

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### “HOPE DEFERRED IS NO HOPE LOST”

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

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

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

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

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

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

The old saying, moreover, that “hope deferred makes the heart grow weary” should never be uttered by the genuine aspirant, convinced in the core of his being of the existence of the Higher Self, of the unerring Law and of the Masters, the embodiments of charity, justice and universal love. He knows that he himself is responsible for his lack of visible progress and none other. Has not the Master written:—

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

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

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

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

A Master has written:—

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

And Mr. Judge reminds us that

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

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

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

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

Continuing our self-examination let us further ask:—

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

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

“Has a faithful attitude been maintained — ‘an abiding, settled faith that nothing may shake,’ or has a feeling of disheartenment been allowed

to come up because achievement seems time-barred, so few are probably the remaining years of life in the present body?"

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

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

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

It is something to hearten the self-retarded aspirant to reflect that at least his face is still turned towards the heights, that if his plodding is slow it is still in the right direction, and that the Masters recognize no irrevocable failure but ceasing to try. Though we stumble and fall a hundred times we are not defeated in the struggle with our lower nature so long as we pick ourselves up and fight on.

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

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

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

## INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS

[Two lectures delivered by the late B. P. Wadia in London on June 7th and 14th, 1921, under the headings "Individual Progress" and "World Service," were published in America the following year in a pamphlet, *Growth Through Service*. For the benefit of present-day aspirants to spiritual progress we reprint below, slightly condensed, the first of these, the subject of which it treats being of perennial interest. It may be mentioned that, at the time these lectures were delivered, the speaker had not yet resigned from the Theosophical Society, to work thenceforth in collaboration with the United Lodge of Theosophists and promulgate Theosophy as proclaimed in the Message of the Masters given out by Madame H. P. Blavatsky.—Eds.]

One of the main purposes for which the Theosophical Society was founded was to afford its members, and those who came under its influence, a chance and an opportunity to lead the spiritual life. This has not been one of our declared Objects; but there is little doubt in the mind of any that the conscious treading of the Path of Evolution with the help of a deliberate and scientific programme was one of the main objectives which the Great Founders of the Society had in mind when They began Their work with the help of Their agent Madame Blavatsky and her physical-plane co-workers.

To present-day members this might sound somewhat strange. Why should we opine that the Theosophical Society has an undeclared Object which aims at helping its members to realize certain great truths with a view to enabling them to tread the path of spiritual progress deliberately and consciously? And yet, when we begin to examine the teachings as Madame Blavatsky gave them, we come across that view put forward by her in more than one place. Thus, in a very instructive short article which appeared in *The Theosophist*, H.P.B. said:—

The Theosophical Society does indeed desire to promote the spiritual growth of every individual who comes within its influence, but its methods are those of the ancient Rishis, its tenets those of the oldest Esotericism; it is no dispenser of patent nostrums, composed of violent remedies which no honest healer would dare to use.

Here we get a corroboration of the fact I am putting forward; but besides that, the general method to be followed by our members is indicated. It is a very interesting statement; nowadays we are tending more and more to the idea that we...are here to do some particular form of physical-world work. While it is true that the Society exists to do active work for the benefit of the world, which is the subject of my second lecture, today I want to put forward the idea that that service is not possible unless our members fit themselves for it; for our service must show itself in activity which is of a special nature and character. It is a good and sound doctrine that we should try to live a life of self-

sacrifice and service; but it implies that the members... have selves to sacrifice, have something to offer at the altar of Service.

Further, the work which the T.S. has to do is spiritual. We were not created as a social service body, as a political reform league, as a Church to make men believe; neither as "a school of psychology" or as "a miracle club" or as "a college for the special study of Occultism." The work of the T.S., in the words of the Master K.H., is

to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come and which will push the age towards extreme atheism, or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive, soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans... Its chief aim is to extirpate current superstitions and skepticism, and from long-sealed ancient fountains to draw the proof that man may shape his own future destiny, and know for a certainty that he can live hereafter...

This implies the understanding of some new laws of life and being. Therefore it is but meet that we should consider what it is that the Society offers to its members in the way of a programme for the spiritual life. Has it any definite plan to offer, any cut-and-dried scheme which its members can use to get results?

When we carefully study the message of H.P.B., we find that she does not even make an attempt to give a cut-and-dried scheme; in this passage and elsewhere she speaks about spiritual progress, and says that the kind of spiritual effort which members should make must conform to the oldest teachings of the genuine esoteric doctrine of the Ancients. And yet our literature does offer schemes and programmes. In recent times we have begun to dogmatize: we know in detail the fetters to be broken and the virtues to be worn for every stage of the Path, which is mapped out in divisions and compartments! That being so, naturally we ask what are the varied possibilities of these programmes given to us, first for study and then for practice? Let us examine them.

First, we get such teachings as come to us from H.P.B. herself: in this article to which I made reference; in several other articles in the early volumes of *The Theosophist*, in *Lucifer* and in *The Path*, edited in America by W. Q. Judge; in the oral teachings... then in her priceless work, written down by her under the title of *The Voice of the Silence*, we get three schemes...

In the early days of the Society, Mabel Collins presented that little gem *Light on the Path*. W. Q. Judge, in his "Culture of Concentration" and in other places, has given some fine and inspiring teachings. His translations and interpretations of the *Gita* and Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* take us to the second class of programmes, *viz.*, interpretations based on ancient Hindu or Buddhist schemes. We have had several of these. There are many and sundry who have written on the four jewels of the Brahmanical and Buddhistic books....

Thus, through the years of our existence as a society, we have been accumulating (1) a number of schemes, and (2) a number of interpreta-

tions; both dealing with rules of conduct, of meditation, of practice for the training of bodies, the culture of mind and emotions, the unfolding of the Man within.

When we put all these teachings together, we get a number of definite programmes, and the question arises — which, after all, is the precise scheme which one must follow to tread this mysterious path of progress, of self-conscious evolution? The Path has been spoken of by different people in different ways, and it has been given different names. From the point of view of the student these few programmes are expositions of and about the “Heart Doctrine”; and their esoteric nature consists in the fact that a certain amount of spiritual perception is essential to grasp the inwardness of the truths they contain. Take the Brahmanical or Buddhist Fourfold Way; or the three schemes of *The Voice of the Silence*; or the programme of *Light on the Path*; . . . or the laws of the *Upasanas* quoted by H.P.B.; these and others of like nature are sincere attempts of occultists to explain how they sought and found the Way, how they became the Path. These are, so to speak, so many links between the esoteric and exoteric: they are not esoteric, inasmuch as they are public property; they are not exoteric, for they require some familiarity and touch with the reality of Esotericism. There are no esoteric books in the public world; the teachings that come from within one’s own unfolding consciousness can remain esoteric. The above-named works are indicative of the Truth which is the Path. The Message never is delivered, for it is spiritual in nature, and therefore always mysterious. The moment you begin to capture it, it eludes your grasp; the moment you begin to speak it, your language fails you. Thus it carries within itself the power of its own secrecy. Just as two individuals knowing a language can talk to each other, so also only those who have sought and found can know each other and hold intercourse. Thus must the secrets of the Real Mystery of Real Initiations be guarded. The power to guard the knowledge goes with the obtaining of the key of knowledge.

When we study carefully such writings, from most ancient times to modern ones — like the Brahmanical *Sutras*, the philosophic propositions laid down by the Buddha in his “Heart Doctrine,” the teachings of the great Chinese sages or early Sufis, or the profound wisdom of the Greeks and the Egyptians, or what H.P.B. has put forward — we find that these are efforts made at explaining what the Path meant and what its treading involved for some daring souls who solved in the inner sanctuary of the heart the Mystery which cannot be revealed but can only be mysteriously indicated. But something very definite evolves out of the study of these Scriptures, *viz.*, that there are common fundamental factors which are the rules and the laws of the foundations on which these edifices have been raised; the existence of the underlying basis is perceived. The practical student of the esoteric science, therefore, goes in search of these laws for the building of foundations. He seeks for the currents of life which produce form, and the vitality which brings the organism

into being. It is with such fundamentals that I want to deal in this lecture, and then, next week, I shall proceed to show how the Theosophical service of the world, to be undertaken by the members of the Society, should be in terms of this particular kind of inner realization of the fundamentals of the spiritual life.

Now what are these fundamentals? An hour's lecture can but deal with one, and that one only partially. Therefore I shall deal with the root-fundamental; others evolve out of it. This is the seed, others are branches and leaves and flowers. It is that man should know himself, that each one should find his own self.

Everyone has read — "Man, know thyself"; but most people have read so much about it that they have a fair knowledge of how to know, what to do, what not to do — all about it, but not *it*! We have mistaken the descriptions for the experience; we have analyzed and dissected the form and the coverings of the Sutra, the Truth, so much that its life has departed! The seed (*bij*) of the Sutra is important primarily. Thus, taking for granted that we have understood this very simple proposition, we have proceeded to the ramifications of that proposition, to the many forms of interpretation which others have built around that life, and thus we have missed the point. Instead of taking the simple, straight road as it lies before us, by applying this fundamental in terms of life, we turn in one direction or another, to one kind of practice or another, to one form of study or another, and adopt that peculiar course which takes us round and round the groove, and — we make progress. Yes, progress which Kingsley has very beautifully described in his *Water Babies*, and which may be called "flapdoodle progress." Progress in terms of life, in terms of knowing ourselves first, has little to do with books and a great deal to do with realization. All that the great, genuine books of the occult order can do is to give us the interpretation of individuals who have made the search and have attained; but what good is that to us unless we make the search in our own way, and check the results of our seeking with their results? And this is the great trouble we are always up against, not only in our own Theosophical Society, but in Theosophical Societies of every age. It is the going away from this fundamentally simple spiritual principle that ultimately brings about the disintegration of real spiritual movements, for people turn the spiritual life into the religious one. These two are very different. The religious life is something as different from the spiritual life, as the intellectual life of the scholar is different from the spiritual. Therefore we want to understand this principle of knowing ourselves. Can we know the laws underlying this principle? Is there any general interpretation of use to all? Is there any clue whereby we can undertake, each one for himself, this profound search of the primary fundamental, so that we know what we are?

