

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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CELESTIAL EXPERIENCE IN MUNDANE DUTIES

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Look to the future; see to it that the continual performance of duty under the guidance of a well-developed Intuition shall keep the balance well poised. Ah! if your eyes were opened, you might see such a vista of potential blessings to *yourselves* and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour's effort, as would fire with joy and zeal your souls! Strive, towards the Light, all of you brave warriors for the Truth, but do not let selfishness penetrate into your ranks, for it is unselfishness alone that throws open all the doors and windows of the inner Tabernacle and leaves them unshut.

—MAHATMA K.H.

EVERY tyro in Theosophy knows that present actions mould our future character as well as our environment. The performance of duty, day by day, has also its immediate recompense. The Master implies, in the words quoted above, that such performance would tend towards sustaining our balance and equanimity. The small plain duties of life hourly call upon us to acquire skill in action as well as concentration of mind. Many have a discontented attitude to mundane tasks; others are bored at peeling potatoes or writing accounts. To be of good cheer during such occupations at home or at office is very necessary.

But the Mahatma points out that "the continual performance of duty" should be "under the guidance of a well-developed Intuition." This may well be called "a tall order." People are swayed by desires in small as in important affairs; most of the time they fail to make proper use of their rational faculty. To expect them to be guided by "a well-developed Intuition" is, so to speak, asking for the impossible.

People often inquire: How can Theosophy help the common man to live a noble life? Here is one answer: What is going to help is not the doing of works forced upon him by his destiny, with a long face, a wandering mind and a heavy heart, but a cheerful acquiescence in the accurate and punctual doing of what has to be done. The Law of Necessity provides the first help; for, it requires that what is not necessary to be done is not a duty. The mundane ways, customs and conventions involved in the performance of duties take their toll from the earnest student, and he is compelled to seek guidance from the doctrines of the Esoteric Philosophy. Our perception and evaluation of the routine duties of life undergo a fundamental change when we examine them in the light of Theosophy. But the Mahatma advocates not a well-developed rationality but a well-developed Intuition. Intuitive knowledge depends not on logic and reason; the faculty related to Buddhi, the abode of intuitions, is the faculty of co-ordinating the mundane and the material to the celestial and the spiritual. This means learning the science of the laws of analogy and correspondence. The study of logic is considered necessary for the correct use of the mind. The development of intuition demands a study of the law of analogy and correspondence, so that we "see a world in a grain of sand" and comprehend the profound and mysterious knowledge enshrined in such a formula—"Oh! the Jewel in the Lotus."

In the present hour are hidden great potentialities. Can it be that the right, hourly performance of duties would bring us the vision that would prove a blessing to ourselves and to mankind? Can it be that in the "germ of the present hour's effort" there are possibilities of progress undreamt of by us? The words of the Mahatma quoted above certainly point to such an idea. Are our souls fired with joy

and zeal during the doing of the small plain duties of life? One such duty for the student of Theosophy is regular attendance at all Theosophical meetings, once again not with discontent and bored feelings but with a cheerful mind charged with zeal and enthusiasm. Among our numerous small plain duties there are those that might be compared to the body; others, to the principle of *Prana*; still others to the mind; and then there are duties that form the soul aspect of them all. Regular, punctual attendance at Theosophical meetings is the soul of mundane duties, most helpful in revealing to us the celestial aspect of all events and happenings. But intelligent preparation for such attendance has to be made. Especially it seems that the Mahatma refers to this Theosophical duty when He speaks of the "vista of potential blessings to *yourselves* (italics His) and mankind lying in the germ of the present hour's effort."

In and through the small plain duties, intuitively performed, we must strive to catch the vision of the Light. But we must heed the warning: "...do not let selfishness penetrate into your ranks"; we must note the pregnant words about what unselfishness can and will accomplish.

The "inner Tabernacle" is mentioned by the Mahatma. Its doors and windows are thrown open, not while we eat or walk or are engaged in mundane works, but, to begin with, when we attend Theosophical meetings with a prepared heart.

The real value of U.L.T. classes and meetings is often not comprehended. The student-aspirant's devotion elevates him at such gatherings which make it easier for him to pursue the principles of Unity, Study, Work.

TRUE contentment is the power of getting out of any situation all that there is in it.

—G. K. CHESTERTON

HEREDITY AND SOUL-EVOLUTION

ONE of the major scientific breakthroughs of recent times is said to be the discovery of the substance that genes are made of—a microscopic chemical compound called DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid). DNA, it is given out, is not only the carrier of the inheritance code, but also the basis of life itself. It exists in all living cells, including sex cells, say the geneticists, and like a microscopic computer it stores a vast number of directions and blueprints which it issues at the right time and place to trigger the building of all the cells and structures of a body, to make them grow and to synchronize their operations at every second during all their allotted life. DNA, it is further believed, gives us our hereditary endowment at birth and supervises all our physical functions.

The student of Theosophy, however, finds himself at variance with the geneticist on the question of how and why heredity is transmitted, for science assumes that matter alone is operative here, while Theosophy maintains that the process is not mechanical at all and is instrumental rather than causal. Heredity is but a mode of the evolutionary process, by which the permanent conscious Force within matter strives for ever fuller self-expression and self-realization. Science does not recognize that the purposive intelligence pervading matter is a reflection of the wisdom of the hosts of sentient beings that guide evolution. Science, moreover, knows nothing of the astral prototype, an indispensable factor in heredity, which, in the vegetable and animal kingdoms no less than in the human, is the substratum and the model for the developing physical form.

As long as modern researchers continue to posit that life is essentially a chemical process and confine their investigations to the chemistry of heredity, they may get some idea of the *how* of the process, but nothing of the *why*. What H.P.B. wrote in 1888 holds equally true today, that "the two chief difficulties of the science of embryology—namely, what are the forces at work in the formation of the foetus, and the *cause* of 'hereditary transmission' of like-

ness, physical, moral or mental," will never be solved "till the day when scientists condescend to accept the Occult theories" (*S.D.*, I, 223). According to these theories, it is

the spiritual potency in the physical cell that guides the development of the embryo, and which is the cause of the hereditary transmission of faculties and all the inherent qualities in man.... This inner soul of the physical cell—this "spiritual plasm" that dominates the germinal plasm—is the key that must open one day the gates of the terra incognita of the Biologist, now called the dark mystery of Embryology. (*S.D.*, I, 219)

Dividing man into three broad compartments—body nature, moral nature and mind nature—what do we find? It is true that sometimes there are physical resemblances between children and parents, but who has not known of children who do *not* look like their parents? The same is true of bodily traits and habits and diseases. More, the body sometimes reverts to ancestral types; a child might resemble, not his parents, but a grandparent or even a granduncle or aunt. A deformity like a hunchback transmits itself fitfully. The son of a hunchback is not always a hunchback, but his grandnephew might be.

Turning to moral traits, the problem is still more complex. Characters of children differ from those of the parents even more than bodily traits and looks. Dishonesty in children, meanness, vices, etc., are often a surprise to their upright parents. And the reverse is equally true; good and even saintly children are to be found in lewd and vulgar families.

