, youth, manhood, age—nay life itself—in one word: To die—

For this into the world you came.

All to be abandoned, and when they have been finally abandoned,

Then to return to be used—and then only to be rightly used, to be free and open forever.

—EDWARD CARPENTER

SACRIFICE

THE most ancient religious philosophies teach that the manifested universe was born out of Sacrifice. The ancient doctrine of Emanations enables us to comprehend the nature and method of this sacrifice, while its modern counterpart of Evolution does *not*. We ordinarily speak of sacrifice only in a restricted sense, as applicable to the human kingdom. The Sanskrit term for it, "*Yagna*," conveys much more to the Hindu, for example, than does the word "sacrifice" to the Christian, in spite of all that has been said about the Sacrifice of the Christos. Even as a principle of morality and ethics, sacrifice is much more talked about than observed, for the reason that it is little understood.

The Inner Soul in us will give the outer personal man the touch of divine resurrected life if that personal man will begin to sacrifice himself for something great and noble. In Nature, too, each kingdom sacrifices for every other kingdom. When we observe Nature and look for her hidden knowledge, we are not depressed at her seeming ruthlessness. She is compassion incarnate and works according to the laws of *Dharma* and *Yagna*. Nature is dutiful and her whole movement is one Grand Sacrifice. If we apply her ways to ourselves, we will learn to sacrifice the senses so that the Mind may be born in us; to sacrifice the Mind, so that the Heart may be born in us; to sacrifice the Heart so that the Soul may be born in us; to sacrifice the Soul so that the Spirit may be born in us; to sacrifice the Spirit so that the Universal Spirit, Paramatma, may be born in us.

Sacrifice begets sacrifice—this is the ancient law.

There are different types of sacrifice. There is the sacrifice of enjoyment and personal pleasure, and it is with this that one must begin. To start with, people sacrifice for those they love, and feel the power of their love through that sacrifice. There is the giving up of some personal attachment—*Raga*—for a greater and deeper love. At this stage, we sacrifice not because it is our duty to sacrifice, but because it brings us a deeper joy, an inner satisfaction. This sacrifice manifests itself on the plane of emotions and feelings.

Next, there comes to birth the sense of duty—*Dharma*. With it is felt some appreciation of causality and destiny—*Karma*—and so to *Raga*-attachment is added the other member of the pair, *Dvesha*-

dislike. People begin to sacrifice not only for loved ones, but also for persons, objects, aims, which they may not love, but which they feel are good and should be sacrificed for, out of a sense of duty. It is at this stage that mortification is experienced. We feel we must sacrifice, although we do not like to do so. There are more persons and more causes coming under the influence of this second type of sacrifice. While in the first type, we sacrifice out of selfish attachment or affection for our own circumscribed circle of relations and friends, in the second a sense of duty, by which the personal self is mortified, shows itself. Its scope widens, a less personal position is taken, but still sacrifice moves in a restricted circle and looks forward to receiving its due fruits. Communal charity, national benefactions which bring fame and popularity come under this second type of sacrifice.

This leads to the third kind. When the expected results of sacrifice of money or of service are not forthcoming, mental confusion and enquiry ensue and the person asks, Why did this happen? It is at this stage that he learns that sacrifice without knowledge is not real sacrifice. Many are the steps and stages leading to this third kind of sacrifice. Man learns slowly; his ignorance dies very hard. He learns that it is better to feed the mind than to feed the body; better to sacrifice for the nation than for the community, which is part of that nation; better to clothe the soul than to clothe the mind; better to build his own bodily temple and become his own priest than to build temples and mosques and churches and synagogues in the world without. Just as mortification guides the second kind of sacrifice, so knowledge energizes this third type.

This search through knowledge brings the individual to real or spiritual sacrifice. He learns that sacrifice is not only doing something to someone with what he possesses; it is not only the giving of wealth or even of knowledge—it is an act of life. All acts should be sacrifices, teaches the *Gita*. Whatever we do, must be backed by a life-ideation, a heart-energy. To throw a coin to a beggar is outer sacrifice; the motive, the thought, the energy behind the act makes it real or unreal, complete or not complete. Sacrifice life unto Life. The great Life sacrifices for the little life; the Great Masters for us puny mortals. That true sacrifice involves all the duties and deeds of life. Here, giving and receiving become one, the sinner and the saint

commingle, the sacrificer has become the sacrifice itself. This might seem somewhat difficult to understand, but in this is the true meaning of the Sacrifice of the Christos, the Universal Self—the *Yagna* of Maheshwara, and of the Vedic god Vishwakarman, the personification of the Creative Force, who is said to "sacrifice himself to himself."

The Great Sacrifice has small beginnings in the day-to-day world, and we can begin by learning to see the divine aspect of all that we do, of all that we contact; learning to discern the Spirit working in everything. We are eating? Thus are we nourishing the gods who nourish us. We are bathing? Thus are we cleansing the earth of its sins—the task of the gods. We are reading? Thus are we enlightening the darkness of ignorance as the Masters do. We are giving help? Such is the gift that Nature and the Lords of Nature bestow, like rain and sunshine and gentle breezes—and let us feel grateful for the opportunity that is ours. We are receiving help? Let us be like flowers, happy to receive warmth and light; be contented and busy as the bee, receiving sweetness from the blossoms; be like the cow, receiving fodder and transmuting it into milk for the nourishment of humans. If the recipient of charity does not pass on what he gets to help others, he receives in vain. So, let us live in sacrifice, thinking of the Great Sacrifice, *Adhiyagna*—He who incarnates that thousands may learn, He who undergoes the martyrdom of self-conscious existence that others may know how to live.

GOOD and bad alike are relative states upraised on attachment to what is called self. Good is based on attachment to selfhood in a state which still leaves considerable track of impurity. And of course evil leaves a great track. Good is not good if it is all with the idea of getting something out of it...It is a good but with oneself at the centre. All would be well if I made the heart empty and forgot the fact that I am doing a good action.

—TREVOR LEGGETT

SUCCESSIVE LIVES ON EARTH

THE aim of all knowledge, of all education, of all efforts to improve human conditions, bespeaks the desire to answer the problem of problems: Why are we here? Only one type of person is not asking the question: Why am I what I am? That person is one who is self-satisfied. But there are fools, as there are wise men, who are satisfied with their own selves! So self-satisfaction is of different kinds.

There is the child, happy in its innocence and ignorance, who does not know where it is, where its food comes from, how it is earned. Most of the time a child is self-satisfied; only bodily discomforts and aches and pains are the causes of its temporary dissatisfaction with itself. Pain because of the growing tooth and the like, disturb the self-satisfaction of the child.

There is the grown-up who behaves like a child; the ignorant and irresponsible person who is satisfied with himself. He has no ambition to better himself. One finds his type among the poor as also in the homes of the rich. He is satisfied with his two or three—if not four—meals a day, with his doing nought save talk and save what pleases him to do. He is disturbed by want; when he cannot get what his body craves, he is dissatisfied. It is his unfulfilled wants that disturb his self-satisfaction, his inertia.

These two, the child-body and the child-mind, have an inertia-self—*Tamo-atman*—with which they are satisfied, and they remain so till pain and want shake them out of it and bring about growth.

Next, we come to the man of desires—many types of desires—who is satisfied for a period of time with one or other of his fulfilled desires. Ambition is the key word of this stage of evolution during which one becomes satisfied with oneself through wealth, fame, power and personal affection. When a person obtains his desired wealth, he is satisfied with it for the time being, till ambition for fame shakes his satisfaction. He settles down in the security of a good name and fame, till the desire for power of controlling others makes him once again dissatisfied. A ruler over men is satisfied till he finds out that those he rules do not love him; then his satisfaction is disturbed till he secures for himself their hearts' affection.