As we study H.P.B. we find that it is possible; for she deals *in a very living manner* with spiritual and mysterious truths. She indicated the

existence and hints at the use of certain keys, which we can apply to our own lives and get the solution of the mystery which surrounds us. In a sense she has solved the mystery for us; but also she has not, because, while she has provided the key, she demands that we must use it.

As a student of H.P.B. I have tried to understand this fundamental. In what I am going to say, I am giving you my interpretation, as useful or as futile to you as any other interpretation; for, after all, what comes in the shape of knowledge (not where it comes from) is useful to each one of us in proportion as we are able to utilize it; it is vital in proportion as we are able to understand it. It becomes the duty of succeeding generations of the students of the Sacred Science to record their interpretations of the inner truths, which they have been able to gain with the help of advanced occultists or teachers. I am giving you, who are students, my own interpretation as a student. You must examine impartially, accept or reject it after intellectual study, on its inherent merit. I am claiming no authority; for there is no such thing as authority in spiritual teachings, save the inherent authority that the teaching itself carries. If what is inherent in H.P.B. is authoritative to me, it is because I am able to respond. If I am not able to respond to the inherent power of any particular teaching, there is no other course for me than to put it away. In that sense examine what I have to offer as an interpretation of the primary fundamental of the inner life that man must know himself, that is, he must know the laws of his own being.

When we begin to analyze, we find that most of us are in the real sense of the expression "non-entities," not non-entities in the ordinary sense in which perhaps the world uses that word, more or less contemptuously, but non-entities in the sense that we are no entity. This might sound to you who are students of Theosophy somewhat strange, that we who talk of monads and egos, and higher and lower selves, are no entities. But it is true; when we begin to analyze, we find that most of us are non-entities; that we do not find ourselves. Because there is no Self or Entity to find! Unless the kingdom of the Self is taken by violence, and he is compelled to reveal himself, we shall find that we are, each one of us, a bundle of non-entities, a fact that we ought to note carefully if we want to progress.

Something else we find: by the help of all the varied processes of life, as individual beings, we are passing, or are endeavouring to pass, from a state of non-entity to a state of entity. Everyone is making an effort to realize it. We find that we have nothing tangible on which we can put our finger and say "this is I"; but we are continuously finding that behind or beyond the bundle of non-entities there is somewhere an "I." We begin to analyze this "I" which instinctively to us is the law of our being. When we become deliberate in our search and analysis, when we become intellectually honest with ourselves, when we begin to think for ourselves and put a stop to thinking by proxy, which has been going on all the time, and when we think earnestly and sincerely, our search

yields a result. What do we find?

We find that there are three beings in us, each yet to be sought and found; each yet to be looked for and recognized. Unless an analysis of our complex nature is undertaken and the law of beings in us found, spiritual progress is not possible. The laws which govern the life of Being can be understood only when the law of beings in us is grasped. The entity reveals himself when the non-entities are seen and overcome.

First, then, we find that there are ghosts of dead selves in us; and that we continuously identify ourselves with them; the ghosts of the selves which we were, but which we no more are. Thus in a very real sense we live in a ghost world. People are very anxious in the Theosophical Society to know what the astral plane is like; but there is a very real kind of astral plane which must first be investigated. The astral world of our solar system can be found; but to investigate into the nature of this ghost world in which we are living, the world which is peopled by many ghosts of our own dead selves, that is a very important thing for us. Each one identifies himself with his dead selves of long ago, and the real Self cannot make himself manifest when this identification continues.

And these ghosts, where do they live? In the graveyard of the body. "What art thou? — A little soul carrying a corpse," said the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. That is why our physical bodies live by rules and laws which are dictated to them from without. Our bodies are dead, and kept alive by artificial, mechanical processes. Civilizations have been killing them, and the task is not yet accomplished; our modern doctors with their serums and vaccines are achieving it as fast as they can!

First, then, we find dead selves — ghosts in graveyards.

Next, we find that there is a living self in us, one which we can catch hold of. But there is this peculiarity about it — it is dying. This is very disconcerting when for the first time we experience the phenomenon. This living self which is dying is a very fascinating entity; it is a reality and an illusion; it reveals itself as an entity, and, before we realize it as such, it is a ghost; it is elusive for it is becoming, and by the time it has become it is dead; it is an entity and yet not one entity; it is always changing, never stable, and yet is stable — from childhood to maturity and old age, from birth through life to death. It unites all our experiences, connects all our actions, is the basis of all we call life, and even is there in what we call dreams. It is there and yet not there.

And this too belongs to our body; but, when this self is active, the body is no more a tomb, but, by turns, obeys its mood and becomes a garden of pleasure, a desert of loneliness, a prison-house of pain and suffering. Through all three we contact the present — the illusion of Time. "Even this shall pass away" is the perpetual slogan this self habitually uses.

That, then, is the next constituent in our make-up, of which we should take note before we can advance further.

Then we go a little deeper. Our inspirations and our aspirations, our yearning and our quest, in the midst of death as also of change, enable us, if we will, to come upon the third Self in us, a Being in hiding. This is the Sleeping Self, and the pursuit of its existence reveals the fact that it is beginning to wake. It is willing to be coaxed into a condition of awakening.

This also belongs to our body; but, when this sleeping-waking Self works in it, it is like the Night — silent and dark and mysterious — but the star-chimes are heard. It keeps vigil to catch the whispering Voice of the Great Sleeper.

We find that there is nothing more in us than these three Beings: the ghosts of our dead selves; the living self that is dying; and the sleeping self that is trying to awake. This is the condition of most of us who belong to what is called the civilized human race.

We are living in three worlds. Recognize in you these three factors of consciousness which you call "I" and which build three worlds to live in. You live in three worlds. "Yes," you say, "but we know them — physical, astral and mental." No, we do not live in those worlds; we do not even live in one of them fully. With the help of the five senses we contact only a portion of the physical world. We contact a meagre portion of the astral world with the help of our immature and uncultured emotions. How much do we contact of that mind-world which lies beyond the astral?

But we do contact in a very real sense three other worlds. There is, first, the world in which these dead selves of ours exist, the ghost world, the world of the past in time. All that has to do with our own dead selves has to do with the past, and there is little that is tangible in it; it may be called the world of the past. Secondly, we live in the world of the present, a very interesting world, full of illusions, but peopled by what to us is the only reality, because we can contact it — the self which is dying. Then the third, the world of the future, a devachanic condition. It is the world of the Sleeper who is yet to wake. He lives in the Heaven of his own making.

Individual progress means that by some process that future world should be transformed into the present world. Spiritual progress means the transmutation of the future into the present — but, herein lies the mystery, that new present must be of a nature that cannot pass into the past.<sup>1</sup> When the Sleeping Self becomes awake, it must be endowed with the Virtue of Immortality — the self must become the Self, the present must become the Living Present, the body must neither be the garden of

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the statement in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Before thou takest thy first step, learn to discern the real from the false, the ever-fleeting from the everlasting. Learn above all to separate Head-learning from Soul-wisdom, the 'Eye' from the 'Heart' doctrine. Yea, ignorance is like unto a closed and airless vessel; the soul a bird shut up within. It warbles not, nor can it stir a feather; but the songster mute and torpid sits, and of exhaustion dies."

pleasure, the desert of loneliness, nor the prison-house of pain but the Temple of the Living God. The sleeping star must not sing to the stillness of the Night, but its silver points, holding the angelic radiance of its Being, must incarnate into the Temple of the body. The illusion of time must vanish, and the Reality of the Eternal Now be precipitated. Therefore the Sleeping Self, in the process of descending into the graveyard, must come enriched with the mysterious Power of Youth. He must not come, like his many predecessors, a mortal, but an Immortal Lord. That Sleeping Self generally awakes looking behind to the Past, and is the Epimetheus; he must awake with his Fiery Eye turned to the Eternal, a true Prometheus.

To build the Bridge between the Heavenly Home of the Immortal Lord and the graveyard transformed into the Temple, is the work of the spiritual aspirant. The Path is the Path of Balance, the Path of Equipoise, the Middle Path — named in a dozen ways and misunderstood in a hundred.

That, then, is the conclusion we come to. We have three beings in us; we live in three worlds; and there is a definite thing to be done if individual progress is to be made. When we identify ourselves with our ghosts, we live in the world of the past, and this we continuously do. We do not live even in the world of the present; when we make plans for the hereafter or the morrow, we do it continuously in terms of the past. We plan in terms of that which is dead or that which is dying. But it is the *eternal* aspect of the present which makes that present the Great Reality, and the world of the present the world of Truth.

This, then, is the first great fundamental principle of the spiritual life. How far have we strayed away when we talk of going on to the astral plane, becoming invisible helpers, making progress by treading the "path of discipleship" and getting "Initiations," and so on and so forth! Did not H.P.B. affirm that the Initiator of the Initiates is within us? How have some found the Self? By self-effort, by self-practice. And it is the individual effort which brings forth help. From which source? From the Source from which all inspiration comes, the World of the Masters.

The spiritual world is not somewhere far away, but within us. When the three worlds of the past, the present and the future merge into the World of the Eternal Now; when the dead selves are resurrected, when the dying self is made to live, when the sleeping self becomes endowed with immortality in the process of awakening; then the graveyard becomes the Temple, and Man, as an incarnated entity, lives in this great World of Reality.

Therefore, to make entity out of non-entity is the process. Recognize the fact that there is an Entity standing somewhere on the threshold. We have read of "dwellers on the threshold," and we attire them in unattractive and even gruesome garbs; but there is a Dweller on the Threshold of the Heavenly World for each one of us — a Radiant Being of Power

which is Peace and of Wisdom which is Love.

This world of Maha-Maya — Great Illusion — where past and present and future abide; this enemy of the Self — dead, dying, asleep, each engaged in the struggle for existence, bound by the laws of division of Mara's creation — these two are one. We are dead, and therefore everything only seems; let us live, and the world will be the World of Reality. God is not in our heaven and all is not right with us when the eternal change fashions eternal pain. God will be on earth, and all will be right with our world, when we live by the Power of the Eternal Watcher within us.

