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"There is no Religion higher than PROF. L.S.S. KUMAR &  
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# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## ON CULTIVATING DISCERNMENT

There must be in us a power of discernment, the cultivation of which will enable us to know whatever is desired to be known. That there is such a power is affirmed by teachers of occultism, and the way to acquire it is by cultivating concentration.

—W. Q. JUDGE

Certain rediscovered, or half-discovered, secrets of *Hatha Yoga* have given rise to many cults devoted to the attainment of one or another personal object through "concentration." There is indeed a tremendous power in practising the art of concentration. Concentration of the right sort will lead one towards becoming a Buddha or a Christ; concentration of the wrong sort may result in one's becoming a medium or a black magician.

It would be profitable to ask ourselves what the discernment spoken of by Mr. Judge, in the passage quoted above, is, by the acquisition of which, through concentration, all knowledge becomes ours, and in which part of our being it resides. If it were the power of the lower man, *i.e.*, of the man who lives and thrives by acquisitiveness, it should develop in all, for all practise concentration, consciously or unconsciously. We know it does not. In the concentration of a business man, for instance, selfish motive commonly plays a part while ethics may be ignored. Primary, therefore, is the question of motive. If the motive is to achieve "health, wealth and happiness" for oneself personally, it is tainted with selfishness and detracts to that extent from the power of concentration. But if it is to fit oneself to be the better able to help and teach others, it requires the development of such control of thought, body and speech as will enable one best to perform all tasks, including the small, plain duties of life. It requires, because of the effect upon others as well as upon our own powers and clearness of perception, keeping out of the mind the things that should not be there, holding in the mind the things that should be there.

Obviously, then, the discernment which Mr. Judge refers to is not the fruit of ordinary concentration and must therefore pertain to some aspect higher than the acquisitive mind. Discernment results from the

radiation of Buddhi-Manas in and through the lower mind. When the latter is turned without it cannot profit by that radiation. It is when our normal thinking consciousness turns inwards that it hears the whisperings of Buddhi-Manas.

Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

As the perfume of a flower cannot be described to one who has no sense of smell, so the radiance of Buddhi remains but a name to him whose feelings and thoughts are wholly personal.

A Master has written that Wisdom springs up naturally within us when we lead the necessary life. This life is the clean life which alone can open the mind to the wisdom from on high, while that mind is eagerly pursuing spiritual knowledge. Janaka, the philosopher-king of Mithila, exemplified that the spiritual life may be a life of active service in the world of affairs and requires no monastery or hermit's hut. The chief concern of one who leads the spiritual life is but to fulfil the duties of his calling. He has naught to do with the self-centred activities of the man of flesh, the man who craves possessions. The sense of personal possession was extinguished to such an extent in King Janaka that when he was told that his capital was on fire he is said to have exclaimed: "Even if Mithila is burnt to ashes nothing that is mine is destroyed." He to whom gold and stone are the same is called in the *Gita* a man of spiritual discernment. The real strength and power of true discernment come from taking and maintaining the position of the One Self and evaluating all things from the point of view of that Self.

Real discernment depends upon depth of knowledge, accumulated experience and consciousness of the divine nature of man. It is a power that comes from within and manifests as an unveiled spiritual perception, the vision of the Soul. Our daily life is the best field for the exercise of the true power of discernment. The mission of Theosophy is to point the way to every prisoner-soul to the state of freedom and light, proofs of touching which are spiritual discernment in the affairs of life and an ever deeper compassion for the Great Orphan, Humanity.

The wise injunction attributed to Zoroaster, "When in doubt abstain," is a most succinct presentation of the Law of Necessity as the proper criterion of discriminative action. The many side-roads that lead away from the Path of Necessity are set with pitfalls. In regard to action, the question "Why?" is always fundamental. Only after it is satisfactorily answered should arise the subsidiary interrogatives, "What?", "Where?", "When?" and "How?".

Our progress in unfolding discernment is in proportion to our effort in subduing the carnal man. It is recorded that when Alexander, mis-called "the Great," put to Aristotle the question, "Master, how can I reform the whole world?" he was answered, "Alexander, reform thyself." That is a line of action the necessity for which is easily demonstra-

ble and which is always in order. Example is more potent than precept and every self-regenerated individual becomes a centre of spiritual action from whom and from whose own daily life radiate the higher spiritual forces which alone can regenerate his fellow men.

To discern, in the real sense of the word, the state of consciousness must be one of calmness. The ruffled surface of a lake even of crystal-clear waters reflects but broken images. The radiance of *Buddhi-Manas* falls on the brain-consciousness that is both pure and calm.

In the *Bhagavad-Gita* the discerning power is equated with *Buddhi*, direct cognition, the highest intellection, the power of judgment. Its various degrees of activity flow from attraction to one or other of the three qualities found in nature, and are described as follows:—

The discerning power that knows how to begin and to renounce, what should and what should not be done, what is to be feared and what not, what holds fast and what sets the soul free, is of the *sattva* quality. That discernment, O son of Pritha, which does not fully know what ought to be done and what not, what should be feared and what not, is of the passion-born *rajas* quality. That discriminating power which is enveloped in obscurity, mistaking wrong for right and all things contrary to their true intent and meaning, is of the dark quality of *tamas*. (XVIII. 30-32)

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There is an inmost centre in us all,  
 Where truth abides in fulness and around,  
 Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,  
 This perfect clear conception which is Truth.  
 A baffling and perverting carnal mesh  
 Binds it and makes all error: and to KNOW  
 Rather consists in opening out a way  
 Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape,  
 Than in effecting entry for a light  
 Supposed to be without.

—ROBERT BROWNING in *Paracelsus*

# STRAY THOUGHTS ON DEATH AND SATAN

[The following is reprinted from *The Theosophist*, Vol. III, pp. 12-14, for October 1881.—Eds.]

To the Editor of *The Theosophist*

*Madam*, — Since you have published a posthumous letter of my Master and beloved friend, the late Eliphas Levi, I think it would be agreeable to you to publish, if judged suitable, a few extracts of the many manuscripts in my possession, written expressly for, and given to, me by my ever-regretted MASTER.

To begin, I send you — “Stray Thoughts on Death and Satan” from his pen. . . .

With the utmost respect,

I remain, Madam,

Yours Devotedly,

BARON J. SPADALIERI

*Marseilles, July 29, 1881.*

*Editor's Note* — It is with feelings of sincere gratitude that we thank Baron Spadaliéri for his most valuable contribution. The late Eliphas Levi was the most learned Kabalist and Occultist of our age, in Europe, and everything from his pen is precious to us, in so far as it helps us to compare notes with the Eastern Occult doctrines and, by the light thrown upon both, to prove to the world of Spiritualists and Mystics that the two systems — the Eastern-Aryan and the Western or the Chaldeo-Jewish Kabala — are one in their principal metaphysical tenets. Only, while the Eastern Occultists have never lost the key to their esoterism, and are daily verifying and elaborating their doctrines by personal experiments and by the additional light of modern science, the Western or Jewish Kabalists, besides having been misled for centuries by the introduction of foreign elements in it such as Christian dogmas, dead-letter interpretations of the Bible, etc., have most undeniably lost the true key to the esoteric meaning of Simeon Ben Iochai's Kabala, and are trying to make up for the loss by interpretations emanating from the depths of their imagination and inner consciousness. . . .

## I

### DEATH

BY (THE LATE) ELIPHAS LEVI

Death is the necessary dissolution of imperfect combinations. It is the re-absorption of the rough outline of individual life into the great work of universal life; only the perfect is immortal.

It is a bath in oblivion. It is the fountain of youth where on one side plunges old age, and whence on the other issues infancy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rebirth of the *Ego* after death. The Eastern, and especially Buddhistic doctrine of the evolution of the new, out of the old *Ego*.—ED. THEOS.

Death is the transfiguration of the living; corpses are but the dead leaves of the Tree of Life which will still have all its leaves in the spring. The resurrection of men resembles eternally these leaves.

Perishable forms are conditioned by immortal types.

All who have lived upon earth, live there still in new exemplars of their types, but the souls which have surpassed their type receive elsewhere a new form based upon a more perfect type, as they mount ever on the ladder of worlds;<sup>2</sup> the bad exemplars are broken, and their matter returned into the general mass.<sup>3</sup>

Our souls are as it were a music, of which our bodies are the instruments. The music exists without the instruments, but it cannot make itself heard without a material intermediary; the immaterial can neither be conceived nor grasped.

Man in his present existence only retains certain predispositions from his past existences.

Evocations of the dead are but condensations of memory, the imaginary coloration of the shades. To evoke those who are no longer there is but to cause their types to re-issue from the imagination of nature.<sup>4</sup>

To be in direct communication with the imagination of nature, one must be either asleep, intoxicated, in an ecstasy, cataleptic, or mad.