When we come to mental faculties, the same lawlessness is encountered. Idiots are born to normal parents; on the other hand, parents of high intelligence might have children of subnormal intelligence. And what about geniuses whom science completely fails to explain? Who gave his powers to Shakespeare? And still more puzzling, where did his genius evaporate? The son of Charles Dickens might have looked like his father, but could he write like the father? Could he create another Pickwick? Quite often, genius is conspicuous by its absence in the progeny of great geniuses.

Another peculiarity of heredity is that it functions to a greater extent as we go *down* the scale of evolution. Heredity works better in savage tribes than among civilized people, more among slum-dwellers than in the cultured strata of society. It works almost perfectly in the animal kingdom. The calf, being the progeny of the cow, will never become a meat-eater; but the Brahmana boy, in spite of ages of hereditary habits, can and nowadays sometimes does become a meat-eater, often without compunction. The young of a warbling bird will warble, but the progeny of a great singer seldom turns out to be a singer of any eminence.

Theosophy does not reject heredity. What Theosophy says is that heredity is not the *cause* of likenesses between parents and children. Heredity is a process, a means, whereby traits of body, of character, of mind are *transmitted*. Our parents and grandparents are not responsible for creating our traits; they but pass them on, transmit them to us.

The second truth Theosophy puts forth is that heredity is but a sub-rule, a subservient law, an aspect of reincarnation. Without reincarnation, heredity cannot be understood. Heredity is one of the several processes by which the law of reincarnation functions. I and I alone am the causal power who created my traits of body, character and mind. I have used the agency of my parents and family to secure for myself my own traits.

Children of the same parents, even twins, show different temperaments and traits. Why is it that one child picks up the good traits of parents and family, and the other the bad ones? If heredity is a law, how can such disparities be explained? Examine the phenomenon in the light of reincarnation. Two souls come to the same family, have the same upbringing, but each takes and adopts from the parents traits and tendencies brought over from his own past—what suits him, what he needs, what he has worked for and deserved. If "the child is father of the man," as Wordsworth said, he must be the child of his own dead self. Each one is solely responsible for all his traits of body, of mind, of morals, of character, good or bad. We are the creators of all those traits. We

only use our parents and family to secure those traits for ourselves. This is Justice, Karma, the twin of the Law of Reincarnation. The justice of heredity is clearly perceived when we look upon it as a process whereby we inherit our own characteristics, using the channel of the family. The sins of the parents are not visited upon the children; it is we alone who visit our sins upon ourselves, sometimes for several lives.

Human evolution consists not just in the evolution of the body, but also in the evolution of the soul. This soul-evolution takes place through reincarnation. The same soul takes birth on this earth in body after body. He learns in and through a body, and when he has learnt all he can through one particular body, he casts it away and we call it death. After a vacation period, he comes to school again on earth in a new body and learns some more. Thus the soul grows and evolves. This is not a haphazard process; it is not by chance or by accident that he is born in a particular family. There are no accidents in Nature. Whatever body, morals and mind he has, have been acquired by him under law. Rigid Justice rules the world. This is the doctrine of Karma. We can see how reincarnation touches Karma at every point, so that invariably the mind keeps reverting to it.

Man is dual—the spiritual being, *Purusha*, and the bundle of attributes, *Prakriti*. Each of us is a *Purusha*, a soul-being; each has a bundle of attributes which we call our nature. The soul is indivisible and immortal; it unfolds and keeps on unfolding. The material nature changes, and many things are cast out of it.

The human soul evolves with the help of his nature, his bundle of material attributes. In evolving, he benefits them; his growth and unfoldment means purification and elevation of his own nature. The soul's advancement lies through the purgation of his own material nature. *Purusha* bestows his vision on blind *Prakriti*; he makes *Prakriti* move by the power inherent in it. *Purusha* is lame and cannot function without *Prakriti*, so he mounts on the shoulders of *Prakriti* and thus both Spirit and Matter progress—not in isolation, but in interdependence. It is a grand lesson.

Each of us as an immortal soul has evolved to a certain point, through many lives on earth during the long past. If anyone desires to know what place he occupies as a soul in the scheme of things, let him look at his own material nature, the bundle of attributes which is his today. As the human soul grows with and through the help of his material nature, the present state of that nature will unmistakably reveal the truth we wish to know about ourselves.

Each of us as an immortal soul lives today in a body which has its traits, its habits, its manners and mannerisms. Some have a refined body, sensitive, pure, magnetic; others have a coarse body, gross, dull, insensitive.

Then, some have a beautiful moral character, noble and unselfish, while others have mean, petty and egotistic natures. This beauty of moral nature does not always go with beauty of physical body. Many physically attractive men and women are mean, contemptible and cowardly in their morals.

Next, some can think clearly and quickly with their minds, while others have slow, lazy minds which cannot jump a fence in conversation or argument. Some minds can concentrate, others just wander. Once again, a keen mind does not necessarily mean lofty morals. Sick bodies are often accompanied by vigorous minds; low morals are frequently joined to keen minds.

In every single instance, our triple nature is in consonance with the soul we are. There are no misfits. If we have a sick body or an objectionable character or a slow mind, it is what we have created for ourselves. Our bodily habits and manners, our character and morals, our mental outlook and vision, are all the result of our past efforts, in past lives, and they go to show on what rung of the ladder of evolution we now stand.

Our natures are called *Samskaras* in Hindu philosophy, *Skan-dhas* in Buddhist philosophy. They are our material attributes. They are generally classified in a fivefold manner, but can be more easily understood in terms of our triune division.

Improvement of our triple nature implies, first and foremost, that body, character and mind must not be left to shift for them-

selves. The soul must lend its vision to these blind natures, otherwise it cannot march forward on the path of progress. The vision of the soul and the motor-power of the natures must work together. The soul is like the driver of a motor-car; the engine of the car is like the triple nature. The driver sees and knows where to go; he must start the engine and direct the motion, and then the car will move forward, taking the soul-driver on to the heights of perfection.

So the first step is to recognize that as souls we possess the vision. We must not mistake the vision of the motor-car as true and dependable. Our natures of body, character and mind are alive, ablaze with passions, and we mistake the fires of lust for the sunlight of life. Let us abandon the sense-vision of body, character and mind, for it is false vision. Let us look within ourselves for soul-vision and lend that vision to the triple nature.

The way to gain soul-vision, the real vision, is by restraining the lower vision of body, character and mind. Just as we clean our car, overhaul it by taking it apart, so must we as souls examine our bodily habits, our moral character, our mind-actions or thoughts. When our lower nature is under examination, it does not function on its own. On the other hand, soul stops functioning when the lower nature asserts itself and takes its own course. And that is fatal for soul-progress. So the first step is to seek and secure the vision of the soul, by stopping the activities of the lower nature. This is self-examination—to sit down quietly and face our own nature—but let us be prepared for frustration. This is the stage almost every truly cultured person has come to. Who does not know his moral weaknesses and mental limitations? Who does not want to eliminate those weaknesses and limitations? Why do people fail? Because they do not take the second step. They examine and know the foibles of their lower nature, but they do not dwell upon the grandeur and beauty of their higher nature, the power and potency of their soul.