Seek for the Self — the Entity, the Inner Ruler, the Immortal God within you, which *is* you. The Masters teach him, on him Their blessings rest, into him Their inspiration is poured. Seek for Them in the World of the Ego, in the sphere of the Self. Advises *The Voice of the Silence*, "Seek not for thy Guru in those mayavic regions" — the worlds of the past, the present and the future. Follow the one true Path of Search for your own Self, all other Paths are false. Know, and do not only believe; stand up, and do not lean on others; seek for the Bread of Life and do not ask to be fed.

H.P.B.'s words come to mind: "Through joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, the soul comes to a knowledge of itself; then *begins* the task of learning the laws of life, that the discords may be resolved, and the harmony be restored."

Kindle the Fire of the Self in the Temple of the Heart, and worship it in the Silence of Reality.

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It is not necessary to be conscious of the progress one has made. In these days we are too prone to wish to know everything all at once, especially in relation to ourselves. It may be desirable and encouraging to be thus conscious, but it is not necessary. We make a good deal of progress in our inner, hidden life of which we are not at all conscious. We do not know of it until some later life. It is best to go on with duty, and to refrain from trying to take stock and measuring of progress. All of our progress is in the inner nature, and not in the physical where lives the brain. The apparent physical progress is evanescent. It is ended when the body dies, at which time, if the inner man has not been allowed to guide us, the natural record against us will be a cipher, or "failure."

Let us, then, extend help to all who come our way. This will be true progress; the veils that come over our souls fall away when we work for others.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

If thou would'st have that stream of hard-earn'd knowledge, of Wisdom heaven-born, remain sweet running waters, thou should'st not leave it to become a stagnant pond.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

In "Some Reflections on the Asking of Questions," published in the November 1958 issue of this Magazine, a passage was quoted from the address inaugurating a series of lectures delivered in 1913-14 by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch as King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge, a series since published under the title *On The Art of Writing*. In this passage it was stated:—

... in studying any work of genius we should begin by taking it *absolutely*; that is to say, with minds intent on discovering just what the author's mind intended . . . . We should lay our minds open to what he wishes to tell, and if what he has to tell be noble and high and beautiful, we should surrender and let soak our minds in it.

At the close of his last address he spoke these most Theosophical words which, in pursuit of our present purpose, we quote in full:—

It [style] comes of endeavouring to understand others, of thinking for them rather than for yourself — of thinking, that is, with the heart as well as the head. It gives rather than receives; it is nobly careless of thanks or applause, not being fed by these but rather sustained and continually refreshed by an inward loyalty to the best. Yet, like "character" it has its altar within; to that retires for counsel, from that fetches its illumination, to ray outwards.

These words without a single alteration are applicable to the art of living. That is significant. The word, or logos, is a symbol of the creative deity and the mouth is the organ of the word. Readers may like to compare the two passages from Quiller-Couch with two articles on "Listening and Speaking" in the September and October numbers of Volume VII of this Magazine. Listening symbolizes the meaning of the first passage; speaking, of the second. To speak or to write is to communicate, and to communicate with a human heart at that point at which it is open to eternity we must learn to listen to the voice of eternity, first in the mouth of the true geniuses and then as it sounds in our own hearts.

The U.L.T. needs speakers on its platforms. THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT and *Theosophy* need writers for their pages. Few of us will think of ourselves as natural speakers and writers. Yet, in a way, we err in this. All of us have natural speech, must speak. All of us have natural powers of communication, must communicate to others. When we are enthusiastic, or when we are angry or depressed, our words are eloquent of our feelings. When the nature and intensity of one's convictions and interests lift one out of the narrow circle of self-interest, almost anyone can hold the attention of another. Almost any one of us, if his The-

osophical convictions be deep and true, can learn to hold the attention of an audience or of the readers.

The U.L.T. needs speakers and writers through whom Theosophy can be communicated to others. But Theosophy is not to be communicated through words alone but like fire which springs up spontaneously in a new place. Unless thoughts, feelings and actions feed the fire within, we cannot communicate Theosophy. When they do, words, spoken or written, will no longer be the only means through which Theosophy can be communicated, through which a new fire can be lighted in other hearts. It will leap through a gesture, a glance, in ways not known to us. The fire of conviction of and enthusiasm for Theosophical ideas comes before verbal facility. An inner preoccupation with these ideas, coupled with a broad sympathy for and understanding of others, comes before verbal facility. Verbal facility will come when the desire to communicate Theosophy, arising spontaneously out of conviction, enthusiasm and sympathy, is supported by a steadfast and self-effacing discipline of our habits of speech and writing.

In the opening article in the March 1957 issue of this Magazine occurred these words: "...to build by imagination the feeling of loving service of mankind." They go to the heart of the matter because before the pure knowledge and true compassion which is our higher Self can enter into the temple of our inner being the latter has to be reconstructed brick by brick. This renovation has to be carried out in every corner, but we are considering the quite large area of our platform work and work for our magazines.

Let us suppose that we are asked to give the Three Fundamental Propositions. While no doubt we accept willingly, perhaps we cannot help other feelings and thoughts accompanying that acceptance, which have been established by habit. We feel reluctant to make yet another effort to present them in a way which we think will interest the class. It will seem a meaningless repetition. We feel sure that the class will be bored. A proper grasp of the Propositions is beyond our feeble understanding. The whole act of giving the Propositions has to be recreated through self-effacement, a different mental approach to the act itself and a re-visualization of the act, and through deliberate attention to detail. It is a re-creation which will not be achieved quickly or easily.

Forget self. Memorize neither the words nor the sequence of ideas. Let soak the mind in the ideas. Visualize the cycles of time, the pilgrimage of the soul, the unity of all, as realities. Memorization and mental analysis are useless except as adjuncts and aids to the direct comprehension of ideas. Develop interiorly the attitude of a servant but do not think that you are giving service. You are receiving an opportunity and a privilege. Do not formulate the needs of your fellows in too abstract terms, but, through your own hunger for spiritual knowledge and insight, feel as well as know their hunger. Through the satisfaction you find in the ancient truths, know the satisfaction that they can find. So

will light enter the sanctuary and occupy it, but not yet will our task be done. The light must be rayed out. All that we have won must be used for the purpose of giving or imparting to others. Then only will our knowledge be confirmed; then only will our individual life be fulfilled; then only will our unity with others be consummated.

That raying out is the logos, the outer expression of inner ideation. Be confident that if you have lived any part of the philosophy, or if you have pondered deeply any of its teachings, then in speaking or writing from that basis you must make a contribution to the life of the U.L.T. which it is not within the power of any other student, however gifted, to make. But if you give, you also receive. You receive the opportunity to learn the true art of communication which the U.L.T. platform and the magazines afford. When that art is mastered you will be "nobly careless of thanks or applause." Where else will you find a policy and an attitude on the part of fellow students so conducive to such carelessness?

If, however, the art of communication comes of endeavouring to understand others, of thinking for them rather than for yourself, of thinking with the heart as well as with the head, do not let your endeavours wait upon your mastery of these. Speak up. Speak clearly. Speak with vigour and conviction. Attend to the simple rules of writing given by Quiller-Couch and others, such as: Be accurate, perspicuous, persuasive and to the point. Prefer the concrete word to the abstract. Prefer the direct word to circumlocution. Let adjectives be few and well chosen. So shall your words bestir others and bestir the life in that which gave them life.

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The pupils of the Tendai school used to study meditation before Zen entered Japan. Four of them who were intimate friends promised one another to observe seven days of silence.

On the first day all were silent. Their meditation had begun auspiciously, but when night came and the oil lamps were growing dim one of the pupils could not help exclaiming to a servant: "Fix those lamps."

The second pupil was surprised to hear the first one talk. "We are not supposed to say a word," he remarked.

"You two are stupid. Why did you talk?" asked the third.

"I am the only one who has not talked," concluded the fourth pupil.

—From *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*, compiled by PAUL REPS  
(Charles E. Tuttle Company, Vermont, U.S.A.)

## MAN'S SEVEN PRINCIPLES

### THE ASTRAL BODY

To destroy, for oneself, materialistic preconceptions as to the nature of physical matter and the physical body is a progressive move; for it opens up the mind to the teaching about the astral body. And, following upon that, it brings within the range of credibility the idea that Life, which exists in organized forms, may be experienced without a physical body — thus nullifying the awful finality of death and suggesting certain possibilities for the hours when the physical body sleeps. At this stage a student feels that a new world-panorama has opened before his mind's eye.

In the world that lies beyond the limits of physical sense perception, the astral body plays an important part. It is the vehicle of the Life Principle, called *Prana*; in this capacity it acts like a copper wire conducting electricity, or like a magnet whose potency is rendered active when the electric current is passed through it. The latter simile is particularly apt, when we learn that Cohesion is the name given to that force by which the astral body draws to it and holds the molecules of physical matter. Thus a general framework of relationships may be glimpsed: the physical body depending on the astral body, and the latter on the energizing Life Force, *Prana*.

The matter of which the astral body is composed is

of very fine texture as compared with the visible body, and has a great tensile strength, so that it changes but little during a lifetime, while the physical alters every moment. And not only has it this immense strength but at the same time possesses an elasticity permitting its extension to a considerable distance. It is flexible, plastic, extensible, and strong. The matter of which it is composed is electrical and magnetic in its essence, and is just what the whole world was composed of in the dim past when the processes of evolution had not yet arrived at the point of producing the material body for man. But it is not raw or crude matter. Having been through a vast period of evolution and undergone purifying processes of an incalculable number, its nature has been refined to a degree far beyond the gross physical elements we see and touch with the physical eye and hand. (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, 2nd Indian ed., pp. 42-3)

The modern scientific pronouncement, coming just before the birth of the 20th century, that the atomic structure of "hard" matter is based upon "particles" or "waves" of electricity, partially confirms the above statement and strengthens the student's belief in the trustworthiness of ancient knowledge.

The astral body is the guiding model for the physical one, and all the other kingdoms have the same astral model. Vegetables, minerals, and animals have the ethereal double, and this theory is the only one which will

answer the question how it is that the seed produces its own kind and all sentient beings bring forth their like. (*Ocean*, p. 43)

Perfect in shape, before the birth of the child, the astral gradually expands in size *pari passu* with the normal growth of the physical body, until the latter reaches its full maturity. Its action, in this, is like that of a microfilm which may be enlarged to any given size without impairing the interrelationship of its parts.