The eternal memory preserves only the imperishable; all that passes in Time belongs of right to oblivion.

The preservation of corpses is a violation of the laws of nature; it is an outrage on the modesty of death, which hides the works of destruction, as we should hide those of reproduction. Preserving corpses is to create phantoms in the imagination of the earth;<sup>5</sup> the spectres of the nightmare, of hallucination, and fear, are but the wandering photographs of preserved corpses. It is these preserved or imperfectly destroyed corpses which spread, amid the living, plague, cholera, contagious diseases, sadness, scepticism and disgust of life.<sup>6</sup> Death is exhaled by death. The cemeteries poison the atmosphere of towns, and the miasma of corpses blights the children even in the bosoms of their mothers.

Near Jerusalem in the Valley of Gehenna a perpetual fire was maintained for the combustion of filth and the carcasses of animals, and it is to this eternal fire that Jesus alludes when he says that the wicked shall

<sup>2</sup> From one *lokka* to the other; from a positive world of causes and activity, to a negative world of effects and passivity.—ED. THEOS.

<sup>3</sup> Into Cosmic matter, when they necessarily lose their self-consciousness or individuality, or are annihilated, as the Eastern Kabalists say.—ED. THEOS.

<sup>4</sup> To ardently desire to see a dead person is to *evoke* the image of that person, to call it forth from the astral light or ether wherein rest photographed the images of the *Past*. That is what is being partially done in the *séance-rooms*. The Spiritualists are unconscious NECROMANCERS.—ED. THEOS.

<sup>5</sup> To intensify these images in the astral or sidereal light.—ED. THEOS.

<sup>6</sup> People begin intuitionally to realize the great truth, and societies for burning bodies and *crematories* are now started in many places in Europe.—ED. THEOS.

be cast into *Gehenna*; signifying that dead souls will be treated as corpses.

The Talmud says that the souls of those who have not believed in immortality will not become immortal. It is faith only which gives personal immortality;<sup>7</sup> science and reason can only affirm the general immortality.

The mortal sin is the suicide of the soul. This suicide would occur if the man devoted himself to evil with the full strength of his mind, with a perfect knowledge of good and evil, and an entire liberty of action which seems impossible in practice, but which is possible in theory, because the essence of an independent personality is an unconditioned liberty. The divinity imposes nothing upon man, not even existence. Man has a right to withdraw himself even from the divine goodness, and the dogma of eternal hell is only the assertion of eternal free-will.

God precipitates no one into hell. It is men who can go there freely, definitively and by their own choice.

Those who are in hell, that is to say, amid the gloom of evil<sup>8</sup> and the sufferings of the necessary punishment, without having absolutely so willed it, are called to emerge from it. This hell is for them only a purgatory. The damned completely, absolutely and without respite, is Satan who is not a rational existence, but a necessary hypothesis.

Satan is the last word of the creation. He is the end infinitely emancipated. He willed to be like God, of which he is the opposite. God is the hypothesis necessary to reason, Satan the hypothesis necessary to unreason asserting itself as free-will.

To be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls; between these two poles vegetate and die without remembrance the useless portion of mankind.

*Editor's Note.*—This may seem incomprehensible to the average reader, for it is one of the most abstruse of the tenets of Occult doctrine. Nature is dual: there is a physical and material side, as there is a spiritual and moral side to it; and there is both good and evil in it, the latter the necessary shadow to its light. To force oneself upon the current of immortality, or rather to secure for oneself an endless series of rebirths as conscious individualities — says the Book of Khiu-te, Vol. XXXI, one must become a co-worker with nature, either for *good* or for *bad* in her work of creation and reproduction, or in that of destruction. It is

<sup>7</sup> Faith and *will-power*. Immortality is conditional, as we have ever stated. It is the reward of the pure and good. The wicked man, the material sensualist, only survives. He who appreciates but physical pleasures will not and *cannot* live in the hereafter as self-conscious Entity.—ED. THEOS.

<sup>8</sup> That is to say, they are reborn in a "lower world" which is neither "Hell" nor any theological purgatory, but a world of nearly absolute *matter* and one preceding the last one in the "circle of necessity" from which "there is no redemption, for there reigns *absolute* spiritual darkness." (Book of Khiu-te.)—ED. THEOS.

but the useless drones which she gets rid of, violently ejecting and making them perish by the millions as self-conscious entities. Thus, while the good and the pure strive to reach *Nipang* (*nirvana* or that state of *absolute* existence and *absolute* consciousness — which, in the world of finite perceptions, is *non-existence* and *non-consciousness*), the wicked will seek, on the contrary, a series of lives as conscious, definite existences or beings, preferring to be ever suffering under the law of retributive justice rather than give up their lives as portions of the integral, universal whole. Being well aware that they can never hope to reach the final rest in pure spirit, or *nirvana*, they cling to life in any form, rather than give up that “desire for life,” or *Tanha*, which causes a new aggregation of *Skandhas* or individuality to be reborn. Nature is as good a mother to the cruel bird of prey as she is to the harmless dove. Mother nature will punish her child, but since he has become her co-worker for destruction she cannot eject him. There are thoroughly wicked and depraved men, yet as highly intellectual and acutely *spiritual* for evil, as those who are spiritual for good. The *Egos* of these may escape the law of final destruction or annihilation for ages to come. That is what Eliphas Levi means by becoming “immortal in evil,” through identification with Satan. “I would thou wert *cold* or *hot*,” says the vision of the *Revelation* to St. John (III. 15-16). “So then because thou art *lukewarm*, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” The *Revelation* is an absolutely *Kabalistic* book. Heat and cold are the two “poles,” *i.e.*, good and evil, *spirit* and *matter*. Nature *spues* the “lukewarm” or “the useless portion of mankind” out of her mouth, *i.e.*, annihilates them. This conception that a considerable portion of mankind may after all not have immortal souls, will not be new even to European readers. Coleridge himself likened the case to that of an oak tree bearing, indeed, millions of acorns, but acorns of which under normal conditions not one in a thousand ever developed into a tree, and suggested that as the majority of the acorns failed to develop into a new living tree, so possibly the majority of men fail to develop into a new living entity after this earthly death.

## II

### SATAN

Satan is merely a type, not a real personage.

It is the type opposed to the Divine type, the necessary foil to this in our imagination. It is the factitious shadow which renders visible to us the infinite light of the Divine.

If Satan was a real personage then would there be two Gods, and the creed of the Manicheans would be a truth.

Satan is the imaginary conception of the absolute in evil; a conception necessary to the complete affirmation of the liberty of the human will, which by the help of this imaginary absolute seems able to equilibrate the entire power even of God. It is the boldest and, perhaps, the

sublimest of the dreams of human pride.

"You shall be as Gods knowing good and evil," saith the allegorical serpent in the Bible. Truly to make evil a science is to create a God of evil, and if any spirit can eternally resist God, there is no longer one God but two Gods.

To resist the Infinite, infinite force is necessary; and two infinite forces opposed to each other must neutralize each other.<sup>9</sup> If resistance on the part of Satan is possible the power of God no longer exists, God and the Devil destroy each other, and man remains alone; he remains alone with the phantom of his Gods, the hybrid sphynx, the winged bull, which poises in its human hand a sword of which the wavering lightnings drive the human imagination from one error to the other, and from the despotism of the light, to the despotism of the darkness.

The history of mundane misery is but the romance of the war of the Gods, a war still unfinished, while the Christian world still adores a God in the Devil, and a Devil in God.

The antagonism of powers is anarchy in Dogma. Thus to the church which affirms that the Devil exists the world replies with a terrifying logic: then God does not exist; and it is vain to seek escape from this argument to invent the supremacy of a God who would permit a Devil to bring about the damnation of men; such a permission would be a monstrosity, and would amount to complicity, and the god that could be an accomplice of the devil, cannot be God.

The Devil of Dogmas is a personification of Atheism. The Devil of Philosophy is the exaggerated ideal of human free-will. The real or physical Devil is the magnetism of evil.

Raising the Devil is but realizing for an instant this imaginary personality. This involves the exaggeration in one's self beyond bounds of the perversity of madness by the most criminal and senseless acts.

The result of this operation is the death of the soul through madness, and often the death of the body even, lightning-struck, as it were, by a cerebral congestion.

The Devil ever importunes, but nothing ever gives in return.

St. John calls it "the Beast" (*la Bête*) because its essence is human folly (*la Bêtise humaine*).