That is the second step—to dwell on the glory, the *Tejas*, of the soul. Let us seek the company of the soul, of our higher nature. This

can be achieved by thoughtful memorizing of true ideas. Learn one soul-idea every morning, remember it during the day, repeat it before going to sleep, bring back to the mind that truth the next morning on waking, and by such memorizing it becomes a part of us.

As we dwell upon these soul-ideas, we purify and elevate the bundle of attributes that we call body, character and mind. It will help us in controlling our senses and sense-organs. Our character will undergo a change: our impatience will turn into patience, our greed into graciousness, our lust into love. And as our mind copies the power and potency of the Divine Ideas, our faculty of concentration and contemplation will be intensified.

The God within, the King in the Heart, is at present a prisoner of *Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha*—passion, anger, greed, delusion. Diseases of the body are born of wrong emotions; wrong emotions are born of low thoughts; and low thoughts are born of the absence of high and noble ones. So let us dwell on high and noble thoughts, such as are to be found in the *Gita*, in *The Voice of the Silence*—thoughts which are universal, *i.e.*, which touch the whole universe, touch all men.

Thus we can improve our future heredity; thus we can be attracted in our next birth to a pure and fortunate family, or even to a family of those who are spiritually illuminated. The work begun in this life will carry us to nobler and grander labours in the next. Such ideation, moreover, will draw to us, like a needle to a magnet, the benediction of the Mighty Ones, the Great Gurus, whose aid we all need, without whose instruction we cannot go far on the Path of Progress. Let us sow the seeds of Karma which will open like a flower into whose heart the sunlight of the Mahatmas may and will pour. This is not impossible; some have done this in the past and we all can do it in the future.

THE true source of rights is duty. If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek.

—M. K. GANDHI

PREDESTINATION OR FREE WILL?

THERE are two classes of beings, generally speaking, who have conflicting beliefs about destiny. There are those who think that destiny is something predetermined or preordained, over which one has no control. It is some "god" or "power" outside of us that shapes and moulds our destiny, and nothing can be done except to submit to its will. This belief arises from the non-understanding of the correct concept of god, of the real nature of man, the purpose and the goal of evolution. Those who hold it consult priests or palmists and astrologers so that through propitiatory ceremonies and offerings some change may be brought about. The Sufi poet Omar Khayyam seems to take this particular point of view when he says in his *Rubaiyat*:

The Moving Finger writes; and having writ,
Moves on: Nor all thy Piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

There are others who do not believe in predestination but consider that the will of man is supreme and that he alone is the mover of that will. As the poet W. E. Henley has put it:

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

Theosophy reconciles both the concepts and admits the operation of both fate and free will, or destiny and self-exertion. They are but aspects of the one great Law, the Law of Karma, the law of cause and effect, of action and reaction. Each cause produces its effect, which man calls fate or destiny, but it is self-made destiny, destiny created through one's own choice. But, as each effect contains within itself the seed for a further cause, our attitude to that effect in the present is of the utmost importance because that attitude will shape our future destiny through present efforts in

right or wrong direction. Fate and free will are like the two wheels of a chariot. Just as a chariot cannot move on one wheel only, for it will then lose its balance, so also in our evolutionary journey both fate and free will play their parts; but, as the great Bhishma lying on his bed of arrows and awaiting his self-appointed hour of death said, "Exertion is greater than destiny." Therein lies hope for mankind.

The Law of Karma is known as the doctrine of responsibility. It is the human soul, the self-conscious thinker and chooser, the reincarnating Ego, who is responsible for all his thoughts and feelings, words and deeds. In the human constitution it is the principle of Manas that is the link between the divine parent, Atma-Buddhi, on one side and the personality on the other. So in making every choice it is swayed by the personal below or the divine above. On the divine plane harmony rules supreme, so when the thinker moves in unison with the divine law there is no disturbance, but when he succumbs to the personal he creates disharmony for which he has to repay. Man generates causes on the physical, mental and moral planes and receives effects, good, bad and indifferent.

For 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.
(S.D., I, 643)

So fate or destiny is the "karmic progeny of all our former thoughts and deeds," as *The Voice of the Silence* states. This important idea if thoroughly grasped will take away life's bitterness and suffering to some extent. Lord Buddha teaches:

Ye are not bound! the Soul of Things is sweet,
The Heart of Being is celestial rest;
Stronger than woe is will: that which was Good
Doth pass to Better—Best.

With the doctrine of Karma operates the law of reincarnation. Man as the immortal pilgrim has lived before and will live again, has acted in the past and will act in the future, not alone but in company with other pilgrim-souls who rejoice and weep from life to life, chained together. We are advised to take as much as merit has in store for us and make further efforts along that particular line. But what about overcoming wrong tendencies which have been brought from the past? Two statements from the *Bhagavad-Gita* are most helpful and hopeful. In the Ninth Discourse, Krishna states:

Even if the man of most evil ways worship me with exclusive devotion, he is to be considered as righteous for he hath judged aright. Such a man soon becometh of a righteous soul and obtaineth perpetual happiness.

Turning in the right direction is the first step. Thoughts are the seeds of Karma. "Sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny." To begin on the plane of mind: on what basis should the beginning be made? Sri Krishna's instruction in the Fourth Discourse should be followed:

Even if thou wert the greatest of all sinners, thou shalt be able to cross over all sins in the bark of spiritual knowledge. As the natural fire, O Arjuna, reduceth fuel to ashes, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all actions to ashes. There is no purifier in this world to be compared to spiritual knowledge; and he who is perfected in devotion findeth spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in himself in the progress of time.

So spiritual knowledge is a purifier; and if it is coupled with true devotion, the weaknesses and limitations of our yesterdays may be transformed into virtues and powers for the future. In moulding the character and in shaping the destiny, the eternal verities should become the foundation.

If our goal is human perfection—for that is the command: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is

perfect"; if our object is "to live to benefit mankind," then surely we need to tread the Paramita Path, the Path of Divine Virtues, which begins in mire, its summit lost in glorious light Nirvanic, making of a man a God. Thus each one can become a weaver of his freedom, freedom from the round of births and deaths, freedom from the chains of joys and sorrows, freedom from attachment to personal existence, breathing the pure air of the high altitude of the spiritual realms, radiating the light of wisdom and compassion.

Each one can begin at his own level the work of transmuting the base metal of his personal nature into the pure gold of spirituality if he keeps ever in mind the three basic ideas:

The soul of man is immortal.

The principle which gives life dwells in us and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent.

Each man is his own absolute lawgiver.