In this *Kama-* or *Rajo-atman* state, we have covered a very wide field of evolution in which we pass from the satisfaction of one

ambition to that of another; this is the class to which most men and women of our civilization belong.

There is the man of learning who is self-satisfied. He is learning something, finding out something, and in that he is happy. His environment disturbs him not. As long as he is left alone with his thoughts and his books, he remains a self-satisfied being. He is disturbed only when something compels him to give up his introspective condition of one-track thinking and do something different.

Then there is the devotee, the *Bhakta*, who is satisfied with his worship-devotion; he wants nothing and seeks nothing save the grace (*Prasadam*) flowing from the lotus feet of his guru and his god. When one cause or another disturbs that inner satisfaction, he sheds tears of self-pity instead of shedding tears of joy and happiness. He is upset at the disturbance of his inner peace.

Finally, we have the man of duty, *Dharma*, who is happy, contented and satisfied in doing what he can to benefit life, to alleviate suffering, to serve humanity. He is disturbed by the conflict of duties—shall he starve his own to feed others, shall he be a poor patriot in loving other lands?—and so on.

These three, those satisfied in their knowledge, or in their devotion, or in their duties, are energized by the rhythm or *sattva* of life and are self-satisfied, each with himself, as long as their rhythm of life is not disturbed.

So, out of a single word—self-satisfaction—we can evolve the whole doctrine of successive lives. We have seen the variety of self-manifestations, for the self is everywhere, in the evil as in the good. "Of those things which deceive I am the dice, and splendour itself among splendid things," says Sri Krishna. (*Gita*, X, 36)

The same self moves cycle by cycle through different and differing environments, for one aspect of the self is motion. We act, we speak, we feel, we think, alternately and by rotation; there is motion, movement, all the time, but at the centre of all this whirligig of feeling and thought, of speech and action, of all these motions, there is something steady and stable and steadfast—the real "I," the Ego, the Soul, the Self. The idle man passes on to become an ambitious man, as the child grows into maturity. Knowledge and devotion and altruistic service follow one another in eternal rounds, but through them all the Self or the Soul, the Ego or the "I," remains. It has

grown, it has changed, but it remains—*it is*.

There are two selves in us: the moving self and the motionless self, the personality and the Individuality. Without an understanding of these two, our study of successive lives, or reincarnation, cannot be pursued. Whether a person is idle or active, whether he is pursuing wealth or fame, power or love, whether he is treading the path of knowledge, of devotion, or of works, he *has* a personality, and he *is* an Individuality.

Personality is the mask of the Individuality. The latter is the real Soul and each personality is its mask. The one is permanent, the other temporary. To take the example of the actor: it is the same actor who *personifies* the character of Falstaff or Prospero, Hamlet or Antonio, on different days; but he looks, on each occasion, very different indeed. In one sense he is different, and yet in another he is the same.

Personality is an ever-changing bundle of attributes or qualities. Mr. Smith and Mrs. Jones are nothing more than a bundle of feelings and thoughts, motives and actions, continually changing—happy or unhappy, good, bad or indifferent. What gives it its name and form is the Soul, the Ego, the Individuality. The Soul is like the sun—it shines; the personality is like the moon which catches the light of the sun, and shines by borrowed light. We all are *Suryavanshis* and *Chandravanshis*, solar beings and lunar beings, and there are several mysteries enshrined in this concept—but that is another story.

There are two factors that we must note: the moon or personality *looks* as if it had its own light; who can doubt that on a clear full-moon day? Yet, when we examine it week by week, day by day, hour by hour, we find that it changes, and the phenomenon brings us the knowledge that the moon shines by the borrowed light of the sun. The other factor is that this continuous change of the personality, as of the moon, happens because of the sun. The crescent, barely visible, grows into the beautiful and majestic full moon and then grows lesser and lesser again till the darkness of the new moon is reached. We find that these changes in the moon are caused by the existence of not only the sun but also the earth. Every student of elementary astronomy knows this.

Our body is the earth; our personality is dependent on the body. All the bundles of feelings, thoughts and words express themselves through the body. This is because of the light of the Sun or the

Soul—the main source of all lunar phases.

Evolution implies successive manifestations of life, or many lives on earth, *i.e.*, the coming together of body, personality and Soul or Individuality, again and again. This gives us a new angle of vision to describe the three main stages with which we started.

At the first and early stage of our evolution, we identify ourselves with our bodies; we are men of earth, *tamasic* or inert beings. The child-body or the child-mind is blissfully ignorant and unaware of its stirring feelings or thoughts.

At the second stage—which is where most men and women of today are—we identify ourselves with our personalities. We are like those actors who forget themselves while playing their parts. They laugh, weep, sing, howl, faint, die, while their real self remains the spectator of all these fantastic motions. *Rajas* is self-identification with the personality.

At the third stage, through knowledge, or devotion, or performance of duty-*dharma*, we begin to realize the truth glimpsed before, that within the personality, at the centre of all the changes, there is the permanent Ego, the real Soul. *Sattva* then means self-identification with the Soul's qualities.

So, through reincarnation or many lives on earth growth takes place. The light of the Soul transforms our inertia into mobility, and again transforms our mobility into rhythm and harmony. This is enacted in the great drama of the *Ramayana*, in the section which deals with the prophetic dream of Ravana on the night of the war against Rama and the host guided by Hanuman.

All these truths can be applied in a practical way. Let each ask himself or herself: "In which main class of evolving souls am I? Am I the man of earth, recognizing the body and no more? Or am I the personality of changing moods and modes, of fleeting feelings and thoughts, with which I identify myself? Or am I recognizing the Individuality, the Thinker who seeks knowledge, the Devotee who yearns for grace and peace, the Altruist bent on the service of others?"

We find that, at the present stage of evolution, we are mostly centred in our personality and therefore belong to the second group; *i.e.*, most of the time we live by our feelings, and forget that the light of the Soul exists and that that which is steadfast and abiding in the personality is of the Soul.

How shall we recognize the Soul? How can we evolve out of this second state and enter the third? When one has left behind inertia, one shows ambition. Ambition is one of the main characteristics of the personality—the lunar or moon-man in us all. Just as there are four phases of the moon, so are there four aspects or four types of ambition. Each one must study his or her ambitions. The other name for ambition is possession or attachment; an ambitious person desires to possess something; first, outer objects which are all purchasable; therefore wealth is the starting point of ambition. "If I have money I will get what I want"—millions of men and women are in this condition today. When wealth is able to feed the personality, it has grown like the moon, from crescent to half, and it is full of desire for recognition from itself or from others. All those who desire popularity or fame are either wealthy or have been wealthy in a previous life. Though the wealth is gone, its effect has remained, like the food eaten and digested days ago exists in the body as muscle, flesh and bone. A poor person who does not care to obtain money, but wants, say, knowledge so that the world may honour him, or power to help others so that his name may shine forth, has had in a previous life the ambition of wealth fulfilled; from it he learnt that it is not really worth while. Ambition for wealth develops into that for fame, and as he grows he is like the gibbous moon, craving for power over others. There are many who exert power because of their wealth; there are others whose influence is the result of their fame; in business as in the social world, one finds grown personalities occupying this stage in evolution. Such an one shines like the growing moon, but there is another aspect of ambition that we have now to examine.