... the presence of the ethereal design body will explain how the form grows into shape, how the eyes push themselves out from within to the surface of the face, and many other mysterious matters in embryology which are passed over by medical men with a description but with no explanation. (*Ocean*, p. 44)

This observation was borne out by the statement of Professor E. W. Sinnott, who, evidently with full knowledge of the modern "gene" theories, stated in 1939: "An understanding of how these units [cells] are built into the fabric of an organism is the task for the hundred years that are to come."

A significant development in modern biological research, from this point of view, is to be found in the published results of four years of specialized work done by Drs. H. S. Burr and F. S. C. Northrop of Yale University. The following excerpts are from a report in *The New York Times*:—

There exists in the bodies of living things an electrical architect who moulds and fashions the individual after a specific predetermined pattern, and remains within the body from the pre-embryonic stages until death. The individual myriads of cells of which the body is made, excepting the brain cells, grow old and die, to be replaced by other cells, but the electrical architect remains the only constant throughout life, building the new cells and organizing them after the same pattern of the original cells, and thus, in a literal sense, constantly recreating the body. . . . death comes to the individual after the electrical architect within him ceases to function. . . . The electrical architect promises a new approach to the understanding of the nature of life and the living processes. It indicates that each living organism possesses an electro-dynamic field. . . . This electric field, having its own pattern, fashions all the protoplasmic clay of life that comes within its sphere of influence after its image, thus personifying itself in the living flesh as the sculptor personifies his ideas in stone.

Were this concept generally accepted, Professor Sinnott's estimate of 100 years' research being required to achieve this very result would no longer apply. And when science overcomes its materialistic prejudices and acknowledges the presence of the Ego, the real Man, who uses the astral and physical bodies, as is taught by Theosophy, the truth on the subject will be gradually established in the popular mind.

The Theosophical teaching continues with a further description of

the astral body:—

In it are the sight, hearing, power to smell, and the sense of touch. It has a complete system of nerves and arteries of its own for the conveyance of the astral fluid which is to that body as our blood is to the physical. . . . There are located the subconscious perception and the latent memory. . . . (*Ocean*, p. 45)

The Theosophical teachings on the astral body, the astral senses and the astral light — a form of astral matter existing round and about this earth — explain most instances of ordinary clairvoyance, clairaudience and “apparitions.” And, by giving the rationale thereof, they remove man’s fear of the unknown which makes him afraid to see a “ghost.”

The idea of an inner, subtle body was wide-spread among the peoples of antiquity. J. T. Addison in his *Life Beyond Death* says:—

Apart from the refinements of philosophers and theologians, we find the popular beliefs of all races and of all ages surprisingly alike. Wherever we turn — to Bantu Africa, to the Indians of North America, to the pages of Homer and Dante, or to the folklore of China and Italy and Scotland — everywhere we find the soul regarded as a kind of airy, filmy double of the body.

The astral or design body is named in Sanskrit *Linga Sharira*. The Hindu term *bhuta* describes what it becomes after the death of the physical form, when released from the mind’s control. The ancient Egyptians called the astral form or shadow *Khaba*. “The Soul and the Form when descending on Earth put on an earthy garment,” says the *Zohar*. In reading the Greek teachings, we should note what H.P.B. says in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 401 fn.):—

By the word *soul*, neither Demokritus nor the other philosophers understood the *nous* or *pneuma*, the divine *immaterial* soul, but the *psyche*, or astral body; that which Plato always terms the second *mortal* soul.

In more recent times we meet it in the “perisprit” of the Kardecists and the “spirit-form” of the Spiritualists.

Turning now to another characteristic of the astral body, we learn that physical factors, such as fire, water, acid, the surgeon’s knife, or stone or steel, are unable to injure it, which explains why men have said that they can still feel, as it were, an amputated limb.

But the human will may exercise a sovereign power over this inner form and Mr. Judge wrote of this when describing certain effects that follow gradually upon successful efforts at the culture of concentration (see *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 18*). One of the results of such a practice is gradually to withdraw the astral from its intimate association with the physical body. As he describes it, the astral lies within the physical like the fibres of a mango which are entangled in its soft pulp. But, by those who know how, the astral may be withdrawn, gradually, bit by bit, or

“fibre by fibre,” from its physical encasement. Since, however, “behind will stands desire,” the domination of an emotion such as anger temporarily destroys any positive results previously realized and sends the “fibres” back into their physical encasement. Viewing constructively this example of the causal or creative relationship that exists between the human mind and the astral body should aid one in grasping the possibility of building a permanent astral.

It is also necessary to understand the part played by the astral body in bringing to the Ego, at each new birth, the exact Karmic results of its past actions and choices. Let us clarify this point. The acquired tendencies of any one life persist as a Karmic basis for a future life. The general Western ideas regarding the formation of character are hazy and pointless, because mental “things” have no real existence for a culture that considers mind as merely the end-product of neural activity. Theosophy teaches, however, that “every thought combines instantly with one of the elemental forces of nature, becoming to that extent an entity which will endure in accordance with the strength of the thought as it leaves the brain” (*Ocean*, pp. 108-9). These entities, according to their nature, pertain to the Kamic principle or the astral man or the physical body, or to other parts. They are named *skandhas* — well known in Eastern philosophy. As these make up the personal man and are inseparably connected with the being who evolved them, we can perceive that the circle of cause and effect is complete. Here is a process in nature that subserves the moral laws of justice and responsibility, with exactitude and impersonality.

Returning now to a consideration of the permanent astral: Where personal desires direct man's choice, new combinations of *skandhas* form a new astral body for each life. But, when the Ego begins to long for the free spaces of the spiritual life, the quality of his thought and desire — propelling the will — becomes reflected in an aspect of the astral body that is finer, and can exist without change from life to life. Using this highly refined form which is immune to the cyclic disintegration of the grosser astral substance, the Ego ultimately achieves an existence of conscious immortality in Spirit, in full possession of all its faculties.

The student will now wish (*a*) to examine the significance of this “new” knowledge, and (*b*) to compare with it the modern scientific discoveries on matters relating to the subject:—

(*a*) The inquiring mind instinctively demands an explanation of the “mechanics” whereby man's lives on earth are linked together; and also of whence come each individual's traits of character, his type of body (healthy or unhealthy, ugly or beautiful) and his innate talents. To a large extent, a knowledge of the astral body and the *skandhas* will supply the answer to the above questions. Not only this, but it will also show the Law of Justice prevailing everywhere, and so give us a logical and ethical basis for our future actions. It does away with reliance on such con-

traditions as “the laws of chance” or “the calculation of probabilities.”

(b) In *The Secret Doctrine* (II. 149) H. P. Blavatsky states:—

*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.*

Already the materialistic concepts of biology, psychology and physics are being undermined by recent discoveries and some scientists are gradually beginning to admit the presence of an invisible, intangible “something” that is suspiciously like the astral body of the Theosophic teachings.

Truly, a study of the astral body and the astral world opens the door to a new, vitalizing vision of Man, Nature and the Universe.

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The most distressing news comes from New Delhi that the Government of India will make its first attempt at family planning on a national scale this year. The Government will distribute free contraceptives through primary health centres and medical institutions, open family-planning clinics, organize orientation camps and camps for training in population control, and stimulate research on new methods of birth control. The Family Planning Board, which met in New Delhi recently, has recommended a tentative Government provision of one crore rupees to implement the family planning programme in 1959-60.

It is heartening to find such an influential and discerning man as Acharya Vinoba Bhave describing artificial means of birth control as being the result of “shallow thinking.” He is reported to have said (*The Times of India*, November 17th) that official efforts in this direction would prove injurious to the community. “This is a question in which the spiritual, moral, economic, social and other aspects in the development of humanity are involved,” he added. But his appears to be now almost entirely a voice crying in the wilderness.

Gandhiji’s views on this matter have been put aside or forgotten. Still we hear it repeated that he is the Father of the Nation! Would that as many paid heed to his advice and admonitions as lay wreaths and flowers upon the resting place of his ashes!

The impoverished imagination of modern social science, which can conceive of no other solution to population problems than denying birth to egos seeking the experience of life on earth, is indeed a matter to be deplored. The Theosophical teaching on this subject, as brought out in the article “A Social Cancer — Artificial Birth Control,” in our issue for November 1958, is quite clear. An interference with the laws of nature is contrary to all true principles of morality, and the Karmic effects of the unwitting abuse of the divine power of creation will work to the detriment of the race.

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## FOUR GREAT IDEAS

*Light on the Path* is unique; it is the handbook of the would-be practitioner of the spiritual life in ordinary day-to-day living. It is a guide and a friend in our passage through life, once we begin to realize, however dimly, what that passage is for and how it is affected by our fellow travellers.

*The Voice of the Silence* deals with ourselves in our pursuit of self-knowledge and shows us the goal shining through the heavy task with ever-increasing splendour, urging us on and on. The *Bhagavad-Gita* takes us through the mental avenues of philosophy, giving us a basis for action. All the while the glorious Great Spirit shines and we are brought back again and again to It, keeping alive the memory of It in our minds so that Its glory illumines our own hearts as we think on It. Patanjali gives us the steps to the control of the mind as we pass through life. But it is when we come to the daily routine that we find *Light on the Path* invaluable — it is, indeed, “Light on the Path.” It is written in so simple a way; it is simplicity itself. But this very simplicity is the door to its complexity as we advance.

Let us look at a few of the points it gives us:—

*Regard earnestly all the life that surrounds you.* How shall we learn to live as we should? What is it that makes the difference between the man of the world, the man of religion and the man of Spirit? The first regards earnestly the life around him, as a person regarding persons, not as something which will enable him to understand life. The second looks at life and divides it into good and bad, and, in the case of the truly religious man, does all he can to improve his own life, and works for the salvation of the sinner. The man of Spirit looks at all life from a different point of view. Life is to him a school, a hard school or a pleasurable escapade which ends in sorrow — death, which is the loss of all. The man of Spirit sees himself and his fellow man as passing through life, gaining or losing sight of its purpose, setting up the causes for years of misery, or becoming little by little more able to see and to help. He views life not only from the human angle but from all aspects, and a great reverence for all life rises within him. His own life becomes centred in understanding others and doing what he can to help. He is less concerned with what happens to him than with his growing understanding of life. Therefore he begins to regard *earnestly* all life. So much of our regard of life is cursory! We neither look nor listen but skim over, get wrong impressions, do wrong actions and fail to learn how to deal with people or circumstances. We lose sight of the relationships between all aspects of life.