IF there be one unfailing test, one sure proof of error, it is to find material advantage of any kind mixed up with spiritual development. The two cannot mix; the very nature of Energy forbids it. Only *psychism* can go hand-in-hand with material gain or allurements—psychism of the left hand order, such as ruins perpetrators (even the self-deceived) and victims, in other lives or in this. The victims suffer because causes are blindly set in motion against the innocent, or against the self-seeking (otherwise "innocent"), whose insidious human weakness has laid them open to the poisoned bait. Such causes act by Law; their course cannot be stayed. *Their* Karmic effect is brief compared to that which dogs the perpetrators of crimes against humanity, and of all such crimes, that is the darkest which attacks men through their ideals. It would be a crime impossible if men kept those ideals pure, untouched by any material thought, held high like blazing torches against the darkness of our age.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE THING TO BE REALIZED

"REALIZATION comes from dwelling upon the thing to be realized." "Try, try, ever keep trying." Observance of these two injunctions provides basic practice for those who are consciously concerned with the growth of the Soul. Of course the importance of the idea dwelt upon is equally basic.

The Secret Doctrine states: "Everything that *is, was and will be*, eternally is, even the countless forms, which are finite and perishable only in their objective, and not in their ideal Form." Obviously, therefore, it is most important that the content of our thinking and dwelling and trying be carefully chosen to produce those realizations that will be of relatively permanent value.

Consider the fundamental implications attending realization. Realization of spiritual verities is an advanced aspect of Consciousness. It is closely related to the "highest power of Intellection." Other aspects of Consciousness are: Cohesion, Sensation, Instinct, Ratiocination, Intuitional Thinking. Our dwelling upon a fundamental idea, or condition, or situation, or truth, will eventually make it real to us, provided, of course, we "try, try, ever keep trying." This is what we mean by realization. All have experienced this. Maybe we have tried to understand a particular philosophical truth. We grasp it to some extent, but another dimension is needed before it takes on reality for us: Suddenly there comes a dawning to our consciousness. No longer does it seem to us an abstract proposition, a proposal to be weighed, compared, possibly compromised; it becomes a living Fact, a Truth that seems more real to us than anything our senses or our intellect can experience.

This is one form of realization, the manifestation of Truth. Something of importance has occurred. Not only have we experienced an expansion of consciousness, but a heretofore potential Idea has been brought on to the field of manifestation. A new centre will act as a vehicle, as a channel for the manifestation of the force which this newly realized Idea will release.

From observing this process, we begin to understand why even

a relatively few devoted, sincere students can be of great value to their community. They can exert a force for good that is far beyond the numerical proportion of their class. This process, of course, applies also to the manifestation of falsehood and error, to ideas of selfishness, greed, passion, to desires to obtain personal advantage. We cannot effectively dwell upon both the personal and the impersonal. The time must surely come when it will be necessary to choose our path, whether we shall develop our faculties for the realization of an impersonal Ideal such as love, brotherhood, cooperation, or whether we shall dwell upon personal ideals in the hope of acquiring power, wealth, position. The greatest initial difficulty is the clarification of our objective.

It seems hardly possible for most persons either constitutionally or environmentally to give up the world and devote their lives to dwelling upon high ideals and great, impersonal concepts. Nor is this procedure demanded of all at this juncture. There are, however, a number of things we can do that will be both productive and sufficient. It is possible undeviatingly to keep alive in our hearts a desire to fit ourselves, "by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others." This is the first step. This will produce several important effects. We shall be in a constant attitude conducive to the absorption of facts and knowledge—knowledge that will later provide a basis for realization. It will provide an ever-widening circle of opportunity to help those who are less progressed. Under the accumulated impetus of these factors we shall develop material which provides a rich productive basis for soul-progress here and now and especially during the Devachanic period, when the unrealized knowledge will become part of our mental faculty. Then, too, in either the next or some future incarnation we shall find valuable servers of those Few whose objective is the amelioration of the sorrows of mankind. This is the greatest of all possible goals, yet within the reach of all those who "try, try, ever keep trying."

SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

H.P.B. tells us in the Preface to *The Secret Doctrine* (p. viii) that the aim of the book is "to show that Nature is not 'a fortuitous concurrence of atoms,' " and also "to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization." She adds that man has to be assigned his rightful place in the scheme of the Universe; that the archaic truths forming the basis of all religions have to be rescued from degradation and the fundamental unity from which they have all sprung, uncovered. Scientific knowledge has taken tremendous strides since the writing of *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888; but we must admit that it still has a long way to go before it comes to accept the viewpoint of Occult Science.

It is essential always to keep in mind that

Occult Science has its *changeless* traditions from prehistoric times. It may err in particulars; it can never become guilty of a mistake in questions of Universal laws, simply because that Science, justly referred to by philosophy as the "*divine*," was born on higher planes, and was brought on Earth by beings who were wiser than man will be, even in the seventh Race of his Seventh Round. (*S.D.*, I, 516)

Let us also remember always the statement that "all that can be given out to the world in this century" is contained in the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine*. It is for us to search and to find out what it contains and not merely to read the book superficially.

H.P.B. asks: "How can a Western scholar accept on hearsay that which he knows nothing about?" (*S.D.*, I, xxxvii) So we need not reproach modern scientists for not accepting ancient knowledge. But we too must learn not to accept on hearsay what is written in *The Secret Doctrine* without trying to understand it. Hence the study of the book is essential for present-day students. If we remember also that "every reader will inevitably judge the statements made from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experience, and consciousness, based on what he has already learnt" (I,

xlvi), then we shall see what prevents us and others from understanding them.

The Occult interpretation of the formation of universes, H.P.B. says, will never be accepted by physical science until it admits an "all-creative force plus ABSOLUTE INTELLIGENCE" (*S.D.*, I, 85). Materialists and men of modern science will never understand the "mystery" of the evolution of the universe, for,

in order to obtain a clear perception of it, one has first of all to admit the postulate of a universally diffused, omnipresent, eternal Deity in Nature; secondly, to have fathomed the mystery of electricity in its true essence; and thirdly, to credit man with being the septenary symbol, on the terrestrial plane, of the One Great UNIT (the Logos). (*S.D.*, I, 78-79)

She adds that

he who believes in all this, has also to believe in the multiple combination of the seven planets of Occultism and of the Kabala, with the twelve zodiacal signs; to attribute, as we do, to each planet and to each constellation an influence which, in the words of Ely Star (a French Occultist), "is proper to it, beneficent or maleficent, and this, after the planetary Spirit which rules it, who, in his turn, is capable of influencing men and things which are found in harmony with him and with which he has any affinity." (*Ibid.*)

How many of us believe in this influence when faced with the conjunction of certain planets, and separate in our minds the limited interpretations of the astrologers and priests from the occult knowledge we have had from H.P.B.? How many of us "search the scriptures," *i.e.*, the teachings of the Ancients as given in the writings of H.P.B., to learn what is real in this influence and what unscientific and illogical? If we do not, how can we expect modern science to do anything but ridicule the influence of hidden causes in precipitating effects on the visible plane? There are so many planes which can be affected and it takes a long time for the effects to manifest, but it is certain that no visible phenomenon in the universe is without a cause.