The Soul and its personality ever work together in life. Real life means for us body, personality and the Soul or Individuality co-operating with one another. Just as the goading of the personality arouses the idle man to action and makes him ambitious, so also the guidance of the Soul makes the personality pure and concentrated enough to recognize the Individuality. As the body's requirement and nourishment is provided by the personality, which does not like the body to die, so also the requirements of the personality are supplied by the Soul. What keeps the ever-changing personality alive is the power given to it by the Soul—the power to unite itself with others through love. Sympathy and compassion, friendship and affection,

gratitude and devotion, are the three principal expressions of love. Home is the symbol of love, of affection. It is the institution where his power comes to birth, where it is fostered and nourished. From start to finish, for the idle or the busy man, for the man of ambitions of one kind or another, home is the field of progress. In the home, the personality is bound to find its Soul, the permanent Individuality. When a person accumulates wealth, he does so with the help of and for others whom he loves; his fame or disgrace is shared by others—herein lies the significance of the "family name." He grows as his ties of kinship with humanity grow. Love is, or should be, the centre and circumference of the home, as home is the centre and circumference of the personality's evolution. One can see why the Ancient Teachers insisted on the spiritual aspect of *Grihastha Ashrama*—the householder stage—that is, evolution of the soul through the home.

Love in home life purifies the personality. But we must go further and love impersonally, without looking for any return of love. Thus do we rise from the plane of *rajas*—moods and motion—to that of *sattva*, true harmony between the personality and the Soul or Individuality. A new type of self-satisfaction begins—satisfaction of and in the Soul. Through many lives we have overcome idleness and childishness; once more through a series of incarnations we have grown through ambitions and learnt the transiency of wealth, the ephemeral power of fame, the corroding force of power over other people, the sorrow-creating personal affection and personal love. At last we have learnt that in the Soul within is the strength to labour, that soul-wealth, soul-fame, soul-power, soul-friendship are superior to all personal manifestations. From *tamas*, through *rajas*, we have come to *sattva*, the life of soul-reliance, where purity and truth and love have new values for us. But we have not reached the end. The *Gita* teaches how the Soul gets entwined by *sattva*; we have to rise above it.

To recapitulate: There are, in the main, two kinds of self-satisfaction—the lower or personal, which is never lasting and ever changing; and the higher, belonging to the Soul or Individuality, which is unfolding and growing, but whose nature is permanent. The Individuality grows life after life, but what it gains it retains for ever. Many lives are spent by the Soul learning from this world and perfecting itself. But, through them all, in spite of all the changes of the many personalities,

it is the same Soul.

The second lesson is that most of us are centred in our personality, are puzzled by the phenomena of wealth and fame and power and love. We have to recognize that the home is the institution of soul-growth. Having learnt the lesson of impersonal love in the home, we will be in a better position to ascend to the mountain top of knowledge and devotion and altruism, and find on that mountain top of evolution those truly Self-satisfied Men—satisfied in the Self, by the Self. They are the Mahatmas, Great Souls—those who are satisfied in the universal and impersonal power within their own hearts. What home is to the personal life, the great Home, the Lodge of Adepts, is to the Individual life. Men and women look for gurus: the way to them is to see Krishna in the playing child, to see Laxmi in the poor woman, Sarasvati in the ignorant one, Parvati in every mother, Sita in every wife, Rama in the head of every family, Buddha in every teacher, and Mahadeva in every dying man who is regenerating himself. Thus, through successive lives we become more than all the gods and goddesses; we become companions of the Rishis, members of the Great Lodge.

WHETHER you realize it or not, there can be no restlessness unless it comes from self-will, although not every person understands this. This what I mean: people fly from this to seek that—these places, these people, these manners, those purposes, that activity—but they should not blame ways or things for thwarting them. When you are thwarted, it is your own attitude that is out of order.

Begin, therefore, first with self and forget yourself! If you do not first get away from self, then whatever else you get away from you will still find obstacles and restlessness. People look in vain for peace, who seek it in the world outside, in places, people, ways, activities, or in world-flight, poverty and humiliation, whatever the avenue or degree; for there is no peace this way. They are looking in the wrong direction, and the longer they look the less they find what they are looking for.

—MEISTER JOHANNES ECKHART

NATIONAL KARMA

THE Law of Cause and Effect operates universally and impersonally—not only in the visible but also on the moral and mental planes where its workings are not so easily determinable as on the physical. Just as chemists have determined how two elements, oxygen and hydrogen, combining in certain proportions produce the effect, water, so can super-chemists know the causal forces which produce, as effects, psychical and psychological phenomena of love or unacy, charity or miserliness. The ancient Sages named the Law "Karma," which term means "effect-producing cause." As it encompasses the mind and the heart of man, it is defined as the unerring Law of Retribution.

One important aspect of this Law is related to nations. Nations, like men, have their Karma. No nation or nations can escape their Karmic fate any more than can units or individuals.

Karma has been mistaken for fatalism, which implies a blind course of some still blinder power, but a human being is a free agent during his stay on earth. Destiny may be described as the effect of actions performed in the past, but destiny is *self-made*. To take a homely example: having freely chosen to eat a particular kind of food, we are compelled to digest what we have eaten. Indigestion may awaken us to secure a prescription to alleviate the pain; but, if we have not been intelligent enough to connect our discomfort with the food we have eaten, we will very likely repeat the same menu and again experience pain.

The same process obtains in the operation of national Karma. A nation's destiny is the effect produced in the present by causes generated in the past. Neither angels nor devas punish or reward, with or without God's or Allah's permission or order, but man himself—his deeds or Karma—may attract, individually and collectively, as in the case of whole nations, every kind of evil and calamity.

Knowledge of the Law of Karma enables us to understand such events as wars or revolutions or anarchy, which directly affect some nations and indirectly all others. Absence of that knowledge misleads us in evaluating the cause and meaning of such experiences. Those who have studied not only the general principles but also the detailed workings of the Law and are capable of calculating the nature and

mass of the forces set into motion by any nation, are in a position to predict or to prophesy the fate awaiting it; yet, in the prognostication of such future events, no psychic phenomenon is involved. "It is simply knowledge and mathematically correct computations" which enable Eastern Initiates to foretell future events in the life of a nation or nations.

But does this imply that the evil and wickedness of war or other national calamities must be silently endured and that nothing can be done? That would be following the philosophy of Fatalism, not of Karma. Fighting evil may be compared to the person's securing a prescription for his pain; but it will not teach him the cause of his pain. If war and evil are to end in the world, that aspect of Karma which is related to Brotherhood must be understood.

Causation and Unity of and in Nature are most intimately connected. In one's personal life, as also in a nation's life, evil and suffering can be overcome only by uprooting the weeds of competition, of ambition, of lust, of wrath, of greed. The great Buddha's axiomatic teaching, which He named the Eternal Law, is that "hatred ceases not by hatred but by love." This is recognized by any thoughtful and intelligent observer of events in his own life. It is not so easy to perceive the working of this principle in national and international affairs. And yet, if we contemplated the principles of life and evolution we should readily see that the Law of Nature cannot but work incessantly to restore disturbed harmony, no less in collective than in personal life.

The only decree of Karma—an eternal and immutable decree—is absolute Harmony in the world of matter as it is in the world of Spirit. It is not, therefore, Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we, who reward or punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that Harmony depends, or—break them.

Nor would the ways of Karma be inscrutable were men to work in union and harmony, instead of disunion and strife. For our ignorance of those ways—which one portion of mankind calls the ways of Providence, dark and intricate; while another sees in them the action of blind Fatalism; and a third, simple chance, with neither gods or devils to guide them—would surely disappear, if we would but attribute all these to their correct cause....Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. It is the constant

presence in our midst of every element of strife and opposition, and the division of races, nations, tribes, societies and individuals into Cains and Abels, wolves and lambs, that is the chief cause of the "ways of Providence." We cut these numerous windings in our destinies daily with our own hands, while we imagine that we are pursuing a track on the royal highroad of respectability and duty, and then complain of those ways being so intricate and so dark....