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<sup>9</sup> And evil being infinite and eternal, for it is coeval with matter, the logical deduction would be that there is neither God nor Devil—as personal Entities; only One Uncreated, Infinite, Immutable and Absolute Principle or Law: EVIL or DEVIL—the deep it falls into matter, GOOD or GOD as soon as it is purified from the latter and re-becomes again pure unalloyed Spirit or the ABSOLUTE in its everlasting, immutable Subjectivity.

## INSPIRATION

It would be to the advantage of the present generation of students of Theosophy to look into the history of the early days of the Theosophical Movement of our era, now in its 87th year, to learn the lessons that history teaches and to seek the life-force of the Movement. What was the vital spring of the Original Impulse? What has kept it alive to this day? What lay behind the efforts to pollute that vital spring? What caused the failure of the original Theosophical Society? Just as the last few years of the life of a human being, if properly used, can set the keynote not only for *Devachan* but also for the future life, so these coming few years can help set the keynote for the next impulse. Let us keep in mind that it is the one MOVEMENT that re-embodies itself periodically.

Ought we not to be getting our house in order, to be cleaning up the present embodiment of the Movement, to be throwing out what is not necessary or what has filled our storehouse of thought with rubbish? Some who see this need think that it can be filled by "uniting" all groups claiming to belong to the Movement. It can, but only on the condition of throwing away the rubbish collected through the years, of searching for the why's and wherefore's of failure, of separating the real from the false.

The U.L.T. was and is such an endeavour, for by its Declaration itself all the rubbish collected was swept away and that which was left was Theosophy as given to us by H.P.B. What more does one want or need? No side issues, no rules, no subscriptions, no officers; spiritual autonomy for all centres of the one United Lodge which has no headquarters, no leaders. Who wants a leader when we have H.P.B.? Dead or alive, she lives in her Message.

Ought not the Associates of the U.L.T. to be reliving the early years of the Movement's life? During the early period in individual unfoldment, the higher aspect of the mind becomes more and more attached to the personality and more and more operative in it — if allowed. Is it not why at that period of a child's life he lives in his imagination, in stories of heroes, in the glory of achievement against almost overwhelming odds, or in stories of fantasy that feed the heart-imagination? Are we not in need of turning to stories of great lives, of true imagination or inspiration? Most students "know" *The Ocean of Theosophy*; they know the technical side of the philosophy. The *Ocean* has become for us like a table of mathematics; it can be used to answer any ordinary question on life or on man's and Nature's composition. It can be used for deeper study; for, no matter what difficult subject is brought up, the key to the answer is there, if we are studious enough to find it. We have other literature also, and a study of *The Secret Doctrine* and of *Isis Unveiled* is most rewarding.

But are we lacking something? Especially those who have been students for years, is their attachment and devotion to the Cause waning?

Where is the child's life rooted? At home, and partly at school. He

can appeal to parent or teacher; they give him sustenance and knowledge and he in return gives them love and reverence. H.P.B. said that the Society founded by her was her child; it had her magnetic fluid. Behind her were the great Sponsors of the Movement. Both H.P.B. and They are unseen today. But have They deserted the Movement? Is H.P.B.'s magnetic fluid still in this embodiment of the Movement? If it is, then should we not begin to draw on that magnetic fluid? Are the Great Sponsors still interested in the Work to which They gave the Original Impulse? Who is to say that They are not? Why not derive sustenance from the Original Impulse?

How shall we find this fluid and this Impulse? How else except by endeavouring to know more of both? Let us search for them in H.P.B.'s writings, in her life. We can, at least to some extent, know the nature of the great Sponsors by a study of such a work as *The Key to Theosophy*, or of the Masters' letters (*U.L.T. Pamphlet Nos. 29 and 33*) and the many references scattered in our magazines. Shall we drag Their names down as has been done, or shall we put our Theosophical knowledge into practice and learn that They are men, holy mortals, but higher than any in this world, morally, intellectually and spiritually? We could not know that They were Masters if we met Them, but we should be able to "sense" that They were great men. Their Mahatmaship we cannot hope to touch; Their manhood as human beings working for humanity and needing helpers we can touch. Once, by thought, we realize that this Movement and this Work are Their Movement and Their Work, we take a different attitude towards both these. If "Lives of great men all remind us We can make our lives sublime," as Longfellow sang, then the thought of Them can serve as such an inspiration to us. But we shall advance through work *for* humanity. There is no other way. Working in Their name and on the lines laid down by Them, we become Their helpers. They are not gods; They know no favourites; but Their love is all-embracing; They know of no limitations of space, time, mind and matter. They see us *as we are*, not as we *think* we are.

Sometimes, therefore, when life seems drab and the goal wrapped in mist, should we not feed our hearts on the strength and beauty in our writings? For it is devotion, love, that truly inspires. We feel H.P.B.'s great heart when we read her writings. Some of her words are an inspiration to courage and devotion. Each can turn periodically to those passages in the literature available to us that appeal to him the best and derive inspiration therefrom.

Perhaps in some such way when we find our interest slackening, when life and its worries, work and its fatigue, come in the way, or when "I have married a wife, and therefore cannot come" is the refrain, we shall find something to rekindle the dying embers in the heart and to pour again our energy and heart-devotion into the Work.

Let us not be of the faint-hearted who perish by the way!

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# THE YOGA APHORISMS OF PATANJALI

## III.—MIND AND WILL—SERVANTS OR USURPERS?

Mr. Judge makes it clear in his Preface that the mind is the instrument of the Soul and therefore properly subservient to it. The Soul, however, requires the mind in order to manifest on this plane and to attain concentration. But the mind must be thoroughly united with the Soul before the "Self-Knowledge" which is interior illumination is achieved. The ultimate conquest of this high peak of progress demands not only protracted striving but also struggles upward many times renewed.

*The Voice of the Silence* tells the very beginner to seek to blend his mind and Soul. Even temporary success in uniting them, as in daily earnest self-examination in the light of our highest perception, makes it possible to see honestly and to judge impersonally not only our words and deeds but also our feelings and our thoughts.

Patanjali's system calls for hindering the modifications of the mind in its ceaseless motion towards the objects giving rise to pleasure or to pain. The mind is naturally drawn hither and thither by its response both to external things and to internal images. But when freed from desire and the objects of desire, whether observed, recollected or imagined, the mind can, as Mr. Judge puts it, be "stilled into a state of absolute calmness." This tranquillity possible to the controlled mind is referred to in *The Voice of the Silence*, where the tranquil mind is associated with bodily activity as well as with the "Soul as limpid as a mountain lake."

The Yoga Aphorisms plainly show the need, the possibility, the method and the fruits of control. They show also that the student of Theosophy cannot receive full benefit from the Teachings without a concentrated mind. We miss out much through inattention—hints and warnings as well as side-lights that would illuminate many points that now may seem obscure. There are two main sorts of concentration, as Mr. Judge brings out in his article on "Meditation, Concentration, Will": "One is the use of an already acquired power on a fixed occasion, the other the deep and constant practice of a power that has been made a possession." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*)

Patanjali's system calls for the control of the mind by the help of the will. He does not actually refer to the will which is a universal power, devoid in itself of moral quality, which only man can impart to it, but the right following of his system will develop it. Mr. Judge in his Preface states that one reason for Patanjali's silence on the subject is that he and his school

well knew that the secret of directing the will with ten times the ordinary force might be discovered if they outlined the method, and then had men whose desires were strong and conscience wanting, would

use it with impunity against their fellows; or that even sincere students might be carried away from spirituality when dazzled by the wonderful results flowing from a training of the will alone. (p. xv)

The will is described in *The Ocean of Theosophy* as the greatest power in the human assemblage of complicated instruments. It is potentially all-powerful, being the very "force of Spirit in action," but it is, like the mind, properly an instrument for the Soul's use. It cannot, however, do its work if the imagination be at all weak or untrained.

Mr. Judge quotes an old Kabalistic maxim, "Behind Will Stands Desire," explaining that

the desires always drawing the man hither and thither, cause him to commit such actions and have such thoughts as form the cause and mould for numerous reincarnations, enslaving him to a destiny against which he rebels, and that constantly destroys and re-creates his mortal body.

Substituting for the present multiplicity of desires, however, a few which are high, pure and altruistic will strengthen our power to call on the will which is ours, which has its seat in the higher Ego.

Whereas the will is guided, with ordinary men, by desire, "in the Adepts' case the will is guided by Buddhi, Manas, and Atma, including in its operation the force of a pure spiritual desire acting solely under law and duty," writes Mr. Judge. Mr. Crosbie calls "the real and true Will... the Spiritual Will, which flies like light and cuts all obstacles like a sharp sword."