So modern science has yet a long way to go; and so have we!

H.P.B. tells us in relation to man that "*the whole issue of the quarrel between the profane and the esoteric sciences depends upon the belief in, and demonstration of, the existence of an astral body within the physical, the former independent of the latter.*" (S.D., II, 149)

Many other references can be found in the S.D. which will help us to see what lies in the way of a union between Occult and modern science, though era by era the differences between the two will become less. We can see signs of this lessening of differences during the past few decades. We have still some more years to go before we realize the truth of the statement that "in the twentieth century of our era scholars will begin to recognize that the *Secret Doctrine* has neither been invented nor exaggerated but, on the contrary, simply outlined; and finally, that its teachings antedate the Vedas." (S.D., I, xxxvii)

It is, however, very necessary for us to remember also that "toward science as a whole, as a divine goal, the whole civilized world ought to look with respect and veneration; for science alone can enable man to understand the Deity by the true appreciation of his works." (*Isis Unveiled*, I, 88)

THE general notions about human understanding...which are illustrated by discoveries in atomic physics are not in the nature of things wholly unfamiliar, wholly unheard of, or new. Even in our own culture they have a history, and in Buddhist and Hindu thought a more considerable and central place. What we shall find is an exemplification, an encouragement, and a refinement of old wisdom.

—ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

THE LAW OF OUR BEING

WE cannot imagine an effect without a cause. Law is within us; our very nature demands that we manifest law, order, harmony, equity, justice, in all our dealings. Mistaking our nature, however, for something different, not understanding it, we unconsciously set in motion causes the effects of which some call fate, destiny, luck, God's will, because they do not recognize that they themselves have generated those causes.

The Law of Karma includes and means cause and effect; its two inseparable processes are sowing and reaping. Actions are causal, but they do not produce themselves; *we* cause them; we initiate actions and reap their effects. But we do not and cannot administer the Law—it administers itself.

Law operates from within us as well as from outside; it operates because of our action on some plane: "There is no Karma unless there is a being to make it or feel its effects."

Law operates on every plane, of which there are seven; every being is under Karmic law; every being is sevenfold. All beings spring from the same Source and travel toward the same Goal. "The Path is one for all," but "the means to reach the goal must vary with the Pilgrims." Why? Because each makes his own choices; each is free to choose how to act; each sows his own causes.

The ultimate Cause and Sustainer of all our actions is the Highest in us, the Real, the Self. From this comes all our power to act. But "no act is performed without a thought at its root either at the time of performance or as leading to it." When action proceeds from false, personal ideas it creates false positions, a faulty nature and unhappiness for its vehicle, the personal self. In reality, manifested Power is threefold and we have three fundamental powers: to create, to preserve and to destroy in order to regenerate. In the knowledge of this lies the root of self-knowledge. Beginning with this basic knowledge and watching and controlling ourselves, we can gain knowledge of ourselves as we are. In this lies hope.

It is the manner in which we use our threefold power that

determines the quality of our personal nature and our Karma. At the very root of our being, as of the Universe, are Love, Law, Order, Harmony. This gives us a criterion for action.

Such is the Law which moves to righteousness,
Which none at last can turn aside or stay;
The heart of it is Love, the end of it
Is Peace and Consummation sweet. Obey!

This is the statement of an utter necessity—it is all there is to the matter.

Often the Great Teachers have pointed out that the spiritual life is simple. It is the ability to conceive and sense this essential simplicity that is so difficult in the *Kali-Yuga*. By meditating on the One Life, the One Law, the One Path and the One Goal, we shall begin to get the idea and become more simple in mind—provided we desire to do so—desire being the motor power that moves both mind and will.

It is the *becoming* that is difficult, of course. Grasping with the mind and intellect is much less of a task. As St. Paul wrote to the Romans:

...to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not that I do....

I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (VII, 18-19, 22-23)

Let us never forget that an Adept *becomes*; he is not made. We are engaged in the work of *becoming*, the most difficult task that one can possibly undertake; yet it is the reason why we are here in manifested life. Only as we *become* here on earth what we *are* in reality, do we progress toward the Goal which is one for all, although the means to reach it will vary in detail with each pilgrim-chooser. "Thou canst not travel on the Path before thou hast become that Path itself," states *The Voice of the Silence*; and a

footnote adds, "In this Path, to whatever place one would go, *that place one's own self becomes.*"

We are inclined to think about and gather much information and many details regarding our bafflingly complicated lower self. Let us add to this, gradually, the ability to let go details and turn our attention to the Inmost, which is always one and simple.

This is an age of diversity—let us endeavour to create and sustain in it a Centre and centres of Unity. On the basis of the U.L.T. Declaration and Robert Crosbie's helpful letters amplifying and explaining it, this may be done in a practical, effectual, impersonal manner, even in this dark period in which we are living. Let us extract from these letters, and those of W. Q. Judge, the simple, straightforward principles of conduct that they indicate and which are concisely formulated for us in the Declaration. These are a Theosophical criterion: the simple pattern for creating and sustaining the only sort of unity that will live to regenerate the world. There is no other.

TRUTH means the fulfilment of our self; and moral law means following the law of our being. Truth is the beginning and end (the substance) of material existence. Without truth there is no material existence. It is for this reason that the moral man values truth.

Truth is not only the fulfilment of our own being; it is that by which things outside of us have an existence. The fulfilment of our being is moral sense. The fulfilment of the nature of things outside of us is intellect. These, moral sense and intellect, are the powers or faculties of our being. They combine the inner or subjective and outer or objective use of the power of the mind. Therefore, with truth, everything done is right.

—*The Golden Mean of Tsesze*

THE HEALTH OF THE PERSONAL MAN

IV.—ATTENTION AND SLEEP

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The disciple should always make obeisance to the Master; and free from heedlessness, should always desire instruction.

—*Sanatsujatiya*

Here we are all, by day. By night we are hurl'd
By dreams, each one, into a sev'rall world.

—ROBERT HERRICK

WE are apt to value sleep as a rest from attention. We say to an inattentive friend in the waking state, "You are asleep!" While it is true that in the waking state we develop attention to a high degree, we overlook the truth that other states of consciousness are extensions of the waking state. When the body sleeps the consciousness continues to function in the dream state which is subjective, but consciousness has always its power—its attentiveness.

But it is one consciousness, one awareness, wherever focused. It is one, coloured by the higher qualities of Buddhi-Manas or by the lower qualities of Kama-Manas. What we often fail to grasp is that we need not put our awareness where we do not want it, and we should not want to put it where we already know it is being degraded. If we can remember that by putting it where Kama reigns we are giving life to evil forces, we may perhaps get help for ourselves, for none of us at this stage really wishes to bring to birth that which is evil.

So attention is dual. We are familiar with the story of Samson's hair which was cut off while he was asleep, thereby depriving him of his strength. There is truth in this. No one can afford to lose his attention; he needs it in order to watch what kind of force he is attracting and giving life and form to.