This state will last till man's spiritual intuitions are fully opened....until we begin acting from *within*, instead of ever following impulses from *without*; namely, those produced by our physical senses and gross selfish body. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 643-44)

This "acting from within" implies a new attitude to international problems. Only those minds which free themselves from the disease of false patriotism, which see the immorality of benefiting one's country at the expense of another, which recognize that humanity is one and that injury to a single part, however small, means harm to the whole body—those minds alone are the true benefactors of humanity. Every leader in every nation is a channel for the manifestation of national Karma. The manner in which he meets the evil enveloping his people must determine the future of his nation, and unless he turns it into a force for good he will ill serve them. To transform evil into good, he must abandon on behalf of his nation the old mistaken path of selfishness, ambition and competition and take to considering the good of the whole, including the part which his own country is. If "the whole past of the Earth is nothing but an unfolded present," the converse is equally true—tomorrow in its turn will be the unfolding of today. And so what is thought and planned now, what is said and done now, will unerringly produce in time its harvest of sweet fruits or poison plants.

The ancient doctrine of Karma needs to be studied by modern men and women if a real New World Order is to arise.

NOTHING which is morally wrong can ever be politically right.

—W. E. GLADSTONE

THE RIGHT MOTIVE

HOW very insidious is the desire for reward, or for the fruits of action, as the *Gita* puts it! It eats its way through into the inner life of the student like a canker, and yet it is so often unrecognized. And how can it be killed unless it is recognized?

One thing is certain: the Ego has no desire for reward. It must, therefore, be sought in the personality, and there its roots are so deep that it is hard to find.

Fundamentally, the knowledge of the Law of Karma, cause and effect, and the recognition of the Third Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*, which teaches that there are no special gifts conferred on anyone, ought to wipe away all *desire* for reward, since the recompense must come anyway. But we forget this teaching in day-to-day living and we long for reward, either consciously or unconsciously.

What is a reward? It is not the effect flowing from the action, for that comes without our wish or desire. It is a wish to receive acknowledgment of our acts from either another person or persons, or from Law itself, and this actually engenders another kind of action binding us more firmly to the personality. Hence Krishna asks us to act because action must be performed, without hope of a reward. This is not so very difficult to do, at least in part.

It is not, in fact, the desire for reward that ruins a character in the deepest sense, but the inner feeling that animates the person who feels that he is *not* being rewarded or noticed. Most of us would agree that, in conscious thought, we do not work for a reward—but we do like to have our efforts noticed and praised, and when they are not, we brood over the injustice. This has the same effect on the inner nature as fear, for it kills the will, turning back the rays of *prana*, magnetism, drawing them into oneself until the whole nature becomes dark; inertia grows and we have the plaintive cry of the nonentity: "The world is against me!"

An inner examination of ourselves as personalities often brings sadness and despair—others shine, we do not; we see our virtues and others' faults, and we begrudge them their popularity or growth; we feel unrewarded for our good qualities while others are rewarded for theirs, in spite of their bad qualities which we see so clearly. We wonder and ask: Why?

How many lives, both in the outer world and in our own student world, are ruined by these feelings! The feeling of injustice takes hold of us. Yet we should take heart, for we are better off than the individual who is self-centred, full of pride, content with all his weaknesses and not yet awake to his inabilities; he does not mind, or even see, another's greatness, for his conceit blinds him to it. It is when, through self-effort, we have begun to examine our personality, or mask, that we see our vices and shortcomings, take note of our efforts, and despair that others do not see our work and praise us.

To cure ourselves of these feelings of despair, of loneliness in our struggle, of envy of others, and of sadness at the lack of praise, we can with advantage reflect over some of the hints given in our literature; for, though we know that the practice of the Paramitas is all-important, reflection on what older students who have likewise suffered in the past have said is often of great help.

The Master gave us an injunction to use in all circumstances: "Whatever happens, say 'It is my fault.'" Or, to use another phrase, "There is always that in us which causes another to offend." Let us seek, then, in all circumstances, where we have erred or where we can learn.

Again, the little seemingly boring duties of daily life, of office routine, or small self-sacrifices, are these of no value? The Master wrote: "What better cause for reward, what better discipline, than the daily and hourly performance of duty?"

Sometimes the Master withdraws himself for a time; sometimes our own higher consciousness seems to withdraw. But what does it matter, if we go on with our duties? The fog will lift. When surrounded by storms and faced with the consequent lack of clear vision, we must learn to understand, "We make our own storms."

One word of warning: dwelling on one's faults as well as one's virtues makes for egocentricity. Therefore we are asked to endeavour to "appear as nothing in the eyes of men." We also learn that where we are is our rightful place, whether it is in a kitchen or on a lecture platform, whether we be shining like the film star or be unobserved like the humble technician who, strange as it might seem, makes the shining of the star possible.

There is no such thing as no reward, no such thing as non-recognition of efforts or virtues. Let us throw out of our minds all

thought of wanting to "get." What matters in the long run is not the *getting* but the *being*, and neither god nor devil nor man can prevent us from *being*.

"Grow as the flower grows," eagerly opening the heart to the sun. But let it be the Spiritual Sun towards which we turn, and let us be reflectors of that light, untarnished by thoughts of self.

So long as each day we can truly say we have fought the good fight to *our* capacity, without regard to others' response or lack of it, we can take all in our stride.

Yet, "be not content with your efforts."

SYNTHESIS is the very essence of philosophy—"the combination of separate elements of thought into a whole"—the opposite of analysis, and analysis is the very essence of science. . . .

There have been many *philosophizers* in modern times, but there can be but one philosophy, one synthesis of the *whole* of Eternal Nature. With the single exception of the writings of Plato, no one in modern times had given to the Western world any approximation to a complete philosophy, previous to the appearance of H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*. The writings of Plato are carefully veiled in the symbolical language of initiation. The *Secret Doctrine*, coming more than two millenniums later, and in an age of so-called Science, is addressed to the Scientific thought of the age, and hence considers the whole subject largely from the standpoint of Science. The present age is as deficient in philosophy as was the age of Plato in knowledge of science. It follows, therefore, that while the *Secret Doctrine* itself apprehends equally both philosophy and science, in addressing itself to the thought of an age it must recognize here, as it does everywhere, the *law of cycles* that rules in the intellectual development of a race no less than in the revolutions of suns and worlds, and so address the times from that plane of thought that is in the ascendant. It is just because analytical thought is in the ascendant, because it is the *thought-form* of the age, that the great majority of readers are likely to overlook the broad synthesis and so miss the philosophy of the *Secret Doctrine*.

—W. Q. JUDGE

LIGHT ON THE PATH

[P. Sreenevas Row's annotations on *Light on the Path* are continued here from our last issue. They appeared originally in *The Theosophist* for July 1885.]

WITH these explanations, let us try to understand the following Rules of the Text, as to what *is to be desired* by the disciple:

9. Desire only that which is within you.
10. Desire only that which is beyond you.
11. Desire only that which is unattainable.
12. (a) For within you is the light of the world—the only light that can be shed upon the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere. (b) It is beyond you; because when you reach it you have lost yourself. (c) It is unattainable, because it forever recedes. You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame.

These rules form one group. Rule 9 is to be read with Rule 12 (a); Rule 10 with Rule 12 (b); and Rule 11 with Rule 12 (c).