*Learn to look intelligently into the hearts of men.* It is from the heart that all men move; therefore a man's life shows us on what his heart is set and what kind of a heart he has. The heart stands not only for

emotion but also for devotion, and, when intelligent, for understanding—the union of Manas and Buddhi. To look *intelligently* into the hearts of men is what we are advised to do. But are we ourselves intelligent enough? We have to *learn* to look intelligently. Learning means practice, and that means trying over and over again. But a start must first be made. We must try to understand, try to be intelligent.

This is often taken to mean at first that we should become critical of others. We think we see what people are really like; we see the faults which express themselves in action and criticize them, but more often we fail to see the good points, as they do not irritate us! Good qualities flower out of the bad which have been conquered. They are like the rose, cool to the touch, colourful and with a pleasing perfume; but to reach to the rose we must pass up the stem with its thorns. If we stay on the stem we get pricked and we never reach the rose. By learning to look intelligently into the hearts of men we shall see the rose if we can remain unaffected by the thorns. It is of course right from one point of view that we should take the good for granted, for it is part of the heart of the universe, universal in its scope. Nevertheless we have to go through the path of finding the good first, so that our love of criticism can be seen for what it is — a guide to our own heart. Hence we are told:—

*Regard most earnestly your own heart.* It is with our heart, intelligent as we are trying to make it, that we regard others; so our regard will be coloured by our own heart. It is through our own heart that will come the light that will illuminate life. So to cleanse our own heart is our task, and to do so we ask ourselves many questions. Some of these are: Why do I waste time talking about myself and my life, centring my talk on the personality and its trials? Why do I waste time talking about others and their lives, as persons? Why do I give opinions on others or on the ideas of others — my ideas *versus* theirs? How often do I feel, as regards others, that *that* trait is fine, *that* capacity good, *that* the best side? One good way of cleansing our own heart is to cleanse our speech, both the speech of spoken words and the inner words of the brain-mind. Therefore we are next told:—

*Speech comes only with knowledge.* Is not this why we are so often advised to be quiet, to stop the tongue? The kind of speech we indulge in is often certainly not based on knowledge, and the “empty-headed” talk a lot! Those who crave sympathy talk a lot. Sometimes it is a disease of the psychic nature, showing in the nervous system. When the winds blow and the thunder booms and the rain falls with a terrific noise we say that Nature is violent, its peace has gone. So with ourselves as talkers. Self-centred talk is the silencer of the Spirit in man and causes storms of sound on the inner planes. If we watched and looked and spoke only with knowledge, then, indeed, we should be using speech for its right purpose — the creation of good.

Our souls are all of one nature. Let us try to link up with other souls and not with personalities which come and go.

If we can realize more and more that this life is a landmark in a long series of lives, a college course, the result of which will be success or failure causing results in other lives; if the soul begins to move us and not the personality; if we know that the personality has no rights, only opportunities and responsibilities; that we are all, as personalities, thrown together in one Work; if we can all have one aim, one purpose, as well as one teaching, then this life, the threshold to future lives, will bring its grand fruition.

Let us begin to learn how to regard all life, to see intelligently into all hearts, including our own. Then our life will be our gift to others. Our speech will be the words of the Great Teachers, for it is through those very words of Theirs that we shall have gained the power to speak.

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Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, noted demographer and Director of the Indian Institute for Population Studies, addressing a gathering at Hong Kong University, said that the vasectomy (sterilization) project was about to be implemented in Madras (*The Times of India*, November 15th). He unfolded a preposterous scheme under which any male in Madras State would be given a bonus of Rs. 100 if he underwent sterilization. The person undergoing the surgical operation should have two or more children and his income should be Rs. 200 or less per month. Surgery would be free.

Dr. Chandrasekhar, who earned much opprobrium in India recently for his assertion that the surplus cattle of the country should be killed, has been deputed by the Government of India to China to make a study of that country's population problem.

To every thoughtful person, this way of solving the population problem needs must seem revolting. Artificial sterilization is an iniquity that has been practised to the detriment of mankind from time to time down the ages. It has been repeatedly condemned in Theosophical journals. Sterilization of the feeble-minded and of criminals, based on the misinformation spread by the pseudo-scientific cult of eugenics, has now led to the sterilization of the healthy and the normal, by bribing them! The *Kali Yuga* has the world fast in its materialistic grip. Students of Theosophy should do all in their power to check dangerous propaganda in favour of such a practice based on the general misconception that children are produced alone through the union of the sexes. Is not the only effective solution to many of our problems, including the population problem, contained in the word — self-control?

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## THE POWER OF THE EYE

The remark by "E. J. G." (the initials of the Editor of *Tomorrow*) in reviewing a few months ago *The Evil Eye*, by Edward S. Gifford, Jr., that "superstitions regarding the power of the eye may be set aside as mere curiosities" seems surprising in a journal usually so commendably open-minded on matters superphysical. The power of the eye is a fact, however many superstitions may have gathered round it.

Irrespective of the merits or shortcomings of the book considered in that review entitled "The Diabolic Eye," the subject merits deeper consideration, related as it is to that of magnetism. On this vast subject Theosophy offers a wealth of information, but we shall here confine our consideration to a few aspects of its working in and upon man, and especially to its expression through the eye, which Madame Blavatsky well describes as the most occult of all our outer organs.

The ancients taught that the astral light — *Akasha* — is projected from the eyes, the thumbs and the palms of the hands. The pure life-giving Light, or magnetic fluid, is called in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 76 fn.) "Od," while "Ob" is the name given to "the messenger of death used by the sorcerers, the nefarious evil fluid." (Compare "Obeah," the designation of sorcerers and sorceresses and black magicians of Africa and the West Indies.)

The "evil eye" is as much a fact as is the blessing silently bestowed upon the fortunate individual on whom the peaceful eyes of Wisdom and Compassion rest. Madame Blavatsky explained in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 144) that the magnetic fluid might equally be employed for a good or an evil purpose. If for a good one, it is magic, if for an evil one, it is called sorcery. "The *jettatura*, or evil eye," she wrote, "is nothing but the direction of this invisible fluid, charged with malicious will and hatred, from one person to another, and sent out with the intention of harming him."

Our teachings explain also that in the astral light exist elementals and, among those attracted to a particular individual and which travel down his glance, their most convenient channel, there may be some which once were in the form of plant or animal which in a past life suffered at his hands. It makes no difference if in that prior incarnation the personality might, under that individual's Karma, have been mentally defective, or if today no memory of that earlier life exists in his brain consciousness. Once drawn again to him, they may attach themselves to any matter in which he engages, so that they may drag it down to disaster. Shall this have no effect upon the individuals on whom his glance rests, thus charged with a malignity which in this life he may not at all suspect?

Also the plastic power of imagination not under its possessor's control may work involuntarily and thus be unintentionally turned to bad uses. On p. 21 of the Second Volume of *Isis Unveiled* H.P.B. clearly indicates

that, without deliberately willing evil to an enemy, we may, by dwelling in thought upon his possible discomfiture or his meeting disaster, precipitate these on him, so far as his Karma permits.

Writing in *Lucifer* for December 1888, H.P.B. defines the power of the "evil eye" in terms that should give pause to many who congratulate themselves, perhaps justly, on being free of any trace of malevolence. For it is, she writes,

simply a great plastic power of thought, so great as to produce a current impregnated with the potentiality of every kind of misfortune and accident, which inoculates, or attaches itself to any person who comes within it. A *jettatore* (one with the evil eye) need not be even imaginative, or have evil intentions or wishes. He may be simply a person who is naturally fond of witnessing or reading about sensational scenes, such as murder, executions, accidents, etc., etc. He may be not even thinking of any of these at the moment his eye meets his future victim. But the currents have been produced and exist in his visual ray ready to spring into activity the instant they find suitable soil, like a seed fallen by the way and ready to sprout at the first opportunity. (*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, pp. 106-7)

In the light of this statement is it surprising that H.P.B. named as the first and most important step in occultism "to learn how to adapt your thoughts and ideas to your plastic potency"? Not only may we injure others by a morbid interest in sensational happenings. Also, by letting our thoughts dwell upon our apprehensions and visualizing the evils which we fear might precipitate, may we not be helping to bring about the very things or circumstances that we dread? How great, then, is our responsibility to control our thoughts, lest we unwittingly harm others and invite upon ourselves the evil Karma of thinkers who brood mischief!

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In our daily actions, even the smallest, whether we are conscious or not of the effect, we are Karmic agents. A single word of ours may have an influence for a lifetime upon another. It may cause once more the fire of passion to blaze up, or bring about a great change for good. We may be the means of another's being late for an appointment and thus save him from calamity or the reverse, and so on infinitely. . . .

H.P.B. held that there are many people in the world, engaged in its affairs, who are, without knowing it, Karmic agents in a special sense, and continually bring to others good and bad sudden effects which otherwise would have come slowly to pass, spread over many more days or years, and showing in a number of small events instead of in one.

—*The Path*, March 1892

# SCIENCE AND THE SECRET DOCTRINE

## I.—SPONTANEOUS GENERATION A DOCTRINE OF THEOSOPHY AND OF SCIENCE

The burden of this short article becomes evident from the title: modern science and ancient Theosophy now see almost eye to eye on the doctrine of spontaneous generation. A few years ago the spontaneous evolution of the simplest and earliest forms of biological life from complex chemical, but *non-biological*, molecules of matter would have been unacceptable to biochemistry or to biology; but this is not so today. As one wise scientist, Dr. Wendell M. Stanley, has put it (Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution, 1955):—

Mankind has undoubtedly wondered about the nature of the difference between living and nonliving things ever since the ability to think was acquired. . . . Over 2,000 years ago Aristotle suggested that nature makes so gradual a transition from the animate or living to the inanimate or nonliving that the boundary line between the two is doubtful and perhaps nonexistent.