If we realize that we are *Spiritual* beings and think and act in the right direction, at once the Spiritual Will begins to work, the power of Concentration is strengthened, the feeling of responsibility grows, the whole nature begins to change, to be transformed — the Great Transition is going on.

Patanjali's system, Mr. Judge writes,

postulates that *Ishwara*, the spirit in man, is untouched by any troubles, works, fruit of works, or desires, and when a firm position is assumed with the end in view of reaching union with spirit through concentration, He comes to the aid of the lower self and raises it gradually to higher planes. In this process the Will by degrees is given a stronger and stronger tendency to act upon a different line from that indicated by passion and desire. Thus it is freed from the domination of desire and at last subdues the mind itself. But before the perfection of the practice is arrived at the will still acts according to desire, only that the desire is for higher things and away from those of the material life.

A man, H.P.B. tells us, "makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light."

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# LISTENING AND SPEAKING

## A STUDY IN "LIGHT ON THE PATH"

*"Listen only to the voice which is soundless."*

### I: LISTENING

[The following article first appeared in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. VII, pp. 169-172, for September 1937.—Eds.]

In numerous places and in numerous ways the importance of purification and control of speech is pointed out in our Theosophical philosophy. The real occult reason is not so clearly perceived by the aspirant to Wisdom, though that too is stressed in numerous places.

The very Name of Deity is represented by the symbol of the Word. Creative Logos is Man's highest appellation and the human mouth is designated as the Organ of the Creative Logos. That Organ, in Man the Microcosm, is derived directly from the primary vehicle which the Creative Logos uses to emanate by Sound the Macrocosmic principles. The voice in the spiritual sound is the Voice of the Most High.

Voice attains a special position in the human kingdom when it acquires words as its vehicle. Words are a special feature of speech, which mark the difference between the human kingdom and the other kingdoms. The birth of word-speech, *i.e.*, human speech, takes place simultaneously with the birth of Manas, the Thinker, who is the human soul. "*Language* is certainly coeval with reason, and could never have been developed before men became one with the informing principles in them — those who fructified and awoke to life the manasic element dormant in primitive man" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 199). Therefore this speech called the logos of thought — through speech thought is able to manifest; deprive man of his thinking power and the use of speech ceases.

Now, just as the existence of Manas, the Thinker, produces the phenomenon of the dual manas, higher and lower, so also we have the phenomenon of dual speech — lower and higher. Most people are centred in the lower mind and the lower speech. It is the task of Theosophy to draw their attention to the existence in them of the higher mind and the higher speech.

Our study has two aspects: we have to consider the lower speech, which is not necessarily and only obscene, untruthful or harsh; and then the higher, which should not be mistaken for polite talk or even friendly but worldly advice. There is a wider difference between higher and lower speech than there is between, say, cruel gossip and harmless chit-chat.

There is an intimate relation between the silence of Nature and her basal sound which the Chinese call *Kung*, the Great Tone. Similarly there is a mathematical harmony subsisting between the Ideation of Manas and the higher speech. The same phenomenon takes place on

the plane of reflection: between the Desire-Mind and the lower speech there is a certain kinship.

#### DANGERS OF SELF-TALK

The earliest practice for the Higher Life consists in the control of speech, without which one cannot become a Listener, an *akoustikoi*, *Shravaka*. One cannot hear and speak at the same time. The power to listen has to be cultivated; modern ways of life — social and political and even business — are not conducive to this development. To be quiet a social function is considered bad form and one is expected to “make talk”; politicians have to have that alertness to interrupt so that the opposing speaker may be worsted soon; and so on, on every plane of modern life.

The Theosophical student is not given to obscene talk: but often he suffers from the weakness of small talk and even of smart talk, for he does not perceive that such a habit tarnishes his consciousness, and affects the motions of the *pranic* currents. There is another danger — small talk soon deteriorates into gossip; harmless talk about persons and personalities quickly degenerates into adverse criticism, hostile denunciation and foul slander. Mr. Judge offers some very useful and practical directions in this matter. (See THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, March 1932, p. 37.)

Those, however, who are on their guard against criticism and denunciation of others easily err in the matter of self-talk. A student likes to talk about what and how much he knows; about himself; the habit “of pushing yourself forward” which “arises from personality” is not easily controlled and there is a line of development which brings to birth Barons Munchausen of Occultism!

#### LEARNING TO LISTEN

To become a listener — that is the first step. What is the aspirant to listen to? To the Voice of Wisdom, and in three stages, broadly speaking, the exercise has to be completed.

(1) Learn to listen to the teachings of Theosophy as recorded in the Message. To enable all men and women to do this, public talks on the principles and fundamentals of Theosophy are arranged by the Unitary Lodge of Theosophists. All our public propaganda, however, should be included in this compartment. While the Sunday talk, so to speak, compels the audience to listen, the other meetings give an opportunity to the earnest student voluntarily to become a Listener. Further still and in one sense *the* most important, individual reading and study bring excellent opportunities to listen to the Voice of Wisdom.

(2) Learn to listen to the Inner Ego, the God within. Thence emerge the experiences gained in many previous lives; also, the Wisdom buried into human consciousness by the Fathers of the Race, when mankind secured the Light of Manas.

(3) Learn to listen to the Great Gurus, the Elder Brothers — the modern Heirs and Representatives of the Ancient Fathers, who sustain the institution of Chelaship even in the Kali-Yuga.

The Voice which enlightens and blesses needs the friendship of listening ears.

The ears which listen have a foe in the tongue which wags.

This dual relationship has been explained at some length in *Light on the Path*. In our study we are separating the Listening and the Speaking processes, but it should be borne in mind that these are not two distinct and separate processes, but one dual process. As we learn to listen we also learn to speak, and as our spiritualized Voice spreads in Akasa, the capacity to hear the Voice of the Silence increases.

### THE TRAINING OF THE EAR

The noises and sounds of the world exert a fascination upon many men and women; such do not hear "the confusion of the world" but enjoy and are charmed by "the silvery buzzing of the golden fire-fly" in clubs, on race-courses, at dinner-parties and the like; such do not come to Theosophy, because the very first requisite for the aspirant to the Higher Life is "to look within" — implying self-examination and self-condemnation. But says our book: "He that chooses evil refuses to look within himself, shuts his ears to the melody of his heart." Leave such to their future suffering, purgation and ultimate recognition that the voice of the world *is* the voice of confusion and evil; they are Theosophists of the future cycles. But in so leaving them, our brothers and sisters, let us not be proud of the place we are reaching, of the position we are trying to attain. The task we have set for ourselves is the most difficult that any human being can undertake. There are perils which might drag us down to depths lower than those which they are likely to touch.

"Before the ear can hear, it must have lost its sensitiveness." This rule precedes the one about speech: "Before the voice can speak in the presence of the Masters it must have lost the power to wound." Losing earthly sensitiveness of hearing enables the neophyte to acquire spiritual sensitiveness of the "inner ear." Then only can the tongue be controlled, by the aid of what is heard, and the spiritual voice arise. But the two processes are simultaneous — like thinking and speaking, though thought precedes, or ought to, words.

### THE FIRST LISTENING

Ordinary enquirers and hasty questioners fail to grasp what is said in response to their queries; inattentive students fail to grasp the passage they are reading; both classes fail because they are listening to the hubbub of their own personal and lower speech. Not only outer noises disturb but internal howls and egotistic self-talk drown the voice of wisdom. "To be able to hear is to have opened the doors of the soul." "The ears [are] the gateways or doors [of the soul]. Through them comes knowl-

edge of the confusion of the world." The result? "[The changing tides of thought] enter into the gateways of his soul, and wash over that soul and make it blind and blank and void of all permanent intelligence."

Thus the first step in the training of the ear is to learn to listen to the Teachings of Theosophy, to learn not to permit the changing tides of worldly thought to wash over our consciousness and make us void of the permanent or immortal intelligence.

### THE SECOND LISTENING

Right study most naturally leads the earnest student to self-examination. Self-knowledge follows — knowledge about the foibles and frailties, the prides and prejudices of one's own lower self, the maker of worldly noises, he who has been contributing his own quota to the din, the babel and the confusion of the world. He, on the other hand, who discerns the pranks of that lower self is the Inner Ego. Because reading or hearing brings to the attention of the student the self-evident fact of his dual nature, he readily and very naturally accepts the teaching, and mistakes his second-hand knowledge for first-hand experience. All students talk of their lower devilish and their higher divine natures but only a few experience this duality, hearing the voice of the inner ego. How many experience the din and the clatter of the outer in which the inner voice is drowned? Unless the disharmony and the bombilation of the outer disturb, nay, sicken us, we do not seek the harmony and the resonance of the within. Our text says: "Use the hearing you have acquired by pain and by the destruction of pain" and in that statement we have the proof that to accept the fact of the existence of the lower in us is not the same as experiencing its power and tenacity. The actual experience that the higher divine broods over us but that we are hedged in, nay, shot through and through by the demoniac is a kind of minor initiation which reveals the depth of three statements in *Light on the Path*:—

To hear the voice of the silence is to understand that from within comes the only true guidance.