With reference to what has been already stated, that nothing which is not eternal can aid the disciple, these Rules, 9 to 12, require that he shall desire the eternal; that is, the eternal which is to be found within him, without him, and everywhere else, and which is unseizable. That which is to be desired and discovered in all these places is only One (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, V, ix, 9), although in order to impress the fact of the universal pervasion of that One upon the mind of the disciple, it is described in these rules as that which is within and without and so on, as will be seen from numerous sacred authorities.

So then, first of all, Rule 9 (with Rule 12a) asks the disciple to desire that which is within himself. It is the great Soul. It abides in our heart (*Chandogya Upanishad*, VIII, i, 1; *Bhagavad-Gita*, XVIII, 61, etc.). It is the Truth of Truths (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, 6; *Chandogya Upanishad*, VIII, iii, 4). It is the great Light (*Ibid.*, V, 111; XII, 3). It will shine in the heart of him who reflects on it with fixed resolution (*Swetasvatara Upanishad*, IV, 7). He who knows the true nature of things, who has subdued his senses, who is calm, free from desires, enduring and composed in his mind, beholds the soul in the soul alone; beholds the great Soul (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, iv, 23); and *that* is to be seen, heard, minded, and meditated upon

(*Ibid.*, IV, iv, 5). This is what the Text asks the disciple to desire and find, as this is the only light that can be shed upon the path; and he should try to find it within himself, for if he feels unable to find it there, he can never hope to find it elsewhere; whereas if he succeeds in finding it within himself, he will be able to find it everywhere else; for, "by seeing, hearing, minding, and meditating upon what we find in ourselves, all the universe can be comprehended" (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, iv, 5). This is because "the light which is in man is the same light that shines outside man, above this heaven, higher than everything in the highest world, beyond which there are no other worlds." (*Chandogya Upanishad*, III, xiii, 7; and III, xvii, 7)

Hence the next Rule, the 10th, requires that the disciple shall desire that which is without him. If he looks for it within himself and not outside, his work would be useless. He should remember that that which is to be desired is the Eternal, the Infinite. "The Infinite is below, above, behind, before, right, and left; and it is all this" (*Chandogya Upanishad*, VII, xxvi). "It is beyond"; "beyond everything" (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, V, ix, 9). Indeed, if it is not beyond the heart of one individual, or beyond a certain point, then it *cannot* be called the Infinite. When the disciple desires and tries to perceive that which is within himself, outside and beyond, then he loses himself in what is infinite, and then he is said to realize the grand idea of the Infinite; and then only can he hope to achieve success in his great undertaking—for, "the Infinite is bliss. There is no bliss in anything finite. Infinity alone is bliss. We must desire and understand this Infinity." (*Chandogya Upanishad*, VII, xxiii, 1)

Now as to Rule 11 (with Rule 12 *c*), let us remember the last words in the preceding paragraph, namely, that we must desire to *understand* this Infinite; *understand* it and not *handle* it. For it is "unseizable" (*Swetasvatara Upanishad*, I, 6 and *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, IV, iv, 22). Indeed, it cannot be otherwise. If you can seize it for any single moment, it becomes a finite object, limited by space and time; whereas that which you are to desire is not so limited, nor is it otherwise conditioned. But there is this fact to be noted, that although it is one which cannot be handled, yet, as it is Truth, Glory and Light, every deserving person can fairly expect to enter within its influence, within its light, however unable he may be to touch the flame.

When the disciple begins to desire the One which is within him and

without him, and which is unseizable, he naturally feels the want of means necessary for the achievement of the desired object. A desire without the materials for its realization is hardly worth being entertained. So, the Text tells him what more he is to desire and become possessed of in order to gain his ultimate end, in the following Rules.

13. Desire power ardently.

14. Desire peace fervently.

15. Desire possessions above all.

16. (a) But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united. Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self. (b) The peace you shall desire is that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons. (c) And that power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men.

Rule 13 should be read with Rule 16 (c); Rule 14 with rule 16 (b); and Rule 15 with Rule 16 (a).

Rule 13 enjoins the disciple to desire power ardently. Indeed he *does* want power. "The deluded soul (*i.e.*, the individual soul), though dwelling on the same tree with the universal soul (*i.e.*, both being in the same body), is immersed in the relation of the world, and is grieved for want of power" (*Mundaka Upanishad*, III, i, 2 and *Swetasvatara Upanishad*, IV, 7). But what is that power which the individual is in need of? Surely it cannot be that power which has reference to mundane matters, *i.e.*, a control over men and things, such as is possessed by the sovereigns we see scattered all over the world—for the worthlessness of such power to a spiritual man is plainly apparent.

The following stanzas are said to have been chanted by Mother Earth in her mirth, as, wreathed with autumn flowers like bright smiles, she beheld so many great and powerful kings unable to effect the subjugation of themselves.

How great [the Earth is represented to have said] is the folly of princes, who are endowed with the faculty of reason, to cherish the confidence of ambition, when they themselves are but foam

upon the wave! Before they have subdued themselves, they seek to reduce their authority; they then endeavour to overcome their foes. Thus, say they, "Will we conquer the ocean-circled earth," and intent upon their project, behold not death, which is not far off. But what mighty matter is the subjugation of the sea-girt earth to one who can subdue himself? Emancipation from worldly existence is the fruit of self-control. It is through infatuation that kings desire to possess me, whom their predecessors have been forced to leave, whom their fathers have not retained. Beguiled by selfish love of power, fathers contend with sons, and brothers with brothers, for my possession. Foolishness has been the character of every king who has boasted, "All this earth is mine; everything is mine; it will be in my house for ever"; for he is dead. How is it possible that such vain desires should survive in the hearts of his descendants who have seen their progenitor, absorbed by the lust of dominion compelled to relinquish me, whom he called his own, and tread the path of dissolution? When I hear a king sending word to another by his ambassador, "This earth is mine; immediately resign your pretensions to it," I am moved to violent laughter; but it soon subsides in pity for the infatuated fool. (*Vishnu Purana*, IV, xxiv)

If this is the lot of the so-called Sovereigns of the Earth, what can be said of the power and possessions of an ordinary person, however wealthy and however great!

In acquiring or losing or preserving wealth, there are many griefs, and there are misfortunes in friends, in wife, children, servants, house, land and riches, and whatever else is considered to be acceptable to man. All these contribute more to his misery than to his happiness, even in this world; and still more so in the next. Where could man, scorched by the fires of the sun of the world, look for unmixed felicity, but in the shade afforded by the tree of emancipation (*Moksha*)? Attainment of the Divine is considered by the wise as the only remedy for the threefold class of ills that beset the different stages of life—conception, birth and decay—as characterized by that only happiness which effaces all other kinds of felicity, however abundant; and as being absolute and final. (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, v)

So, it is this kind of power that the disciple should desire; that is, the power which can secure for him that which is eternal bliss; and not the power over worldly matters. This is what our Text means when it says (Clause *c* in Rule 16), that the "power which the disciple shall

covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men." For such power, as is desired by men of the world, can never remove the grief which the individual soul is suffering for want of power as stated in the extract from the *Mundaka* and *Swetasvatara Upanishads* given above. "Such grief can only cease when the individual soul sees the universal soul within itself" (III, i, 2 and iv, 7, of the said Upanishads respectively). Hence the power which the disciple has to desire, is such as is calculated to enable him to behold the Supreme in all its infinite glory.

The first step towards the acquisition of such power is to obtain peace, *i.e.*, a perfect control over all our organs, unalloyed love for all, and unmixed devotion to the Supreme. The Text (Rule 14 and Clause *b* of Rule 16) defines the peace to be "that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons." Those who are immersed in worldly affairs, and who take pride in effecting worldly triumphs, can never hope to remain in that peaceful condition of mind, which alone can pave the way for the attainment of the eternal bliss.