H.P.B. wrote in 1888 (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 150-51):—

. . . should spontaneous generation be indeed proven impossible in our present world-period and actual conditions — which the occultists deny — still it would be no demonstration that it could not have taken place under different cosmic conditions, not only in the seas of the Laurentian period, but even on the then convulsed Earth. . . . If spontaneous generation has changed its methods now, owing perhaps to accumulated material on hand, so as to almost escape detection, it was in full swing in the genesis of terrestrial life.

She quotes in support (*S.D.*, II. 718-19) the opinion of a scientist of her day, one whom she calls “that Emperor of Materialists,” L. Buchner, who wrote (*Force and Matter*, 1855):—

Produced in the way of spontaneous generation . . . it is by the aid of intense natural forces and *endless periods of time* [that] there has progressively arisen that rich and infinitely modified organic world by which we are at present surrounded. . . . Spontaneous generation played, no doubt, *a more important part in the primeval epoch than at present; nor can it be denied that in this way beings of a higher organization were produced than now.*

This, she says, is also the claim of Occultism.

In *The Physics and Chemistry of Life* (a *Scientific American* book), in a chapter entitled “The Origin of Life,” as lucidly written as it is soundly presented, George Wald, a leading contemporary biologist, marshals recent evidence on the subject, derived mainly from the field of physical chemistry. He talks, almost Theosophically, of the opposing

forces of dissolution and integration operating constantly in most forms of matter, and shows how "spontaneous dissolution" is a more probable and more rapid process than "spontaneous synthesis." Nevertheless, the latter process would have to predominate if complex compounds or even the simplest type of organisms were to evolve. Professor Wald suggests "spontaneous architectonic tendencies" by which *intramolecular* dissolution is opposed by *intermolecular* aggregations of various kinds, and describes how, for instance in the case of proteins, the fully formed protein molecule displays much less tendency to disintegrate into its constituent amino acids than a smaller compound consisting of just two or three amino acids.

Aggregations of several such proteins can and do occur, and we are told that

such molecular aggregates, of various degrees of material and architectural complexity, are indispensable intermediates between molecules and organisms. We have no need to try to imagine the spontaneous formation of an organism by one grand collision of its component molecules. The whole process must be gradual. . . . Aggregates of various kinds interact with one another to form still larger and more complex structures. In this way we imagine the ascent, not by jumps or master strokes, but gradually, piecemeal, to the first living organisms.

One cannot help notice how this very modern scientific thinking is almost a harking back to ancient concepts on the subject, such as those mentioned in *The Secret Doctrine* (*vide supra*). Though it cannot be said that the formation of "animate" organisms from "inanimate" matter has by any means been *proved scientifically*, the theory has certainly come a long way since the time of Pasteur, when too literal an interpretation was assigned to that great bacteriologist's accurate observation that, in the laboratory, germs and microbes could only arise from a preceding generation of germs and microbes, and not from the broth on which they were grown.

Yet another contemporary scientific thinker, Dr. G. G. Simpson, has expressed views similar to those of Professor Wald. On the first page of his book, *The Meaning of Evolution*, he asks and answers:—

How did life arise? Again, the honest answer is that we do not know but that we have some good clues. . . . Current studies suggest that it would be no miracle, nor even a great statistical improbability, if living molecules appeared spontaneously under special conditions of surface waters rich in the carbon compounds that are the food and substance of life. And the occurrence of such waters at early stages of the planet's evolution is more probable than not. This is not to say that the origin of life was by chance or by supernatural intervention, but that it was in accordance with the grand, eternal physical laws of the universe.

Still more recent progress (published in the latest Annual Report of

the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.) in breaking down barriers between non-living molecules and living organisms is embodied in the "synthesis of one of the chemically highly complicated nucleic acids which forms an essential component of viruses and of genes, the units of heredity." The way now seems open, we are told, "to the actual laboratory synthesis of a structure having most of the properties of a living agent." This is a far cry, indeed, from the "scientific" dogmatism of just half a century ago when "dead matter" was so severely segregated from "living organisms."

Theosophy would add that all evolution, whether of forms on this earth or of worlds in the cosmos, goes on under law, and that this law of the physical world is no different from the moral law of cause and effect governing the present life and future unfoldment of man. To epitomize evolution in the beautiful words of the Kabalistic axiom: "A stone becomes a plant; a plant, a beast; a beast, a man; a man, a spirit; and the spirit, a god." Spontaneous generation or gradual evolution? But where is the difference?

## II.—SCIENCE AND THEOSOPHY ON THE AGE OF THE EARTH

Sincere scientists admit that they do not know the answer to the question: How old is life? — though they maintain that they have some interesting clues. Modern science, as can be seen from some recent publications, claims that "life can be no older than the earth."<sup>1</sup> It still believes in the Azoic age, the age in which it recognizes no trace of life. But Occultism

disposes of the so-called Azoic age of Science, for it shows that there never was a time when the Earth was without life upon it. Wherever there is an atom of matter, a particle or a molecule, even in its most gaseous condition, there is life in it, however latent and unconscious. (*S.D.*, I. 258)

Theosophy asserts that it is Life which caused the earth to come into existence; that Life "is a universally pervasive principle. It is the ocean in which the earth floats; it permeates the globe and every being and object on it" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, pp. 40-41).

As *The Secret Doctrine* maintains, life could not produce an inorganic atom, whether simple or complex, nor could life arise from inorganic molecules. Every physical point or atom is but the phenomenal expression of the noumenal, metaphysical point. The wondrous laws of matter spring from

*the transformation into energy of the supra-conscious thought of the Logos, infused, so to speak, into the objectivation of the latter out of potential latency in the One Reality.* (*S.D.*, II. 24)

<sup>1</sup> GEORGE GAYLORD SIMPSON: *The Meaning of Evolution* (A Mentor Book), p. 13.

Corresponding to Spirit, mind (or soul) and body in the human constitution, are the

three distinct Hosts, which, counted from the highest planes, are, firstly, "gods," or conscious, spiritual *Egos*; the intelligent architects, who work after the plan in the *Divine Mind*. Then come the Elementals, or *Monads*, who form collectively and unconsciously the grand Universal Mirrors of everything connected with their respective realms. Lastly, the atoms, or material molecules, which are informed in their turn by their *apperceptive* monads, just as every cell in a human body is so informed. (*S.D.*, I. 632)

Thus the evolution of the earth is not the result merely of physical laws, but of the work of "gods" and Monads.

At the time *The Secret Doctrine* was published (1888), organic evolution, or the "dawn of life" on earth, was traced back by geologists to only a hundred million years. H.P.B. asserted, on occult data, that the time which has elapsed since the first sedimentary deposits is 320 million years (*S.D.*, II. 710). The geological time scale of the present day takes the Cambrian period back to 505 million years.<sup>2</sup> H.P.B., in presenting the divergences between the scientific hypotheses of that day and the esoteric theory, on the question of the age of the globe and of man, said that

it is not impossible — nay, it is most likely — that further discoveries in geology and the finding of fossil remains of man will force science to confess that it is esoteric philosophy which is right after all, or, at any rate, nearer to the truth. (*S.D.*, II. 711)

Let us look into the progress that geology has made in this direction:—

... the study of the Earth's interior indicates that most of its body is still in a molten state, and that the "solid ground" ... is actually only a comparatively thin sheet floating on the surface of the molten magma.<sup>3</sup>

Theosophy corroborates what modern science recognizes, that the matter of the earth and of all things physical upon it was at one time either gaseous or molten, and that later it cooled and altered (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 66). It is now admitted that

a rough estimate of the rate of cooling and growth of the solid crust indicates that the cooling process must have begun several billion years ago.<sup>4</sup>

The same conclusion is arrived at by estimating the age of the rocks forming the crust of the earth:—

Measurements of the results of radioactivity in certain minerals have established that some rocks in the earth's crust are about 2,000,000,000 years old. There is evidence that even these astonishingly ancient rocks

<sup>2</sup> *The Meaning of Evolution*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> GEORGE GAMOW: *One Two Three . . . Infinity* (A Mentor Book), p. 280.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

were formed long after the planet earth came into existence. The whole age of the earth is probably on the order of 3,000,000,000 years. That we judge to be the *possible* span of life on the earth, although a billion years or more may have passed after the earth was formed and before life arose.<sup>5</sup>

What has Esoteric Philosophy to say on this? W. Q. Judge points out that "the real age of the world is asserted by Theosophy to be almost incalculable" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 22). There are, however, interesting clues given. Theosophy asserts that there have been, broadly speaking, ethereal, astral and physical periods of evolution. The evolution of "the very ethereal first matter" occupied between one and two billion years. The astral prototypes of the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms took some 300 million years to evolve. Then "still more material processes go forward for the production of the tangible kingdoms of nature, including man." This third stage covers over one and one-half billions of years. "And the number of solar years included in the present 'human' period is over eighteen millions of years" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 20).

Although the descriptions of the evolution of the earth as given by Theosophy and modern science are still divergent in many respects, on the question of the age of the earth the data and chronology of science are now coming nearer and nearer to those of Theosophy.

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In the last 300 years the progress of science has resulted in a fragmentation of knowledge into a series of compartments each of which can only be appreciated and understood by experts. . . . We are suspicious of all-embracing views of any kind. Limited horizons . . . are thought sufficient; a man should not concern himself with matters he does not have expert knowledge of. As a result the common ground held by people of different occupations has narrowed. . . . Western societies are uncertain of their aims, their beliefs, themselves. What is needed is a new integration of knowledge and belief . . . into a living faith which will again give people a feeling of wholeness. Perhaps, it is too soon for this to happen; and it may be that Western life will have to be eroded to its roots before it can be rebuilt.

—J. A. V. BUTLER in *Science and Human Life*

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<sup>5</sup> *The Meaning of Evolution*, p. 13.

## CAN STONES CARRY A CURSE?

Madame Blavatsky wrote: "There are occult properties in many . . . minerals, equally strange with that in the lodestone, which all practitioners of magic *must* know, and of which so-called exact science is wholly ignorant" (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 589). But can a stone carry a curse? The story of the 44½-carat blue Hope diamond, recently presented by a New York City jeweller to the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, is a lurid record, hard to ascribe wholly either to superstition or to that over-worked word, "coincidence."