When the ear no longer discriminates between that which is pleasant or that which is painful, it will no longer be affected by the voice of others.

In compelling the ears to listen only to the eternal silence the being we call man becomes something which is no longer man.

While these statements refer particularly to what results at the culmination of the practice of the second of the four unnumbered Rules each practitioner perceives, however vaguely, what they imply, at which they are driving. Especially is this true of another statement:—

In that inner place [of peace] there leaps into flame the light of actual knowledge. Then the ears begin to hear.

How shall an aspirant know the extent to which his ears have lost their sensitiveness? The sure test is the Wisdom which wells up with

his own consciousness — convincing him past doubt that the Spirit in the body is at once the admonisher, the guide and the instructor. It is with this stage — the neophyte learning to listen to the Silent Speaker — that the first of the chosen fragments from the “Book of the Golden Precepts” deals, giving many details.

It is well to note that before the ears can listen to the Voice of the Masters they have to learn to attune themselves to the Voice of the “great Master,” “thy *inner* God.” Many in the Theosophical Movement want to run before they can walk; such wish to contact and know the Masters before trying to know their own Inner Ego, and are blissfully ignorant that without union achieved within one’s Self, no real “meeting” with the Masters is possible. Says our text:—

The voice of the Masters is always in the world; but only those hear it whose ears are no longer receptive of the sounds which affect the personal life. Laughter no longer lightens the heart, anger may no longer enrage it, tender words bring it no balm. For that within, to which the ears are as an outer gateway, is an unshaken place of peace in itself which no person can disturb.

This is the ideal goal. It implies the reaching by the neophyte of the place of peace within himself. Slowly, in the beginning very gradually, the would-be chela has to seek his own Inner Ego, and by silencing the senses, the feelings and desires, the cogitations, reasons and images, come to the “blank” and the “void” and wait in patient expectancy to hear the “voice that speaks where there is none to speak.” Many days may, probably will, go by without the ears catching any note, any sound. Desperation, even harassment, often ensues, but perseverance is bound to win. “A calm will come to the harassed spirit. And in the deep silence the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found.” The joy which follows and the satisfaction which is felt undo the work, if the practitioner rests on his oars; without any break the daily exercise of communion between soul and Soul must continue.

Then in the process of time “out of the silence that is peace a resonant voice shall arise. And this voice will say, It is not well; thou hast reaped, now thou must sow.” Then the hour for teaching has come. A danger from the psychic plane threatens the neophyte. He may mistake this voice from “the silence itself” to be something which it is not. Those who show the Way stress that the new listener must recognize the voice as that of his own Inner Self, and check the truth of what he hears by the recorded knowledge of the Illustrious Ones who have preceded him to the final goal of victory.

And it is said, “If thy cry reach his listening ear then will he fight in thee and fill the dull void within.” To seek and find and use the Warrior marks a very important stage. The Soul is poet and painter, saint and sage, but ere he can create, the hero-aspect in him must become active. Our primary touch with the Inner Ego is in the capacity of a warrior meeting a Warrior; as fortune’s favoured soldier who has as

his Guide the Divinest of Generals. Till a person recognizes himself as Nara-Man his battles cannot begin.

The Warrior chases out of our constitution the man of flesh and sin — Papa-Purusha, who has been growing from strength to strength, has been waxing strong and has been occupying the Temple of the God, using it as his own citadel. In helping us to fight he also teaches why and how we should fight. For this reason it is that the Epic Song of Life comes from the Warrior within. Therefore the neophyte is advised:—

Listen to the song of life. . . . Listen to it first in your own heart. At first you may say, It is not there; when I search I find only discord. Look deeper. If again you are disappointed, pause and look deeper again. There is a natural melody, an obscure fount in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced — but it is there. At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope, and love.

The sustained effort of learning from the Warrior, “not as though he were a general, but as though he were thyself,” and applying his teachings to fight the foe and overthrow him, enables the practising aspirant to discern the beauty, the philosophy and the peace of the hitherto martial strains of the Epic of the Soul. What shall he do?

Store in your memory the melody you hear. Learn from it the lesson of harmony. . . . Only fragments of the great song come to your ears while yet you are but man. But if you listen to it, remember it faithfully, so that none which has reached you is lost [this is an important clause] and endeavour to learn from it the meaning of the mystery which surrounds you. . . . You will by degrees be able to read the larger word of life.

In proportion as the enemy is subdued, and he cheerfully obeys orders from Within, the interior, the loftier, purer strains of the music of life begin to fall on the ears which have now well-nigh lost their fleshly quality. Then follows — “the pause of the soul [which] is the moment of wonder, and the next moment of satisfaction, that is the silence”; and it is written that “the utter silence which can only come by closing the ears to all transitory sounds comes as a more appalling horror than even the formless emptiness of space.” This is a test of and in supernature: The inner stamina to rely on one’s Self, not to tremble with fear but to see, understand and appreciate the “silence” and “the void” which is the Voice of the Plenum. “Once having heard it [within yourself] you will more readily recognize it around you.”

### THE THIRD LISTENING

For convenience of explanation and understanding we have made a division between the second and the third types of listening. Exactly as we experience fluctuations in our own consciousness — moods of soul-

elation and depression, or successful concentration and annoying and dejecting dispersion of thoughts and breakage of laboriously constructed Images — so also there is an intimate, almost a mathematical, relation subsisting between our own higher nature's command and the kingship over our lower nature and our ability to hear the Voice of the Great Ones. One marked feature of *Probationary Learning* is that while the Teachers instruct, the pupils are ignorant, more or less, of Their very presence. As the practitioner learns to discriminate between the voices of his own lower good nature — the vicious tendencies being fairly under control — and of his own higher spiritual nature, he also acquires the power to discern the Voice of the Master within the Voice of his own Inner Ego. On the other hand, he has also to learn how the tempting, glamouring voices of "the Dad-Dugpa clan" penetrate through his vices and weaknesses, creating Doubt and Hypocrisy and raising his centre of separative self to unsuspected heights of sheer Egotism.

The Hall of Probationary Learning and that of Real Learning or of Wisdom represent two stages of unfolding human consciousness. Each aspirant moves and fluctuates between these two — for years, for lives. Day after day in waking consciousness, night after night in subjective ideation of that consciousness (foul or fair, vague and fanciful or deliberate and image-forming, tending towards the delights of Kama or steadily absorbing the light of Buddhi), the practitioner is approaching the Moment of Choice — going upward because he has succeeded or downward because he has failed. And even though he has failed, "the voice of the silence remains within him, and though he leave the path utterly, yet one day it will resound and rend him asunder and separate his passions from his divine possibilities."

The greatest danger enveloping the Probationary Listener comes through his psychic nature — not ordinary vices, but exaggerated virtues which unknown to himself become gross intellectual and even spiritual vices. These take shape and they are of hard-iron substance, most difficult, almost impossible, to break. Safer it is therefore not to let our weaknesses grow into vices; and not to let our vices coalesce and take shape. Attend to impersonalizing yourself — this is the Way of Virtue. Only those hear the voice of the Masters "whose ears are no longer receptive of the sounds which affect the personal life."

When this danger is overcome the knowledge of controlling the "powers of the Air," the fastening Lhamayin in endless space, is also sufficiently acquired. Love of Nature which springs from the appreciation of the grand unity of all in Nature, the result of the action of the Law of Interdependence, provides the safety for the would-be magician and adept. To learn to use all forms of life, without any injury to them, much more without their total destruction, is to learn the method which the Masters adopt. Vast Nature is the Concert Hall, the Lodge of Masters the perfect Recorder of all her notes, scales and melodies. With the aid of this accurate and perfect Record They create Mantras —

sound and word aphorisms — for Their Chelas. Again, vast Nature is a Museum, of which every specimen and species is studied and the beneficent or maleficent properties thereof are tabulated and used for the instruction of Their Chelas. Again, the archetypes in the vast Picture Gallery of Akasa are reduced to their typical forms which the Masters offer, in tables and diagrams, as clues for Their Chelas to meditate upon and decipher. In these and other ways each disciple perfects his power to listen to the Voice of his own Master and then of His Peers and of the Great Lodge.