As a mansion of clay is plastered with clay and water, so the body, which is of earth, is perpetuated by earth and water (*i.e.*, eating and drinking). The body, consisting of five elements, is nourished by substances equally composed of those elements. But, since this is the case, what is there in this life that man should be proud of? Travelling the path of the world for many thousands of births, man attains only the weariness of bewilderment, and is smothered by the dust of imagination (*Vasana*). When that dust is washed away by the water of real knowledge, then the weariness of bewilderment sustained by the wayfarer through repeated births, is removed. While that weariness is relieved, the internal man is at peace, and he obtains that supreme felicity which is undisturbed and unequalled. (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, vii)

And so all the *Srutis* tell the disciple to desire Peace (*Syantam*). (*e.g.*, *Amritabindu Upanishad*, etc.). And practically, how to acquire Peace is well explained in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, where, at the request of the Devas and other students, the great Prajapati told them what their duty was, in these words—"Restrain your desires." "Be liberal." "Be clement." And the same was repeated by the Divine Voice, with the force of thunder, namely, the syllables Da-Da-Da,

meaning, "*Damyata* (be restrained), *Datta* (be liberal), *Dayadhwan* (be clement)." Therefore every person shall learn this triad of duty—restraint, liberality and clemency. (V, ii, 3)

The reader will perceive that these three divine precepts, when closely analysed, will be found to embrace all the moral rules; and the observance of them, coupled with an unmixed devotion to the Supreme, will secure for the disciple that *peace* which he is required to obtain.

And lastly, Rule 15 advises the disciple to "desire possessions above all." This is the outcome of the two preceding rules. When he acquires power and peace in the sense in which they are explained, he will be in possession of most of what may be necessary for his spiritual advancement; for such possessions belong to the pure soul. Let us remember what the Text says in Clause *a* of Rule 16, *viz.*, that the possessions which a disciple ought to desire are such as are possessed "*by all pure souls equally*," and are thus "the especial property of the whole only when united." This idea is well illustrated in the following speech of Great Prahlada. He said:

Whatever power I possess, Father, is neither the result of magic rites, nor is separable from my nature. *It is no more than what is possessed by all those in whose hearts the Eternal abides.* He who meditates not of wrong to others, but considers them as himself, is free from the effects of sin, inasmuch as the cause does not exist. But he who inflicts pain upon others in act, thought, or speech, sows the seed of future birth; and the fruit that awaits him after birth is pain. I wish no evil to any, and do and speak no offence; for I behold the Supreme in all beings, as in my own soul. Whence should corporeal or mental suffering, or pain inflicted by elements or gods, affect me, whose heart is thoroughly purified by the contemplation of the Supreme? Love then for all creatures will be assiduously cherished by all those who understand that the universal soul is in all things. (*Vishnu Purana*, I, xix)

Such, generally speaking, are the Power, Peace and Possessions which a disciple is required to desire and acquire; but, in a special sense, they mean the possessions, peace and power which a disciple would obtain by the practice of Yoga, which is essential for the attainment of the final goal. Some superficial thinkers consider that Yoga is prohibited by the Sage Veda-Vyasa, in his *Brahma-sutra*, (II, i, 3); but from the antecedent and subsequent passages it is clear that

what is forbidden is that kind of so-called Yoga which has mundane matters for its object. Indeed, it is impossible that Yoga in its really spiritual sense should have been denounced by that venerable Sage; for Yoga, from the Sanscrit root *yuj*—to join—means the attainment of the Supreme by the individual soul; and if this is condemned, then the whole foundation upon which the fabric of every true religion stands is destroyed; and no Sage like Sri Veda-Vyasa can, for a moment, be presumed to have advocated such a course. On the other hand, numerous works composed by the same Divine Author authorize, and strongly inculcate, the necessity of Yoga in its highly spiritual form—*vide Sri Bhagavata*, XI, xv; *Vishnu Purana*, VI, vii; *Markandeya Purana*, Ch. XXXIV, etc. In the *Bhagavad-Gita* (VI, 23), Yoga is defined to mean "the disunion from conjunction of pain from adherence to worldly things, and union with things spiritual"—and Sri Krishna ordains that Yoga shall be practised (*Ibid.*, II, 48). Indeed authorities for the performance of Yoga are to be found in the Upanishads and the Vedas. In the course of time, different systems of Yoga have sprung up; and the disciple should consult the best of teachers before he selects one for his guidance.

Generally, Yoga consists of eight parts or subservients: (1) *Yama* (forbearance of certain actions); (2) *Niyama* (observance of certain actions); (3) *Asana* (posture in which the Yoga-practitioner is to sit when engaged in meditation); (4) *Pranayama* (modifications of breathing during such meditation); (5) *Pratyahara* (restraint of organs from susceptibility to outward impressions, and directing them entirely to internal perceptions); (6) *Dharana* (abstraction; fixing the mind upon the Great One); (7) *Dhyana* (contemplation of this Supreme); and (8) *Samadhi* (unceasing and immovable concentration of thought on the Supreme). This last stage is arrived at when the disciple obtains an accurate knowledge of the great soul.

I must leave the disciple to study the works above named in order to understand the eight foregoing subdivisions of this sublime Yoga-Vidya; but a summary of what is comprised in the first and second divisions (*Yama* and *Niyama*) is, I think, necessary for the purpose of these Annotations.

To be brief, *Yama* includes five acts of forbearance; and *Niyama* has five acts of observance. To the former class belong, first, *Ahimsa* (freedom from injury, and practice of active benevolence); secondly,

Satya (freedom from all that is untrue, and practice of veracity); thirdly, *Asteya* (freedom from appropriation of what belongs to others, and practice of honesty); fourthly, *Brahmacharya* (freedom from sensual desires, and practice of continence); and fifthly, *Aparigraha* (freedom from interest, and practice of disinterestedness). And to the latter part (*Niyama*) belong, first, *Saucha* (purity of mind, speech and body); second, *Santoshā* (cheerfulness and contentedness under all circumstances); third, *Svadhaya* (religious study); fourth, *Tapas* (religious austerity), fifth, *Niyatatma* (firmness of mind). The disciple will find, on careful analysis, that all these rules of forbearance and observance are comprised within the Rules given in the present Treatise, namely, Rules 1 to 16, and the preamble.

The disciple who applies himself to the practice of Yoga is called *Yoga-Yujuy* (the practitioner of Yoga, the neophyte); and when he attains the Divine Wisdom, he is termed the *Vinishpannasamadhi* (one whose meditations are successfully accomplished by his arriving at the last stage of Yoga, namely, the *Samadhi*—i.e., the adept). (*Vishnu Purana*, VI, vii)

Colonel H. S. Olcott has beautifully compared Yoga with Mesmerism, in his Introduction to the Treatise on the Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali, in these words :

Yoga is self-mesmerization. It differs from the practice of the ordinary mesmeric operator, in that the subject in this case is the mystic's own body, instead of another person. In both examples there is the development of a current of psychic aura, if the word is permissible, and its direction an Operative WILL upon a selected receptive object. The mesmerizer throws out his current upon his passive subject, and in that organization provokes the result his mind had conceived and his will commanded. The Yogi develops the same potential aura, but turns it in upon himself. He firstly determines concentration, vanquishes the natural restlessness of the body and supremacy of the physical appetites, reducing the physical self to the condition of a passive subject. Then only, when his will has fully asserted its power, can he develop within himself those transcendental powers of intelligence which are fitted to observe the laws and phenomena of the spiritual world.