The attention-power of the subjective consciousness is different from that of the waking consciousness. In the waking state we are conscious of objects, things and beings. These impress our consciousness and, when we are in sleep, these impresses are the

subjects of our dreams—a flower pot which was an object in the waking state is a subjective image or picture; similarly, our friend does not talk to us in the subjective dream state; we see *our* image of him, impressed on our consciousness, and our own formulated words talk to us as if they were coming from our friend. This image, these words, result from our observation and attentiveness in the waking state. If our power of observation is weak and inaccurate and our attentiveness is spasmodic and faulty in waking, objective life, the subjective states become confused, mixed, irregular.

Both attention and sleep affect the assemblage of *skandhaic* lives and *tanhaic* elementals. Our attention has to be properly developed in waking life; not only does the accuracy of registered observation enable us to be vigilant, bring us information and nourish our thinking, reasoning power, but also impressions made on the consciousness by perception and reflection in waking life are active in the dream state and become an important factor in making our dreams chaotic or orderly.

The important collection of the Buddha's sayings known as the *Dhammapada* contains a full chapter on the subject of attention. The very opening verse of the chapter is sufficiently strong to indicate how the Master valued attentiveness:

Vigilance is the path to Life Eternal. Thoughtlessness is the path to death. The reflecting vigilant die not. The heedless are already dead. (Verse 21)

The esoteric point of view about the function of attention is admirably put forward by Robert Crosbie in *The Friendly Philosopher*:

The whole universe exists only for purposes of Soul. Soul is individualization of Being; we, as self-conscious beings, have to remain in the bondage of matter long enough to give lower segregated entities the necessary impetus towards self-consciousness. The majority do this work unconsciously, partly right and partly wrong. It is possible to do it consciously and free from attachment, as well as rightly. (p.135)

Contemplation is impossible without concentration, and the latter is dependent on the power of attentiveness. To do all things attentively implies concentration. A student who is concentrated in his short period of meditation, but does not carry the process forward in the doing of all his deeds throughout the day, ultimately cannot concentrate even for a short while. To be successful in achieving what Robert Crosbie suggests—and that is the duty of the Esotericist to his lives, *skandhaic* and *tanhaic* elementals—one has to develop the power of attentiveness.

Patanjali's sixth step, *Dharana*, is often rendered as attention which produces contemplation and culminates in *Samadhi*, ecstatic vision, supreme attention which is capable of seeing a universe in a grain of sand—Unity composed of units, the many in the One. This highest attention is *Chitta-Shakti*, "the power of pure consciousness" (Johnston), "the power of consciousness established in its own nature" (Vyasa), "the power of consciousness free from the afflictions" (Vachaspati). Dr. Bhagavan Dasji in his *Yoga-Sutra-Bhashya-Kosh* helps us with these words: "That which is aware of everything and all things, that in which is all the past, the present, the future, the there behind, the here, the there in front, is all gathered up and collected, bound up in the Eternal Now and Infinite Here." This metaphysical and super-psychological aspect of attention will lead the student to perceive how very important a principle it is, and how it has different expressions which affect the Higher Life; therefore in the leading of his personal life attention plays an important role.

The development of attention in the mundane world and works takes place with the ascent of the human soul into supermundane worlds and states; attention is concomitant with every step on the Path of Union or Yoga.

We have coupled attention with sleep because it plays a significant part in the subjective state of dreams (*swapna*) and of dreamlessness (*sushupti*) during the sleep of the body. Idle day-dreams in waking life result from mental inertia which is inattentiveness; confused and chaotic dreams are also born of inattentive-

ness. We cannot develop attentiveness in the subjective states of consciousness; we must begin to practise attentiveness in the waking state. Wakefulness and attentiveness are intimately related. To be awake is to be attentive, and *vice versa*. On the power of attention developed in our waking consciousness depend our orderly perceptions in the states of sleep. Dreams which are mere fancies or confused and chaotic pictures, as well as warning, retrospective and allegorical dreams, are directly related to the power of attention of our personal consciousness. Dreams sent by Adepts, like Their messages sent in our waking state of consciousness, are received by us or missed, depending on the same faculty.

Sleep of the body implies the shortening of the waking state of consciousness. Our senses and organs and brain, especially the cerebrum, become passive or non-active. While these are dormant, our consciousness passes into the subjective states, two in kind, already named—*swapna*, the dream state, and *sushupti*, the dreamless state. Each of these has many degrees and varieties of subjective consciousness.

The Voice of the Silence, in the imagery of the three Halls, gives us the practical aspect of attention, corresponding to the objective and subjective states. In waking life, we dream, wrongly or usefully; through meditation we cultivate the attentiveness of *Dharana*, *Dhyana* and *Samadhi*. Right psychological exercises, mental and moral, practised regularly in waking life, prepare us for right and useful activity in our subjective states.

Here we can give only in a summarized form what is necessary for the purposes of this article. The waking or *jagrat* state is called the Hall of Sorrow (p. 4) and of Ignorance (p. 6). Suffering and sorrow make us search, *i.e.*, inquire and question, and lead us to knowledge. The dream or *swapna* state is dual in its subjectivity—one, an extension of ignorance and sorrow, confused, nightmarish and chaotic; the other, of learning by tests and trials which show us how a serpent is hidden under every bloom of earthly existence. These tests and trials come to the practitioner through the elementals or nature spirits—gnomes, undines, sylphs and salamanders—

which play an important part in the formation of our *skandhaic* lives and *tanhaic* elementals.

Now, the Science of Occultism recommends that the student-devotee use his waking state to develop his attentiveness in such a manner that he shortens the first aspect of dream subjectivity to a minimum and postpones the gaining of the knowledge and experience aspect till a particular, suitable time. Which is that?

Sushupti or dreamlessness is the subjective state wherein our consciousness is turned within and plunges in the Waters of the Higher Consciousness in which everything is forgotten and the soul dwells in its own pure state.

By considering the nature and character of this state of *sushupti* while we are in objective waking consciousness, we derive great benefit. In the *sushupti* of ordinary people, dualism is non-existent and joy and bliss are unmixed; and so it is not known, but only felt. But, for the earnest devotee who studies the Science of Occultism, it ought to be different. For him *sushupti* should not be so conditioned that while in that state he knows neither self nor non-self. He must understand the inwardness of the statement in *The Voice of the Silence* about the *sushupti* state or the Hall of Wisdom. It points out that the real Master is not to be found in the *jagrat* and *swapna* states but in the *sushupti* condition:

Seek for him who is to give thee birth, in the Hall of Wisdom,
the Hall which lies beyond, wherein all shadows are unknown,
and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory.

The footnote is also important. Only in the Hall of Wisdom can "the Initiate, who leads the disciple, through the Knowledge given to him, to his spiritual, or second birth," be found. He is also called the Father, Guru, or Master.

W. Q. Judge has said that *sushupti* is

the dreamless state in which the mystic's highest consciousness—composed of his highest intellectual and ethical faculties—hunts for and seizes any knowledge he may be in need of.