But all this learning and acquiring of secret knowledge and the unfolding of superphysical faculties is not for the chela's personal progression and perfection. He who learns to listen also learns to speak. In fact it is because he can speak that the Masters allow and enable the chela to hear. One of the ways, and a highly important way, in which the Great Ones sustain Their Voice in the world of mortals is by using the speech of Their devoted disciples pledged to serve Orphan Humanity.

To the consideration of Speech then let us turn.

*(To be concluded)*

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“Man is mankind's sole surviving deadly enemy, and he is the most formidable enemy that mankind has ever had,” opines Dr. Arnold Toynbee in his article reprinted from the *London Observer* in *Bhavan's Journal* of November 26th. He compares the long-enduring human race to a bull at the altar of sacrifice; and the knives that threaten to take his life, to the new weapons of the atomic age. In this hour, he says, the voice of all mankind has a right to be heard “above the familiar din of squabbling tribes and sects.”

This time the human race has a right not only to be given a hearing but also to present a demand. We, the human race, make a new demand upon all human beings now living. Because the survival of the human race is now in doubt, and will remain in doubt so long as pre-atomic age human habits persist, every man and woman is called upon to make a radical break with some of the traditional human ways of feeling, thinking and acting. Henceforth we are all called upon to give our paramount loyalty to the human race itself. Our traditional lesser loyalties to tribes and sects must be subordinate to this overriding one. In the last resort they must be thrown overboard, if this proves to be the price of saving mankind itself from shipwreck.

Dreadful as is the prospect of a nuclear war, we need not fear, as do Dr. Toynbee and other thinkers in our age, that mankind will forever be wiped out from the face of our globe. The new weapons of our atomic age may destroy our civilization, but Man, the Eternal Pilgrim, can never be destroyed and will always build anew.

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## THE OCCULT SIDE OF NATURE

Love of mystery seems to be an inherent characteristic of man. It lies at the root of science and its efforts to solve the mysteries of Nature, in the heart of the *yogi* who wishes to probe the Mystery of the Universe and of his own nature, and at the core of the religious man's belief in miracles. It is reflected today in mystery novels, in the interest shown in the solving of murders, in science fiction. The ordinary man is evincing great interest in the occult, the hidden, in those things which are a mystery to him but understandable by the man who has attained to knowledge. Owing to the professions and practices of many pseudo-occultists, the word "occult" has become associated in the minds of many with hocus-pocus.

From the Theosophical point of view, however, the hidden and the occult refer to that which is behind or at the core of manifestation and which is unseen by us. We are told that there are no unsolvable mysteries anywhere, and therefore what to us is the unseen or hidden side of Nature can be seen by those who have developed the power required for seeing it.

H.P.B. tells us in her first book, *Isis Unveiled*, that there are no miracles. Law works everywhere in the Cosmos, and therefore it is only when we are not familiar with the workings of Law that we say that this or that is a miracle. She adds that the laws governing the so-called "miracles" were once known to man and will again become known in the future. It is the stress laid by Theosophy on the possibility of gaining knowledge through personal effort and merit that makes it a living, vital philosophy of life. And this is strongly pointed out in *Isis Unveiled*:—

*The trinity of nature is the lock of magic, the trinity of man the key that fits it. . .*

Magic, as a science, is the knowledge of these principles, and of the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice. . . .

One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will.

We also learn of the characteristics of Nature that are useful to man — magnetism and electricity; an intimate and practical knowledge of these is the corner-stone of magic. Man, in his search for full knowledge which gives control over Nature, has to know all the "qualities, correlations and potencies" of these two powers which are everywhere in Nature as also in man. What will enable us to gain this knowledge and to wield the power it gives? The Will. *Isis Unveiled* has this to say about will-power:—

The great Universal Idea willed, and the eosmos sprang into existence. I *will*, and my limbs obey. I *will*, and, my thought traversing space, which does not exist for it, envelops the body of another individual who is not a part of myself, penetrates through his pores, and, superseding his own faculties, if they are weaker, forces him to a predetermined action. (I. 144)

### How does this will act in Nature?

The mysterious effects of attraction and repulsion are the *unconscious* agents of that will; fascination, such as we see exercised by some animals, by serpents over birds, for instance, is a *conscious* action of it, and the result of thought. Sealing-wax, glass, and amber, when rubbed... attract light bodies; they exercise unconsciously, *will*; for inorganic as well as organic matter possesses a particle of the *divine* essence in itself, however infinitesimally small it may be... Man, the most perfect of organized beings on earth, in whom matter and spirit — *i.e.*, *will* — are the most developed and powerful, is alone allowed to give a conscious impulse to that principle which emanates from him; and only he can impart to the magnetic fluid opposite and various impulses without limit as to the direction. "He wills," says Du Potet, "and *organized* matter obeys." (*Ibid.*)

The latent Deity, or latent force, at its first manifestation became Will and communicated the first impulse to the atoms, whose agglomeration is matter (*Isis*, I. 61). Just as the "Intelligent Idea," by directing its will power toward a centre of localized forces, causes objective forms to appear, so can man, the microcosm of the great Macrocosm, do the same in proportion to the development of his will power. He shares this divine potency with every atom in the Universe, and exercises it throughout his life, consciously or unconsciously. In the former case, when he is in the full possession of his powers, he controls and guides the Universal Soul. In the case of animals, plants, minerals and the average of humanity, this "ethereal fluid," which pervades all things, finding no resistance and being left to itself, moves them as its impulse directs. (*Isis*, I. 213)

Is the will fluidic? There is no such thing, we learn, as empty space. Universal Mind is everywhere; the universal fluid is everywhere. In *Isis Unveiled* (I. 172-3) H.P.B. gives some propositions of Mesmer and among them is this:—

A fluid, universally diffused and continued, so as to admit no vacuum, whose subtilty is beyond all comparison, and which, from its nature, is capable of receiving, propagating, and communicating all the impressions of motion, is the medium of this influence [the mutual influence between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and living bodies].

One of the aims of *The Secret Doctrine*, we are told in the Preface is "to show that the occult side of Nature has never been approached by the Science of modern civilization." And H.P.B. gives the key to

science, if it will accept it, for making this approach: "Esoteric philosophy proves the necessity of an absolute Divine Principle in Nature."

Here we can go to the *Gita*. In Chapter VII Krishna says: "Enveloped by my magic illusion I am not visible to the world; therefore the world doth not recognize me, the unborn and exhaustless." And throughout the book we are constantly brought back to this Divine Principle acting in all.

What shall we do with this knowledge? Meditation upon it will bring home to us the truth of the brotherhood that exists between all creatures, between the earth and the stars and the planets, between the tiny grain of sand and the vast universe. It should help us to realize that every action, conscious or unconscious, affects the whole of Nature. Those who impress Nature deliberately with evil are gradually led into sorcery; those who consciously impress it with good become in time White Magicians. Once we learn the laws of life, we can and should use this knowledge consciously, will-fully, so that we make of Nature our ally, pupil and servant. We have not to "control" Nature for destructive purposes, but to work on with her. Only by working with Nature can Nature work in harmony with us, but if we use her for our own purposes she will in time destroy us.

All the virtues we can develop, all the ethical teachings that lie at the heart of all religions and philosophies, are ways of using occult powers rightly. And it should be borne in mind that every virtue has its corresponding vice; every step taken on the path of light arouses the corresponding forces of darkness.

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My own view — it's entirely unorthodox — is that mankind is not the greatest force in the universe. We're not the lords of the universe. "Pride goeth before a fall," and all that. My belief is that human beings can make themselves behave properly only if they get over their self-centredness and realize that the universe is not made to suit us. . . .

This implies that there is some kind of rule of the road that we must conform to. We're subject to a kind of moral law that is not our own desires, and our job is to find out what that law is.

—ARNOLD TOYNBEE

## THE WEB OF DESTINY

“Destiny” is a word that puzzles most people. What it is, how it is made, and who is responsible for it, is not known to the majority of people. Individuals and nations, races and civilizations, rise to fall and fall to rise like the tides in the ocean. The belief that all that happens is the result of destiny has led men and women to an irresponsible way of thinking and living, and therefore to negligence of their own duties, fear of their fellow beings and constant despair for the state of affairs in the world. It has also driven them away from the path of self-effort for true spiritual freedom. Somehow it is usually considered that destiny is woven by a personal God, separate from man and nature, according to his own whim and fancy. For some, he is so liberal as to shower sunshine and happiness all through their lives, and on them fortune always smiles. With others he is strict and severe; their destiny is full of knots; they have to struggle hard for their very existence from birth and find no way out of that bondage! Thus, from the cradle to the grave people succumb to the sway of their so-called destiny.

It is also believed that destiny depends on the stars, that each individual is born under the influence of certain stars, that no one and nothing can change the course of what is predestined and preordained, and that what will be, will be! There are others who do not take this view but consider themselves masters of their own fate and therefore fully responsible for their own choices and moves in right or wrong directions.