This process of self-mesmerization (Yoga) produces an extraordinary self-illumination, developing the higher faculties of man, hitherto lying latent and dormant; it fills his heart with a genuine feeling of

compassion, sympathy and beneficence towards all beings, without any distinction whatsoever; and endows him with the knowledge of universal sciences, knowledge of the former state of his existences and knowledge of the past, present, and future events, besides powers to control the course of nature and change them; not to mention such comparatively small powers as clairvoyance, clairaudience and so forth—all tending ultimately to enable him to behold the Great Soul within himself, without himself and everywhere. Such is the effect of the sublime science, *Yoga-Vidya*; and such are the powers and possessions which the disciple is required to desire and obtain.

Now, let us pause a while, and make a resume of all that has been said from the beginning.

The preamble gives the preliminary rules calculated to ensure the purity of the disciple's heart and the steadiness of his mind. Then Rules 1 to 4 (referring to ambition, desire of life, and desire of comfort) show how a disciple should behave in respect of himself, in his individual capacity. Rules 5 to 8 (relating to the sense of separateness, sensation and growth) describe the line of conduct which the disciple should follow in respect of others, in his social capacity. Rules 9 to 12 (adverting to the desire of what is within us, without us, and unseizable) declare how the disciple should act in respect of the Great Soul, in his highly spiritual capacity. And lastly, Rules 13 to 16 (which refer to the acquisition of spiritual power, peace and possessions) are calculated to advise the disciple as to the best materials that he should furnish himself with for the purpose of accomplishing the journey to his final goal with safety.

When these Rules are properly understood and observed by the disciple, he will be in a position to proclaim, in the words of a great personage referred to in the *Chandogya Upanishad*: "I desire real glory, the glory of glories. I shall not, no, I shall never again enter the white, toothless, all-devouring slippery object (*i.e.*, the womb). I shall proceed to the 'Sabha' (Hall) of Prajapati, the Immortal universal Soul" (VIII, xiv, 1). That is the Hall of learning, to which our Text alludes in subsequent parts of this Treatise; and that is the Hall (figuratively of course) to which the Text requires the disciple to seek the way in the following 17th and other Rules.

(To be continued)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Theosophy has a definite contribution to make to the question that has become the source of endless debate in recent years: "Can Computers Think?" Under that title, science writer Mitchell Waldrop reviews in *Dialogue* (No. 93) the artificial intelligence debate, and sees in it older questions about the nature of the mind and mankind's special purpose in the universe. He believes that, contrary to popular fears, science's growing understanding of the mechanisms of thought need not, in the end, threaten our appreciation of human creativity and other higher functions of the mind. Instead, he hopes that a scientific theory of intelligence will offer us "new insight into what we are and what our place is in creation."

To the question, "Can machines think?", the most often heard, and the most heartfelt, answer, says Waldrop, is:

No! "I am not a machine (goes the argument). I'm me. I'm alive. And you're never going to make a computer that can say that. Furthermore, the essence of humanity isn't reason or logic or any of the other things that computers can do; it's intuition, sensuality, and emotion. So how can a computer think if it does not feel, and how can it feel if it knows nothing of love, anguish, exhilaration, loneliness, and all the rest of what it means to be a living human being?". . .

As this last answer suggests, the case against machine intelligence always comes down to the ultimate mystery, which goes by many names: consciousness, awareness, spirit, soul. We don't even understand what it is in humans. Many people would say that it is beyond our understanding entirely. . . . Other people simply wonder if a brain can understand itself, even in principle. But either way, how can we ever hope to reproduce it, whatever it is, with a pile of silicon and software?. . . . The debate is made all the hotter by the fact that people aren't arguing science. They're arguing philosophical ideology.

Many, says Waldrop, instinctively side with the view that man alone has what some philosophers call "intentionality." A machine, no matter how complex, cannot have it. To such people, artificial intelligence is a message of despair; meaning and purpose become illusions; soul and spirit become nothing more than the activations of neuronal symbols and the surge of hormones and neurotransmitters.

So the message of science can be bleak indeed [remarks Waldrop]. It can be seen as a proclamation that human beings are nothing more than masses of particles collected by blind chance and governed by immutable physical law, that we have no meaning, that there is no purpose to existence, and that the universe just doesn't care. . . .

Yet the message doesn't have to be bleak. Science has given us a universe of enormous extent filled with marvels far beyond anything Aquinas ever knew. Does it diminish the night sky to know that the planets are other worlds and that the stars are other suns? In the same way, a scientific theory of intelligence and awareness might very well provide us with an understanding of other possible minds. Perhaps it will tell us how human intelligence fits in with the range of other possible intelligences that might exist in the universe. Perhaps it will give us a new insight into who we are and what our place is in creation.

The question, "Can machines think?", raises a corollary question, "Can technology triumph over man?" How to be a man in the kingdom of machines is the core of all questions. This will be possible only if science changes its image of man and believes him to be a moral being. A computer cannot make moral decisions; that remains the prerogative of man. Nor need man fear encroachment by computers on his prerogative of self-consciousness, freedom of choice and the higher powers of the mind—intuition and imagination, compassion and the will to create and to sacrifice and serve. Man alone—and those Beings who have transcended the stage of ordinary humanity—is capable of exercising the power of *Kriyashakti*, "the mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 293)

Terms such as "intelligent robots," "thinking machines," "artificial intelligence," need to be seen as inappropriate and misleading.

The current public concern about the environment is grounded in the ancient dichotomy of man *versus* nature. But there are those who maintain that we must radically change the debate and begin to talk of man *and* nature. This line of thinking suggests that new answers must be found to old questions. In order to examine the rapidly

changing metaphors that locate our place in the world, *Harper's Magazine* (U.S.A.) asked five environmentalists with backgrounds in science, political activism, or philosophy to discuss the shifting definitions of nature and of ourselves. The participants were Daniel B. Botkin, Dave Foreman, James Lovelock, Frederick Turner and Robert Yaro. Some of the points made in the discussion are worthy of note:

Nature is a continually evolving process. . . .It is not a pretty, manicured place maintained for human beings. It is a dynamic continuum, often a violent one. . . .

Nature is a set of complicated feedback systems, constantly exchanging information. Some are self-duplicating—preserving the system as it is—and they are called homeostatic. Others are open-ended systems, constantly creating novel states and new ecologies. In an open-ended system, the most crucial element is the human species. . . .

Nature has had the tendency toward increasingly more complex ways of passing on information from the Big Bang all the way up. Humankind is what nature has been trying, all these millennia, "to be." . . .

When we see ourselves as part of the *dynamism* of nature, we will have a more accurate view of the world. . . .We must discover our proper place in that dynamic. . . .

We shouldn't treat nature as if it's a machine—take it apart, rebuild it, and substitute new parts. The rule should be: change nature at nature's rates and in nature's ways. . . .The destruction of the tropical rain forests and the greenhouse effect are so serious—they're not just the doom stories of scientists—that the consequences will be upon us within 5 to 10 years. They will come in the form of surprises: storms of vastly greater severity than anything we've ever experienced before, disruptions in the ozone layer, events for which no amount of expensive computer simulation could possibly prepare us. As is the essence of surprises, we can't know what they will be. . . .

We are promoting nature because *we are nature*. We are the leading edge, the sensitive tip of nature. And we are charged with its promotion. . . .We are foolish to believe that all our problems are solvable, especially by technology or sociology. The technological fix often creates twice as many problems as it solves. We need fewer solutions and more humility.

Theosophy regards the power of speech as sacred and looks upon words as living entities endowed with a mighty potency; they act like "living messengers." H.P.B. writes in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 411):

There are words which have a destructive quality in their very syllables, as though objective things; for every sound awakens a corresponding one in the invisible world of spirit, and the repercussion produces either a good or bad effect.