But this can become possible only when the learner carefully considers two subjects of study, viz., the Higher Self and the Master-Guru-Initiator. To gain true insight into these two subjects we need the use of *Buddhi* in some measure. Once again it is important to consider what is implicit in this statement of H.P.B.'s in *The Theosophical Glossary*: "*Buddhi*, Spiritual Soul, is...the direct cause of the *sushupti* condition." She recommends that the student activate *Buddhi*, which is at present passive. As he deepens his study of the nature and character of his own Inner God and Higher Self and of the powers of his Higher *Manas* and of *Buddhi*, he activates them. But the precepts derived from such study need the support of example. Masters are *Buddhic Beings*; Their faculty of intuitive cognition has been fully developed. Therefore to Them *sushupti* is not a subjective state; it has become *Turiya*—"a state of high spiritual consciousness." They live and love and labour from that high state.

When the learner has obtained some perception of these subjects in *jagrat* study-experience, he is able to shorten his dream state and to lengthen and use his *sushupti* state every time his body is asleep. Now, it is the quality of attention, corresponding to *Dharana* and *Dhyana*, that is developed through such specialized study.

Once the soul gains an awakening in the condition, so that a vision of the Guru is obtained by the single eye, and the inner organ of speech asks and the inner ear hears the answer in the Divine Sounds the Guru uses, he becomes ready for real chela-life. His probation is not yet over; the trying tests of the *swapna* state are yet to come. But he has gained the necessary strength and psychic stamina to face them and emerge victorious. This *swapna* condition is the Hall of Probationary Learning.

Patanjali's Aphorisms give us another approach to sleep and attentiveness. Sleep is one of the modifications (*Vritti*) of the thinking principle (*Chitta*). Several types of sleep are mentioned. The commentary of Vyasa and the gloss of Vachaspati tell us that, on waking, a man either says, (1) "I have slept well; my mind is

clear; my intelligence is bright in purity"; or, (2) "I have slept badly; my mind is restless; it wanders; it is unfit for work"; or, (3) "I have slept very stupidly; my limbs are heavy; my mind is tired, heavy, lazy—as if it were absent." What causes these conditions on waking? It is said that *tamas* and *sattva* cause the first; *tamas* and *rajas* cause the second; and when only *tamas* has been at work the third condition is caused.

Charles Johnston explains the aphorism about sleep as a psychic condition thus:

In waking life, we have two currents of perception; an outer current of physical things seen and heard and perceived; an inner current of mind images and thoughts. The outer current ceases in sleep; the inner current continues, and watching the mind-images float before the field of consciousness, we "dream."

Even when there are no dreams, there is still a certain consciousness in sleep, so that, on waking, one says, "I have slept well," or "I have slept badly."

This subject has been treated at some length because of the practical value of the relation between sleep and attention, on the right use of which real soul-progress in chela-life depends.

Thus the personality made up of *skandhas* is purified and elevated by attentive study, attentive reflection on what is studied, and attentive application of what is reflected upon. Sleep gives us an opportunity to develop and use higher types of attention and should not be regarded as an escape from a life of irksome attention.

(To be concluded)

ACCUSE not Nature, she hath done her part,
Do thou but thine.

—JOHN MILTON

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

There are at present some 50 armed conflicts in over 40 countries, according to a UNESCO report. Yet, though the seeds of conflict are widely spread, the international community has now a better chance than ever of acting to prevent conflict erupting into war. UNESCO's new Culture of Peace Programme is tailored to the types of conflict the world is now witnessing, and is motivated by the belief that "we cannot remain indifferent when countries and peoples begin to tear themselves apart." As *Unesco Sources*, October 1994, puts it:

Today, a unique convergence of historical factors has put the abolition of war clearly on the agenda. This does not just mean an end to the violence of war; it means rooting out the culture of war that has come to dominate our institutions and therefore our everyday lives. It means seeking positive ways to resolve conflicts by working on our attitudes and behaviour, and including everybody in the peace-building process. It means learning from our traditions, but overcoming the fears and prejudices that feed conflict and violence. And it imposes a re-ordering of financial priorities to tackle those problems—from social injustice to the environment—that threaten our security and well-being. These are some of the goals set by the ambitious new UNESCO programme, as its contribution to the global transformation towards a culture of peace....

It is no surprise that the programme puts so much emphasis on the ability of each individual, each community, from the grass roots up, to build and enhance peace. Our attitudes and behaviour, individual and collective, can have great bearing on how conflicts are resolved. As that oft quoted but nonetheless pertinent phrase from UNESCO's Constitutional Act states, "since wars begin in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

It is time, argues UNESCO's Director-General Federico Mayor, "to get history to lay down its arms":

We teach our children the history of power but not of knowl-

edge, the history of war but not of culture. The path of history is strewn with warlike acts, with the clash of arms as their only accompaniment. Therefore change we must. We must learn to pay the price of peace just as we had to pay the price of war. We shall have to set fresh priorities.

Lasting peace cannot be imposed, but must come from within a people and their culture. A village elder in Mozambique is quoted as saying: "You can bring the culture of war in a plane and humanitarian aid in a truck, but you can't bring us the culture of peace because it is a tree with its roots deep in our land."

The Culture of Peace Programme sets out to nurture this tree and help it flourish.

As noted in "In the Light of Theosophy" last month, the two erstwhile antagonists, science and religion, are seen by some leading thinkers of the day as allies in the search for truth.

"Do scientists believe in God? And is there anything wrong if they do?" These are the questions raised in *The Sunday Times of India Review* (December 25, 1994). Jerry Pinto talked to some Indian scientists and writes about his findings:

There may be some reason why scientists should not find it quite easy to believe in doctrine, religion and God, but again there's no reason why they should not do so. If they can handle the cognitive dissonance of conflicting systems, why not? And maybe there is no cognitive dissonance, for there have been any number of great scientists who were believers.

The problem lies in the fact that both religion and science have similar offers to make, *prima facie*—a set of ready answers to fundamental questions of existence. As Dr. Jayant Narlikar puts it, they have common goals but different approaches. "That is the main contrast...in their perception of the truth: the objectivity of science versus the highly subjective personal experiences of the religious."...

Most scientists accept that they have no truths, only explanations that are good enough for now because they account best

for all that is known; that these are likely to be overthrown, and that almost every law is a working hypothesis based on state-of-the-knowledge and certain unprovable axioms. He must make the blind leap of faith and believe that the universe is real, knowable, causal....

The relationship between science and religion has improved greatly in this century because there is a greater degree of uncertainty on both sides. At the end of the last century, physicists were much more sure that they knew all there was to know about science. Then Quantum Theory and Godel's Theorem occurred. Together they shook scientists.

When Galileo displaced the earth from the centre of the universe, man was shocked. When Heisenberg concluded that a particular electron could never be located with any degree of certainty, he appalled scientists. Time broke free of clocks and turned into a Mobius strip. The very mass underfoot became energy and melted away at the speed of light. Perhaps it has never been so easy for scientists to believe in God.