Theosophy teaches that destiny, or fate, and free will are both necessary for evolution. Man is a self-moving unit with the power to think and choose. He may think ten times before he makes his choice, but, once it is made, that choice becomes his destiny by which he is bound down. Today's destiny is made by each individual through his choices in the past, as today's choices will weave his future destiny. So destiny has three aspects — past-present-future according to time; cause-effect-cause in terms of motion. If man makes the choice to go in the right direction, he moves forward in space, in his evolutionary march; if he chooses the wrong direction, he slips backward. Thus man himself is the weaver of his destiny, and thread by thread the pattern is woven. If the basic principles of the Eternal Verities are kept in mind and applied, the pattern of life will be in terms of Truth, Goodness and Beauty. It is true that at times our wrong actions in the past may create obstacles in our way, in our right endeavours, but if the attitude is right they can be taken as stepping-stones to further progress.

The first of those principles is that Alaya's Self or God, and Eternal Harmony or Law, are synonymous terms. Were no man to break the Harmony, “Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, no weapons to act through” (*S.D.*, I. 643). Karma, the Law of Moral Retribution, works on this plane of heterogeneity because man continually breaks the harmony through his selfish actions; the Law only bring

about adjustments. If, instead of working impulsively and psychically, he were to act noetically, after deliberate thought, then harmony would prevail, this earth would be transformed into an Arcadia of lofty souls and all kinds of strifes and struggles would cease. So this Law of Harmony neither rewards nor punishes, being an impersonal Law. It cannot be prayed to or propitiated; it "knows not wrath nor pardon." Sir Edwin Arnold makes Lord Buddha speak of it thus in *The Light of Asia*, Book VIII:—

It will not be contemned of anyone;  
 Who thwarts it loses, who serves it gains;  
 The hidden good it pays with peace and bliss,  
 The hidden ill with pains.

So, in weaving our destiny it is necessary to remember at every step and at every turn not to *thwart* the Law but to *serve* it, which can only be done by preserving harmony within ourselves and outside of us. The Law works not only on the plane of action but also on the plane of thought and feeling, which is hidden. Destiny is woven in the minds of men, thread by thread, the threads of Love and Life; and Death and Pain are the shuttles of its loom. How to serve the Law? It is explained by Lord Buddha in the simplest way:—

Evil swells the debts to pay,  
 Good delivers and acquits;  
 Shun evil, follow good; hold sway  
 Over thyself. This is the Way.

Self-control is the key to open the gates of Harmony. Good and evil exist only in the human kingdom. Working with the Law, serving it, spells good; going against it, thwarting it, means evil. Both good and evil are relative terms in this phenomenal universe, the results of pure or impure thinking.

"Sow a thought, reap an act; sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny." Thought, act, habit, character and destiny form a chain of cause and effect, from the inner to the outward planes of life. Destiny starts with the choice of the seeds of thought, how and where they are planted, how they are nurtured, what flowers and fruits they will bear. Each one is born with a divine destiny; he himself is the weaver of his freedom. No one compels him to act in one or another manner.

The second principle of the Eternal Verities to be remembered in serving the Law is to act for and as the Self of all creatures; to think not of one's own benefit but of the good of all. Whatever one has by way of knowledge, capacity, possession, is to be shared with others. The divine plane where harmony rules supreme radiates the light of Wisdom and of Compassion. The light that we have received has to be used to illumine the path of others. We have to be in attunement with the kingdoms below us because they are all within us, and it is our privilege and

responsibility to train them and give them a forward impetus. Before making any choice, the good of the whole is to be considered.

The third principle that would enable us to serve the Law efficiently is to live in the world without being of the world. It is not by escaping from the world but by living with suffering humanity, alleviating its suffering to some extent at least, that the Law can be served. False asceticism leads one to desert his family duties, to go away from his kith and kin; this is thwarting the Law. Theosophy teaches us to perform every duty with a different attitude of mind and heart, so that living in the world we may soar higher, above the ways of the world — *i.e.*, not get involved in worldly allurements, not have attachment for worldly things, but serve our fellow beings by serving the Law. Thus life and all worldly things will acquire new values.

One of the qualifications for chelaship is: "Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world, in its relation with, and to, the invisible regions." Thus, personal life can be adjusted to the spiritual realities. The interrelationship between the inner and the outer worlds will be established harmoniously. Each individual, as he attempts to transform his thinking and acting, will build a better, nobler character and weave his destiny according to the archetypal pattern. It is not the stars that rule our destiny, but *we* put ourselves under the influence of the stars according to our behaviour and conduct. We are put in favourable or unfavourable circumstances not by an outside god but by ourselves, as we deserve them in terms of our self-made destiny. When this is understood, the word "destiny" ceases to mean fatalism. It is not something static but moves according to the free will of man. That great power of the will is to be trained and directed along spiritual lines so that the threads of personal bondage may be loosened and divine destiny fulfilled. The weaver weaves according to a certain pattern. Every individual has to keep before his mind's eye the embodiments of the Divine Pattern, the never-failing guardians of the Eternal Law, so that Their instructions may prove a source of inspiration and energization in serving the Law while living in this world of ignorance and darkness.

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If you urge that I am young and tender, and that the time for seeking wisdom is not yet, then you should know that to seek true religion there never is a time not fit.

—*Fo-sho-hing-tsan-king*

## THE UNFOLDING UNIT

In all human beings consciousness is a unit, is indivisible. However many its manifestations through one instrument or another, it is always a unit and that is why we call ourselves individuals.

That indivisible unit is constantly unfolding and growing, progressing and advancing. Consciousness is like a seed; it unfolds from within without by the powers latent within it.

The relation of that unit, that individual, to anything we are dealing with has to be sought. If we are dealing with the mind, we have to look for the relationship of the individual to the mind. If we are dealing with the feelings, we have to look for the relationship of the individual to the feelings. Whether we are dealing with impulses, instincts, intuitions, or anything else, we cannot isolate them from the individual. That unit or that individual remains one and the same, whatever it deals with. It deals with different things because it, as an indivisible unit, is in the process of unfoldment. Unfoldment implies its contact with new and newer things. It grows from within without and, therefore, with every step of growth it contacts a different phase and more of the without.

From that simple view we can survey the whole field of evolution and ourselves in it.

What is true of consciousness which is human is also true of all individualized consciousness. That consciousness which is the consciousness of an atom is a unit, indivisible, unfolding. That consciousness which is the consciousness of a cosmos or a world is a unit, indivisible, unfolding.

The unfolding unit that we call consciousness never came into being and can never go out of being. It always *is*. The process of its unfoldment is a continuous one. Hence, what we call our human soul or consciousness is timeless; it lives continuously.

Our instincts, our impulses, our feelings, our emotions, our thoughts, our intuitions are all instruments through which the indivisible and unfolding life, the consciousness or soul, makes its own growth, carves out its own path of evolution. It looks to us as if there are many different entities in us when we look at them from without. We are apt to make a division and say, "My feelings are different from my thoughts." We put emphasis on the words "feelings" and "thoughts," forgetting to put emphasis on the common word "my" — *my* feelings and *my* thoughts. We proceed from the point of view of that which divides instead of proceeding from the point of view of that which is the common basis. That "*my*" is the indivisible aspect and feelings, thoughts, etc., are the unfolding aspect.

We are unfolding different aspects of ourselves. If we look only at these different aspects we cannot know what we are. We proceed by the method of analysis instead of proceeding by the true method of synthesis. We proceed from details to laws, from particulars to universals. The ancient method was to proceed from the universal to the particular. Therefore we find that in all old books the description of the creation of the

universe precedes the description of the creation of man. Man is because the universe is. Mind is because the soul is. We have today reversed the process.

Modern science posits the brain and the sense-organs as the primary factors, consciousness as the secondary factor. Asiatic philosophy and Theosophic teaching say: Because man desired to see, therefore the sense of sight was conceived by him; and because he conceived the sense of sight, therefore he built for himself the organ, the eye. He wanted to think, and therefore he developed the mind; because he wanted the mind to work a body, therefore he built the brain. Brain did not produce thought; it is the product of the mind. Mind developed because of the energizing power of creative thought in human consciousness.

Therefore we have to proceed with our "I" and trace in the human constitution as it is at the present moment the ramifications of that "I." We must, first, get this thought clearly in our mind that everything in the body of the universe is in the human body, for the same reason that everything that is in cosmic or God-consciousness is in human consciousness. The properties of the drop of water are the same as the properties of the ocean. The properties of a ray of light coming through a window are the same as the properties of light everywhere. Human consciousness, being part of the divine consciousness, has in it all the properties of the divine consciousness. Certain aspects of divine consciousness have already manifested themselves in us; certain other aspects have not yet made themselves manifest. An understanding of this is the first step towards finding our own place in the scheme of the universe.