"For the love of heaven do not take any tales or informations from any person to any other," advises Mr. Judge. We are apt to forget the precept. Idle chatter soon degenerates; we begin to talk of other people's affairs and thus cruel gossip results. Gossip has become the pastime of the thoughtless.

"Why Do We Gossip?" is the title of Quentin Crisp's article in the December *Parade* (Bombay). He calls gossip "the voice of envy."

. . .and envy is a growth industry. The moderately prosperous are made restless by the presence of people with faster cars, larger houses and more leisure time than they, themselves, enjoy. As the distance between the idol and his devotees decreases, envy does not diminish; it becomes greater. . . .

The gossip discovered or invented by the Press is worse than that which emanates from other sources, because people believe what they read more unshakably than they believe what they are told. . . .Newspaper proprietors are concerned only with making money. The issue of scandal is parallel to the problem of drugs. It will never be possible to prevent cocaine from being sold while anyone is willing to pay a high price for it. In the same way, no one will ever be capable of stopping papers peddling malicious gossip if readers can be found who enjoy it. . . .

Speech is born of mind and, like mind, has the power to create. But mind enslaved by desires has lost its purity and one result is that speech has assumed priority; so generally man thinks, if at all, after speaking. Small talk, shop talk, jesting talk, degenerating into personal talk, malicious talk, backbiting, etc., are considered by the Science of Occultism to be calamitous offences. In numerous places and in numerous ways the importance of purification and control of speech is pointed out in the Theosophical philosophy, and the occult reason for this needs to be perceived.

Cruelty, whether of the thoughtless or the interested or the purely scientific kind, is one of the greatest blots on our civilization. Cruelty is regarded in Theosophy as a formidable sin against living Nature, and the immorality of experiments on animals should draw the protest of all right-thinking men and women.

In his article, "Prisoners of Science," Paul Binding considers it unacceptable to cause suffering even in the search for knowledge (*New Statesman and Society*, December 13, 1991). "Refined, elaborate and extreme cruelty" is still generally accepted because of its academic context. That institutions, universities and medical schools think animal experimentation necessary to educational and scientific programmes gives them legitimacy in the eye of the public. People become diffident in their criticism, nervous of speaking against the cause of "progress." Yet facts are being covered up or distorted, and the public in general is not sufficiently aware of the extreme cruelty of the procedures to which animals are subjected and whether they are at all useful to humans. Some of the experiments described by Paul Binding are an eye-opener.

The victims of these procedures [he writes], cats, dogs and rats, are all beings of very advanced sensitivities, and chosen as such. Their physical sufferings must therefore have been compounded by a protracted terror not at all dissimilar to our own in such situations and unbearable to contemplate.

But contemplate it we must because all objection to animal experimentation must begin and end with doing so. Prisoners of human beings, through capture or breeding, the animals, birds, amphibians and fish, whatever their other abilities, have no faculty for comprehending, let alone acquiescing, in what is being dealt out methodically to them. To inflict pain and to profit by another's innocence are surely both unacceptable to any morality that rises above a system of expediency. . . .

We do not allow circumstances to change for us what we have found morally objectionable; a cat having its nerve crushed is a distressing and pitiable creature—on account of its pain, the misery of its enforced position and its state of palpable and justifiable fear. It can't cease to be distressing and pitiable because it has been declared an instrument of education, no matter what the wonderful deliverance from ills envisaged at the end of this. Stifle your reactions and you have done damage to your most

important piece of mental equipment; resentment at another sentient being's afflictions will be diminished merely to a higher squeamishness. The morality of compassion refuses to be banished from *any* activity; it will not bow down and fall over at the words "education," "research" or "advancement," but will insist that the only civilization worth striving for is one in which the capacity for identifying with others' feelings is given first place.

How, then, to pursue a scientific vocation without any injurious use of animals? In Britain, a project called Campaign for Ethical Science has been organized by Animal Aid, an organization committed to protecting animal rights and aiding young scientists and students disturbed at the use of animals in educational institutions. Its efforts have had success and now all A-level boards permit conscientious objection. Copies of its magazine, *The Ethical Scientist*, have been sent out to first-year students at various universities, polytechnics and medical schools. This magazine puts forward with great clarity the case against scientific use of animals, carries testimonies from students past and present who listened to their own voice of conscience and of compassion, and offers supportive services for sympathetic readers. The campaign reinforces work being carried out by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection, the Humane Research Trust and other organizations.

How unreliable are the analogies between animal reactions and human reactions has been borne out in many instances; *e.g.*, the World Health Organization has now pronounced all carcinogenic tests on mice to be unreliable. Besides, there are enough alternatives now available, as Paul Binding reminds us:

A cruelty-free university course is not at all difficult to imagine once we free ourselves of the impositions of custom and commerce. Particularly now. Computer simulation and videos can teach just as effectively as specimen animals. Cell and tissue cultures can be extensively used. Sophisticated dummies can be constructed. . . .Of inestimable importance, too, is the careful observation of human cases, which can be far more helpful to us in dealing with human illness than any animal one. . . .

Behind such facts, other matters present their terrifying face—the fact that about one per cent of medical research money goes on prevention of disease, prevention that doesn't involve the huge profits that drugs—resting on large-scale animal "sacrifices"—do.

Yet, clean water, good diet and unpolluted air are indispensable for the health of all, and their promotion has often meant the great reduction of killing diseases—cholera, for instance. Perhaps the kind way will also turn out to be the most practical and sensible.

Theosophy condemns all animal experimentations. H.P.B. remarks editorially in *Lucifer* for June 1990 that when reflecting

on the awful horrors of vivisection, we may sometimes be inclined to feel more sorrow for the vivisector than for his pain-racked victim, for the awful pangs of remorse that sooner or later will seize on the former, will outweigh a thousand times the comparatively momentary pain of the poor dumb sufferers.

Very often we confuse wants with needs and needs with wants. This gives rise to much confusion and suffering. The need to distinguish between the two is stressed editorially in the August 1991 issue of *The Middle Way* (Journal of the Buddhist Society, London):

In a culture which to a very large extent is geared to the satisfaction of wants, the two are easily confused; it is important to distinguish them. If we are driven by wants we neglect our needs and therefore go astray and cease to search for what is truly lacking.

The Life of the Buddha exemplifies this search. As a young man all his material wants were satisfied but this did not answer his own need whose bidding led directly to the path that he took. Forsaking material comforts, home, family and security, he set off to discover the answer to his own dissatisfaction. . . .

Our needs are far fewer than we imagine, both spiritual and material, but they need to be truly and honestly acknowledged, for to neglect them in ourselves and others simply increases our anger, hatred and confusion. This compounds our suffering—is our suffering.

Despite our best intentions we are often sadly too proud, too mean and too rigid to bow and say yes to the underlying simplicity and warmth of the human heart and how it informs us.

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
THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS
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
THE YOGA APHORISMS OF PATANJALI
VERNAL BLOOMS
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AN EPTOME OF THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY GENERALLY STATED
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

By Robert Crosbie:

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THE ETERNAL VERITIES
THE TELL-TALE PICTURE GALLERY
STUDIES IN "THE SECRET DOCTRINE" (BOOKS I AND II)
LIVING THE LIFE
THE BUILDING OF THE HOME
"THUS HAVE I HEARD"
THE ZOROASTRIAN PHILOSOPHY AND WAY OF LIFE
U.L.T.—ITS MISSION AND ITS FUTURE
TEXTS FOR THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"
IN MEMORY OF HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, BY SOME OF HER PUPILS
U.L.T. PAMPHLET SERIES, NOS. 1-36
H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards 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, and no formalities to be complied with.