As Dr. Albert Einstein declared:

It is enough for me to contemplate the mystery of conscious life perpetuating itself through all eternity; to reflect upon the marvellous structure of the universe which we can dimly perceive, and to try humbly to comprehend even an infinitesimal part of the intelligence manifested in nature.

Coming from a scientist, this is as good a definition of God as one can have. The old idea of an anthropomorphic God has no place in the scientific framework, but the very recognition by science that this is a universe of law and order is indirectly also a recognition of God, for God is Law and Law is God. Likewise, God is the Intelligence in Nature, is Life itself, which scientists now recognize as omnipresent. God or Deity, according to Theosophy,

is everywhere, in every atom of the visible as of the invisible Cosmos, in, over, and around every invisible atom and divisible molecule; for IT is the mysterious power of evolution and involution, the omnipresent, omnipotent, and even omniscient crea-

tive potentiality. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 64)

"Some call it Evolution, and others call it God," said the poet William Herbert Carruth, in his poem "Each in his Own Tongue." In the ultimate analysis, true religion and science have much the same thing to say—each in its own tongue.

Scientists have known for some time that there is a close link and a direct exchange of information between the psyche and the immune system. The defence mechanism of the body also possesses a "memory" and is linked with the brain. It is therefore able to learn from the experience provided by a constant exchange of information with all the bodily tissues. In addition to this, investigations into numerous diseases have, during the past few years, reinforced the conjecture that the immune system collaborates directly with the central nervous system. (*Universitas*, 2/1994)

This interaction between the immune, nervous and hormonal systems, say the scientists, could be the key to investigating many diseases at present regarded as incurable. It could shed some light on many obscure psyche-soma problems and also open up new approaches in medical practice.

This systemic defence mechanism is present everywhere in the body. Its cells and molecules are in a constant state of alert. Actually, it comprises a billion cells, including the lymphocyte component of the white blood cells, and 100 million antibodies which are produced by these lymphocytes and their derivatives, the plasma cells. These are all pitched against dangerous or even merely foreign invaders. Everything alien to the body, such as viruses, bacteria, and poisonous or otherwise damaging substances are recognized by the biochemical peculiarities of their surface structure, known as antigens. Then, after these antigens have combined with the "matching" antibody, they are attacked and, in general, destroyed...

"Receiving points" (receptors) on the immune cells are prepared to take up the widest possible variety of hormones and

messenger substances including, for instance, the so-called stress hormone adrenalin, the growth hormone, the hormone cortisol secreted by the adrenal cortex, the tissue hormone acetylcholine, the blood-sugar controlling hormone insulin; also the tissue hormone histamine, feared by allergic subjects because of its responsibility for the many unpleasant symptoms accompanying their over-sensitive reactions.

A series of hormones, however, also stimulates the immune system by way of the psyche....Particularly closely bound up with the psyche are the endorphin and enkephalin group of substances, which are opiates produced in the body. These activate a feeling of well-being and at the same time heighten the effectiveness of the immune system.

Thus is medical science coming closer to the Theosophical position. Theosophy has always asserted that behind the immediate cause of any disease there is another cause, the inner one, involving both mind and emotions. Real health of the body will result only from a clean life and a sane mental-emotional attitude.

The importance of keeping our promises cannot be overemphasized. The consequence of breaking the promises we make is the theme of Geoffrey Cupit's article: "How Requests and Promises Create Obligations" (*The Philosophical Quarterly*, October 1994). Why do we have an obligation to keep our promises? What happens when we renege on a promise? The author argues:

To renege on one's promises (without an appropriate reason, at least) is to degrade oneself; it is to undermine one's trustworthiness, and to make oneself less worthy of trust. At least this is so if, as most of us believe, trustworthiness is a virtue. One reason to keep a promise, therefore, is the avoidance of self-degradation. But although the avoidance of self-degradation may provide a reason to keep a promise, it can hardly provide an explanation of why promises *qua promises* create obligations, for this explanation seems to apply just as readily to any vows we might make to ourselves....If we can explain how it is that to break a promise is

to treat the promisee unfittingly or to degrade the promisee, or both, we shall have an account of why reneging on promises wrongs the promisee, and hence an explanation of how a promise creates an obligation....

The author goes on to say that just as we put ourselves under an obligation by making a promise, so we may be put under an obligation by a request from another. It is a mistaken view, he argues, that we have no obligations save those we choose to impose upon ourselves. If we have a duty not to treat others with disrespect, as less than they are, then it follows that some requests too generate an obligation in much the same way as promises do.

Theosophically speaking, the promises we make to ourselves are just as binding as those made to others. It needs to be recognized that each time we break a promise, the power of the will is weakened, and will is the power of Spirit in action. Promises should not be made lightly, for the breaking of a promise means self-degradation through loss of self-respect. A vow or an oath is generally recognized as sacred, but even a person's "word" should be looked upon as a sacred bond. However, this recognition is all too often lacking today. Our beliefs and ideas are reflected in our actions; and it is said that according to the sacredness attaching to a promise, a civilization is rising or falling.

A worrying trend as we approach the close of this century is a worldwide rise in crime rates, even in countries that were once relatively free of crime. Criminologist Gene Stephens believes that clashing cultures create many of the problems in modern societies, because of the weakening of social norms. His article, "The Global Crime Wave—And What We Can Do About It," explores the cultural roots of crime and suggests steps to combat it. (*The Futurist*, July-August 1994)

Crime is a complex problem, Stephens admits, and is somewhat like cancer: It is serious, potentially deadly, comes in many varieties, is difficult to diagnose, hard to treat, and almost impos-

sible to eradicate. Still, there are certain conditions associated with rising crime, and ways to create a safe, sane world:

The outlook for global crime is disturbing, if not alarming. However, much can be done to improve the prospects for eventually reducing crime rates. Let's begin by asking, What is the formula for changing a high-crime culture—heterogeneous, poorly disciplined, and culturally pluralistic with helter-skelter parenting and child care, large disparities in wealth, choice without direction, punishment without socialization—into a low-crime culture?

First, we need to move from a "war" model to a "peace" model in our approach to crime....At present, police treat a community as if it were enemy territory....The peace model, exemplified by community policing, fits well with the emerging information era, where success will depend more on co-operation than competition, reconciliation more than retribution....

Second, the world's most valuable resource—its children—need to be treated with the respect they deserve. Children need and deserve tender loving care and attention. When they feel wanted and gain attention and approval for socially desirable activities, they are unlikely to become serious lawbreakers as adolescents or adults....

Third, proactive rather than reactive methods must be used in reducing crime. If a crime is prevented, there are no victims and no costly repercussions such as trials and incarceration. However, a preventive approach would require a change in the traditional structure, role, and methods of criminal-justice systems....

Fourth, when disputes arise—and many can be expected in a multicultural society—they need to be settled by mediation or arbitration in a nonadversarial environment rather than by a courtroom combat that pits the defendant against the hierarchical power structure....

The remedy sought for crime must turn from punishment aimed at retribution (revenge) and deterrence to socialization based on restitution and reconciliation.