*Newsweek* for November 17th traces it from 1642 when a French adventurer, Jean Baptiste Tavernier, took to France the stone from the Krishna River mines in India. Whether or not it had been torn from the forehead of an idol, as another source alleges, tragedy or great misfortune has befallen many of its possessors. These disasters have included being torn to pieces by wild dogs (Tavernier's fate), murder, suicide, fatal accident, destitution, and, in the case of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, death on the guillotine.

Mr. Judge states in one of the "Conversations on Occultism" published in *The Path* that in every case elementals have guard over hidden treasure, having "many and curious modes of causing further concealment" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 138). We are told, moreover, by Madame Blavatsky, that "by a determined concentration of the will an otherwise inert object may become imbued with protective or destructive power according to the purpose directing" (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 463).

Ample evidence has been put forward for the protective power of talismans "imbued by the influence of that greatest of all magnets, the human will, with a potency for good. . ." but a potency for ill can also be communicated to an object by a malevolent will. And some elemental beings are described as being "of horrible malignity." Attention may be invited to the short article, "A Bone That Scared a Knight," in our August 1937 issue, with its reference to the mysterious deaths of Lord Carnarvon and 14 others after the opening of the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen, and to the less spectacular case that gave the article its title. The events that followed the removal of a bone from an ancient Egyptian tomb would seem quite possibly ascribable to elemental guardians of the remains.

Even waiving the possibility that a curse might have been laid on the remover of the Hope diamond and its later owners, would not the association with it of so many disasters be cumulative in its influence? Psychometry — not as used in modern Western psychology but in the sense in which H.P.B. used the word, is the exercise by a certain class of sensitive persons of an ability to see again the scenes through which an object contacted has passed. It confirms her statement that "every occurrence . . . leaves its indelible impress upon physical nature" (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 182). The psychometer examining a specimen is brought

in contact with the current of the astral light that holds the pictures of the events associated with its history. Suggestion plays a far more important role than is generally recognized, and there is more truth than probably Poe realized when he penned in *Politian*, his unfinished drama, the following lines among others inspired by the ruins of the Colosseum at Rome:—

We are not impotent — we pallid stones.  
Not all our power is gone. . .  
Not all the memories that hang upon  
And cling about us as a garment. . . .

Is there no analogy between the possibility of suggestion by the associations clustering about an object, whether perceived by a sensitive or not, and H.P.B.'s warning that a "vibration in the air is sure to awaken corresponding powers, union with which produces good or bad results, as the case may be"?

But to what do the relatively few among the owners of the Hope diamond who have not been overtaken by disaster owe their exemption? To what but to their Karmic heritage and/or to their character and motives in the life in which the stone was theirs?

Will the public display of the stone in the Smithsonian Institution's Hall of Gems and Minerals serve any better purpose than to feed a morbid curiosity and possibly to spread its influence for harm?

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Our correspondent, in common with most modern scholars, completely ignores one chief factor. We allude to the experience, once so common among men, now so comparatively rare, of a world of real beings, whose abode is in the four elements, beings with probable though as yet ill defined powers, and a perceptible existence. We are sorry for those who will pity us for making this admission; but fact is fact, science or no science. The realization of this inner world of the *Elementals* dates back to the beginning of our race, and has been embalmed in the verse of poets and preserved in the religious and historical records of the world. Granted that the perception of phenomena developed nature-worship, yet, unless our materialistic friends admit that the range of these phenomena included experiences with the spirits of the elements and the higher and noble realities of Psychology, it would trouble them to account for the universality of belief in the various races of the Unseen Universe.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## REFLECTIONS ON THE GANDHIAN OUTLOOK

The first fundamental principle of the Gandhian outlook is universal unity and causation, human brotherhood. The actions of one react on the lives of all; the good or otherwise of society is inextricably bound up with the nature of the activities and strivings of individuals. The brotherhood of man, for Gandhiji, meant that we are inseparable from one another and that we cannot injure our neighbour without injuring ourselves. He said:—

I do not believe that an individual may gain spiritually and those that surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita*. I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent.

In *The Key to Theosophy* H.P.B. wrote:—

It is an occult law, moreover, that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. In the same way, no one can sin, nor suffer the effects of sin, alone. In reality there is no such thing as "Separateness."

The second fundamental principle of the Gandhian outlook is the supremacy of moral law and the necessity for purity of means in order to achieve righteous ends. Gandhiji's scrupulous regard for and insistence upon pure and moral means are not generally appreciated. People are more inclined to accept that the end justifies the means. It often happens that desirable or approved ends are sought to be achieved by morally doubtful means. Just as, in the past, religious dogmas and doctrines have been established by immoral means, so in recent years economic, political and social projects are sometimes sought to be implemented by means that are in direct contradiction to the good ends they may be designed to serve. Gandhiji wrote:—

They say "means are after all means." I would say "means are after all everything." As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. . . . Realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception.

The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.

The belief that the end justifies the means is untenable even scientifically. Every act must bring its appropriate results. The effects which can ensue from a cause must be inherent in that cause itself, or they could never make themselves felt — just as the appropriate plant issues from its seed and no other. It could not be otherwise, although it must be recognized that there may be a time-lag between a cause and its

manifestation in effects. There is also a relationship between a cause and the individual who experiences the effects.

The third fundamental principle of the Gandhian outlook is *Satyagraha*: truth and non-violence. By insisting on moral means Gandhiji did not imply that evil, injustice and tyranny were to be tolerated; humanity's problems would not be solved thus. He held that evil, injustice and tyranny must be resisted and eliminated, but not by employing hate, war and violence, which have not so far brought humanity any nearer to the goal of peace. Gandhiji wrote:—

It is my firm conviction that nothing enduring can be built upon violence. . . . Brute force has been the ruling factor in the world for thousands of years, and mankind has been reaping its bitter harvest all along, as he who runs may read. There is little hope of anything good coming out of it in the future. If light can come out of darkness, then alone can love emerge from hatred.

Gandhiji evolved the technique of resisting evil through the instrumentality of truth and non-violence. Injustice and tyranny persist and prosper because of the active or passive co-operation of the oppressed. Gandhiji taught and demonstrated a method of non-co-operation with evil which would bring about the elimination of evil without harming or harbouring hatred towards the evil-doer. He always distinguished between evil and its doer, one who has temporarily associated himself with evil but who can dissociate himself from it. He wrote:—

It is never the intention of a *satyagrahi* to embarrass the wrongdoer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be, always to his heart. The *satyagrahi's* object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrongdoer. . . . Whilst we may attack measures and systems, we may not, must not, attack men. Imperfect ourselves, we must be tender towards others and be slow to impute motives.

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In a letter to *The Hindu* (November 14th, 1958) Kumari Jaya Paul congratulates the University of Madras "for the rich heritage and fluency in English" that it has given to its graduates, and welcomes the growing desire to retain English as the medium of higher instruction in this country. She writes from Chicago, U.S.A., that she has observed that research workers from all over the world are being seriously handicapped when not having a thorough knowledge of English.

As the year 1975 draws nearer, the prevision of H.P.B. in learning English, though born a Russian, and in recording the Message of Theosophy for the 19th-20th century in that language, now become the international one, becomes more and more evident. India would be unwise, indeed, to allow herself to become a victim of linguistic or any other bias when the world trend is now in the opposite direction.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The recent birth centenary celebrations of Acharya Jagdish Chandra Bose have once again focused the attention of the Indian public on the pioneering work done by this great scientist. His efforts to demonstrate "the one inner life of all beings" by empirical proofs acceptable to Western thought should be recognized as an important service to the Theosophical Movement. Through his researches based upon the axiom of a single all-pervasive life and consciousness as the basis of all actions and forces, he bridged the gap between science and philosophy, between ancient Indian and modern Western thought.

Inaugurating on November 30th the week-long celebrations at the Bose Research Institute in Calcutta, Prime Minister Nehru called upon the present-day scientists of the world to bring about a "marriage between scientific knowledge and spiritual outlook," such as Acharya Bose had succeeded in bringing about. This, he stated, was the only solution to the present ills of the world caused by increased scientific knowledge.

Addressing the gathering later, Dr. Radhakrishnan stated that "the simple and deep-seated conviction in the human mind that there was a unitary whole which manifested as a manifold was for the scientist a hypothesis which called for experimental testimony." It was Jagdish Bose's ambition to establish this fact and "reach the goal of an enduring brotherhood."

The Vice-President went on to say:—

India had a long and continuous history in the development of science. Among the various kinds of knowledge which, in the *Chandogya Upanishad*, Narada said he knew, were included the science of numbers (mathematics), the science of time, the science of elemental spirits, the science of weapons, astronomy, etc. Indians were greatly interested in ascertaining the laws which governed the different aspects of the universe. For some centuries, the scientific genius of India lay dormant.

The Indian seers looked upon the world as a whole and not as an aggregate. It was a universe and not a multiverse. It was not a dead expanse but a living universe. Nature made no leaps. . . . Dharmottara in the *Nyaya-Hindu-Tika* noticed the contraction of leaves at night while Udayana mentioned the phenomena in plants, as in the human body, of life, death, sleep, waking, disease, taking medicines, etc. The opening to sunlight and closing in its absence of flowers like Surya-Mukhi, the sensitiveness to touch of plants like the *Mimosa Pudica*, their latent consciousness and susceptibility to pain and pleasure were noticed. According to Udayana, plants had "a dull unmanifested consciousness."

These intuitions of our seers were given empirical verification by Jagdish Bose. . . . He held that the nervous impulse in the plant and the animal was identical. He tried to demonstrate these views by means of delicately constructed instruments.

How essentially spiritual was his outlook came out well in his address

delivered in 1901 before the Royal Institution in London, in which he reported his wonderful discoveries as to the sensitivity of plants. He said:—

It was when I came upon the mute witness of these self-made records and perceived in them one phase of a pervading unity that bears within it all things — the mote that quivers in ripples of light, the teeming life upon our earth, the radiant suns that shine above us — it was then that I understood for the first time a little of that message proclaimed by my ancestors on the banks of the Ganges thirty centuries ago:—

“They who see but one, in all the changing manifoldness of this Universe, unto them belongs Eternal Truth, unto none else, unto none else.”

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“The advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people.” So reads part of the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 10th, 1948. In the tenth anniversary year which has just been celebrated, attention has once again been focused on these “four freedoms” and what they mean today.

In *Common Ground* for Autumn 1958 Professor F. F. Stone discusses the ideas which lie behind the slogan “Freedom from Fear.” Fear in one aspect is a negative, destructive force which paralyzes, which stifles growth and causes the individual to be distorted; it stamps out his hope and joy and can even affect the functioning of his body.

In times of stress during war, people are gripped by fear of aggression. Freedom from this kind of fear, Professor Stone states, “becomes possible as a man accepts respect for law and for those rights which flow from it.” Man may respect law because he fears the consequences of not doing so. Professor Stone suggests that this kind of fear is a wholesome fear “to the extent that it restrains man for his own good and for that of his neighbour.” Allied to this, there is the fear of the loss of respect and good opinion of one’s fellow men which restrains one from doing acts that may injure oneself or others.

As long as fear of consequences keeps us from doing wrong, we may rest assured that we are on an unsure foundation, which may topple down any moment. Looking to the consequences of one’s acts is itself not desirable. In our age war is feared, not so much because it is wrong in itself, but mainly because of the fear of the horrible weapons of warfare. Nuclear weapons are said to be a preventive against war, but thinking men throughout the world have voiced the opinion that if the mad race for armaments continues, war will inevitably result.

Yet there is a higher aspect of fear, hinted at in the Old Testament saying: “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Professor

Stone refers to this aspect of fear; but whether we mean by the word "Lord" the Inner Ruler or some outside force or authority makes all the difference in our understanding of this saying. One of the names of Maheshwara, the Great Lord seated in the heart of each, is "the admonisher," according to the *Gita*. This admonisher is the voice of conscience, which in its lower aspect is the accumulated experience or knowledge garnered by the senses and the lower mind, and, in its higher aspect, the voice of intuitive discernment or of Buddhi.

In the section so entitled in his essay in the October *Hibbert Journal* on "A Christian Philosophy for To-day," The Very Reverend The Right Honourable Professor R. Corkey of Queen's University, Belfast, recognizes the need of modifying some of the "hard sayings" of formulators of creeds. He includes among them the Calvinistic teaching of Predestination, which pre-assigns or preordains men, whether good or bad, to everlasting happiness or misery, pronouncing it a mistake "to declare, without qualification, that 'God foreordained whatsoever cometh to pass.'"

Madame Blavatsky was more forthright in her treatment of this "noble and encouraging Doctrine," as she ironically called it. She advised comparing with it

our Theosophic views upon Karma, the law of Retribution . . . whether they are not both more philosophical and just than this cruel and idiotic dogma which makes of "God" a senseless fiend; the tenet, namely, that the "elect only" will be saved, and the rest doomed to eternal perdition! (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 212)

Professor Corkey's sense of justice revolts at the doctrine of "Original Sin" as ordinarily understood, declaring that "a person cannot, in strict justice, be blamed, still less punished, for improper deeds for which he was in no way responsible. . . . The 'Adam' who is really and truly accountable for a man's sin is himself." In so far he seems to align himself with the Theosophical insistence on strict and impartial justice.

Unfortunately, however, though he also boldly challenges "the idea of *vicarious punishment* at the hand of God, he does not rule out the possibility of divine forgiveness.

Madame Blavatsky devoted the closing sub-section of Section XI in *The Key to Theosophy* to answering emphatically in the negative the question, "Has God the Right to Forgive?"

Substitute for the personal god, as Theosophy does, the concept that "Deity is Law, and *vice versa*" and it becomes apparent, as one of the Masters has written, that

the slightest *cause* produced, however unconsciously, with whatever motive, cannot be unmade, or its effects crossed in their progress — by millions of gods, demons, and men combined.

True, Karmic effects “may be counteracted or mitigated by the thoughts and acts of oneself or of another,” as we are told in Aphorism 13 (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*, p. 6). But then “the resulting effects represent the combination and interaction of the whole number of causes involved in producing the effects.” No cause is wiped out. That could not be, in a universe of law. “Can the *results* of a crime be obliterated even though the crime itself should be pardoned?” (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 542)

We are told in *The Secret Doctrine* that

the “still greater and more exacting divinity” than the god of this world, supposed so “good” — is KARMA. And this true Divinity shows well that the lesser one, our *inner* God (personal for the time being), has no power to arrest the mighty hand of this greater Deity, the CAUSE awakened by our actions generating smaller causes, which is called the LAW OF RETRIBUTION. (II. 555 fn.)

The only “atonement” needed and possible, besides making what recompense we can to those we may have injured, is reconciliation (“at-one” being the root of “atone”) with the God within, against whom we have sinned. That atonement effected, we can bravely face all consequences flowing from our actions, serenely confident that nothing can overwhelm us while our soul keeps its hold on the starry spirit within.

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One of the most astonishing archæological puzzles known to the world of science is the strange history of the lost civilization of the Mayas of Central America. In “The Unsolved Mystery of the Mayas” (*The Atlantic*, October 1958), Oliver La Farge outlines the little that is known about these “intriguing, puzzling people,” and regrets that Maya research is now beginning to falter. The surviving antiquities of Central America — their beautiful carvings in wood and stone, their ceramics, their paintings on walls and on paper, their temples, palaces and pyramids of great size, and the magnificent cities they had built in their heyday — all bespeak the height of civilization they must have reached. They had great scientific achievements also to their credit, especially in mathematics and astronomy. They had a “poetic, vigorous literature,” but their literary remains are fragmentary, most of them having been destroyed by the Spanish conquerors. Mr. La Farge writes:—

None of these developments fits our concept of a Stone Age culture. In fact, the more we learn about Middle America, the more it upsets our preconceived ideas. So far, we know little about social institutions of the area except as they existed at the time when the white men fell upon the land, but everything we do know is rich with unusual characteristics. The central area of the greatest ruins suggests some odd possibilities.

He rules out the possibility that the Mayas could have been influ-

enced from the Old World. Hence, according to him, the peculiar interest of Middle American archæological studies lies in the fact that they reveal what kind of a civilization men isolated from the rest of the civilized world and "limited only by their own minds" can produce.

Students of H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* would take issue with the contention that they grew up isolated. "Their ceramics, fine art and architecture," Mr. La Farge states, "compare favourably to the Hindu and South Asiatic." And herein lies the clue to understanding the "mystery" of the Mayas. If he would consult Chapter XIV in Volume I of *Isis Unveiled* he would find ample discussion of the origins of early American races. H.P.B. remarks in this work:—

In order to institute a better comparison between the specimens of prehistoric architecture to be found at the most opposite points of the globe, we have but to point to the grandiose Hindu ruins of Ellora in the Dekkan, the Mexican Chichen-Itza, in Yucatan, and the still grander ruins of Copan, in Guatemala. They present such features of resemblance that it seems impossible to escape the conviction that they were built by peoples moved by the same religious ideas, and that had reached an equal level of highest civilization in arts and sciences. (I. 561)

The perfect identity of the rites, ceremonies, traditions, and even the names of the deities, among the Mexicans and ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, are a sufficient proof of South America being peopled by a colony which mysteriously found its way across the Atlantic. (I. 557)

Without recognizing that there once existed a vast Atlantic continent on which flourished a civilization which was the mother of all the cultures of the ancient world, it is impossible for modern archæologists to arrive at the true explanation for similarities in prehistoric architecture, and in customs and traditions. "America," H.P.B. writes in "A Land of Mystery" (reprinted from *The Theosophist* in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for May, June, July and August 1943), "was once united with Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia." And in *The Secret Doctrine* she states that "although certainly coeval with Plato's Atlantis, the Mayas belonged to the Fifth Continent, which was preceded by Atlantis and Lemuria" (II. 35 fn.). Is it not time the notion that civilization has developed by trial and error from primeval or aboriginal beginnings were given up?

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The Reverend A. W. Argyle, tracing in the October *Hibbert Journal* "The Historical Christian Attitude to Cremation" down to modern times, denies the existence among the early Christians of the fear that the cremation of the body would interfere with its resurrection—an objection elsewhere, however, alleged to have been raised in recent decades against the practice. To the early Christians, who followed the Jewish custom of burial, cremation had only seemed irreverent. A Papal

Edict forbidding cremation is said to have been promulgated in 1300 and to this day the Roman Catholic Church opposes it. No other Christian Church, Mr. Argyle writes, has opposed cremation, and he anticipates its probable continued increase among non-Catholics.

The article names as the pioneer of cremation in the British Isles the wife of the Honourable John Pratt, Treasurer of Ireland, who died in 1710, leaving specific directions that her body should be cremated and not buried. Her wish has been ascribed to her belief that the vapours arising from graveyards in populous cities might prove harmful to the inhabitants, a fear which according to our teachings is not unfounded.

It is interesting to note that the American Theosophists sponsored the first scientific cremation in the U.S.A., that of the body of Baron J. H. de Palm, an Austrian nobleman, which took place at Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1876. It was described in *The Theosophist* for April 1880 in an article entitled "Cremation in America."

It is stated in *The Secret Doctrine* that "cremation was universal till a comparatively recent period — some 80, or 100,000 years ago" (II. 753).

In an article on "Death" in *The Theosophist* for October 1881, Eliphas Levi wrote:—

Preserving corpses is to create phantoms in the imagination of the earth; the spectres of the nightmare, of hallucination, and fear, are but the wandering photographs of preserved corpses [*i.e.*, their reflections in the astral light]. It is these preserved or imperfectly destroyed corpses, which spread, amid the living, plague, cholera, contagious diseases, sadness, scepticism and disgust of life.

To this H.P.B. added in an editorial footnote:—

People begin intuitionally to realize the great truth, and societies for burning bodies and *crematories* are now started in many places in Europe.

It was further stated editorially in *Lucifer* for May 1890:—

There are occult reasons why cremation should be an imperative necessity, and all Theosophists should gladly welcome and hasten the day when this "purification by fire" will be an accomplished fact.

Is it any wonder that she had written earlier of "the unwise West, where cremation is unknown"?

Mr. Judge also, answering in *The Forum* for August 1894 a question about cremation, said that this method of disposal of the corpse, doing away as it did with matter in such a state as to be injurious to the living, was of high importance. It also gave the astral body a chance to dissipate more quickly, without affecting Atma, Buddhi, Manas or Prana at all.

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