We have all unfolded, at various stages of our evolution, sense consciousness, feeling or emotional consciousness and mind consciousness. A new faculty is now unfolding in the human kingdom—intuition; hence we speak of intuitional consciousness. We may unfold still other aspects of consciousness during our evolution in the future.

There is a science which tells us how to deal with these many aspects of our consciousness or soul. That science is the result of correlating the experiences of human beings for millions of years and the common fund of experience gives us the common sense which enables us to know what truth is. Common sense is that sense which enables us to go to that common fund of experience. That is what the science of Theosophy, the Science of the Soul, deals with. It is a science which explains all phenomena and all experiences of all souls, and as each of us is a soul it is a science that touches us intimately.

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## THE FUNCTION OF THEOSOPHISTS

Many student-practitioners of Theosophy recognize that their foremost duty is to make the influence of Theosophy felt in the world. But how to go about it is not clear to some. Some discrimination is necessary on our part in the selection of our work. Our task lies in ourselves becoming living, breathing centres of light and hope for others, in spiritualizing the intellectual and moral atmosphere of the world. This noble task can be performed in two ways: (1) by at least a few *living* the Theosophical life; and (2) by the propagation of the great teachings of our Philosophy.

"Theosophical life" is an expression which is often not fully understood. It is not only a life of service, but service of a particular kind, rendered in a particular manner. All service is noble and good; all work is useful work; but there is a certain kind of service, a certain type of work, which is fundamentally ours. How can a spiritual renaissance take place in the world unless at least a few live the life of meditation, of real devotion, that will flood the atmosphere with the life-currents that purify and build the inner life of the world? What is advocated is not a quiet life, without work, but a life which keeps in view the spiritual and inner basis of things in the midst of a thousand activities of the earth — a life of consecration to the Masters, a life which understands the hidden phases of outer happenings, and which deals with the latter wisely, according to occult laws and principles. But the hidden phases of outer happenings cannot be perceived unless the Inner Light of the Soul is focused on each world event. The happenings in the world of action proceed from the world of Ideation; and, unless we live and labour in the latter, we are more or less bound to fail in our attempts to handle it successfully.

Now, how can we live and labour in that inner world of Ideation? How are we to obtain the power of spiritual perception? The Light of the Immortal God within us has to be made to illumine our brain-consciousness and, through it, all our activities and all the objects that we contact. Not an escape into the superphysical regions of the universe, but a descent of the Immortal Inner Ruler in the purified and sanctified temple of the body should be our objective.

H.P.B. has said that one of the necessary qualifications for the spiritual life is an unshakable belief in one's own inner powers, and she speaks of the God within as the "Initiator of Initiates." That Immortal Ruler lives his own life in his own world and unfolds his wonderful spirituality. He is there — the real Self in each one of us, and as human beings ours is the task so to work and so to worship that with the help of a concentrated mind and a purified heart the Inner Ruler is able to manifest his nature through the physical body in the physical world. Therefore the study of the Holy Lore and the Ancient Wisdom is essential; so is constant and regular meditation; for, without these, our activities will but take us round and round the ever-widening circle of

materialism, as in the case of him who said:—

Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
 Doctor and Saint, and heard great argument  
 About it and about: but evermore  
 Came out by the same door as in I went.

In this *Kali Yuga* when class fights against class and nation wars with nation, Theosophists must render the great service of showing humanity the way to Real Freedom, not by precept but by example, remembering that true Altruism consists in oneself leading a positive Life of Brotherhood. "Lead the life necessary for the acquisition of knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally," said a Master once. Therefore the first thing is to live the life — the life of meditation and study.

The second task before us is the spreading of Theosophical teachings. Our work is to prepare the atmosphere for the universal reception of the Three Fundamental Propositions of Theosophy as given by H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine*. The application of these Propositions, and all that they imply, to the problems that confront us every day is our task; but let us not forget that, while we are engaged in the work of application, we have the duty of popularizing those three Propositions. It may be that there exist in the world people better fitted to apply these and other Theosophical teachings to the work of everyday life; our task is to see that none are kept in ignorance of the teachings. In the great rush of many-sided activities, we are apt to overlook the fact that we in this day and generation are the trustees of the Wisdom which the Blessed Masters gave through H.P.B., and as such it is our solemn duty to make that Wisdom known by Life and by Work.

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In such a great work as this Movement no one should expect to find his associates all congenial, intuitive, prudent or courageous. One of the first proofs of self-mastery is when one shows that he can be kind and forbearing and genial with companions of the most dissimilar characters and temperaments. One of the strongest signs of retrogression is when one shows that he expects others to like what he likes and act as he acts. . . . You are too many here. With more or less bits of too much self-personality.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

## PREHISTORIC LINKS

The Indian Prime Minister's visit to Mexico has stimulated interest in the national press of both countries and they have come out with stories of prehistoric links between India and the original inhabitants of Mexico. Dewan Chaman Lal's article in *The Times of India* of November 12th, 1961, refers to the view held by Mexican historians and anthropologists that contacts between India and Mexico were at least 2,000 years old. The author had concluded the Preface to his historic book, *Hindu-America*, with these pregnant words:—

The fire of sacrifice (Yagna) that was kindled by our forefathers in Pataldesha (America), is still burning in the hearts of many millions of Americans and the day is not far off when free India will reclaim America to her cultural fold.

Like the Indians, the Mexicans too have an ancient history as they were one of the oldest civilized peoples in the world. Long before European civilization had come to the Western hemisphere, they had passed through two flourishing civilizations, the relics of which are still preserved. Mexican Indians have been credited with building some of the proudest monuments in Latin America. Madame H. P. Blavatsky refers to the subject by remarking that

a most suggestive fact is the *startling resemblance between the architecture of these colossal buildings and that of the archaic European nations*. Mr. Fergusson regards the analogies between the ruins of "Inca" civilization and the Cyclopean remains of the Pelasgians in Italy and Greece as a coincidence "the most remarkable in the history of architecture." "It is difficult to resist the conclusion that there may be some relation between them." (*S.D.*, II. 745)

From Sanchi to Central America one can note a striking similarity in architecture; and how could one explain the prevalence of Hindu and Buddhist touches in Maya palaces and temples without reference to the fact that the ancient civilization, whether Aztec, Maya or Inca, of the two Americas owed its origin to the ancient culture of India?

Madame Blavatsky in her monumental work, speaking of events hundreds of thousands of years old, "nay, even millions . . . not of any of those events which happened during the few thousand years of the pre-historic margin allowed by timid and ever-cautious history," quotes from Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg:—

Traditions, whose traces recur in Mexico, in Central America, in Peru, and in Bolivia, suggest the idea that man existed in these different countries at the time of the gigantic upheaval of the Andes, and that he has retained the memory of it. (II. 745)

Detailing the Mexican interest in India's ancient cultural relations, Dewan Chaman Lal refers in his article to various questions asked by Mexican scholars on the subject, and expresses the view that the con-

tacts were at least 3,000 years old. Skilled navigators from India had in those times carried Indian culture, commerce and religion to far-off lands on the fringes of the vast Pacific Ocean. He adds:—

From Amaravati to America, ancient ruins tell the story of a mighty Hindu civilization. The tide of Hinduism which spread over a span of nearly twenty centuries and finally crossed the Pacific, first firmly established itself in Cambodia. The *Ramayana* speaks of Suvarna-dvipa and Yava-dvipa—ancient Sumatra and Java. The Puranas mention Malaya-dvipa.

A prince of Kalinga founded the Hindu State of Java. Mahayana Buddhism took root in Central Java under the powerful dynasty of the Sailendras. The supreme achievement of the dynasty was the Borobudur shrine. The monuments of Angkor, built later, are essentially Hindu in spirit, with many features common to Brahminism and Buddhism.

This theory of ancient Indo-American contacts, it is gratifying to note, has found support from such leading anthropologists of Europe and America as Dr. Robert Heine Geldern of Vienna and Dr. Eckholm of New York, who are reported to have said:—

The time has come when we must no longer take shelter under psychological excuses, but admit close cultural contacts between America, India and other South-East Asian countries, from the first to the twelfth century A.D.

The official history of Mexico published by its Foreign Office has, according to Dewan Chaman Lal, clearly stated that

those who first arrived on the continent later to be known as America were groups of men driven by that mighty current that set out from India towards the East.

Referring further to Indo-Mexican links, he continues:—

Significantly, the Mexican expression for a boat is the South Indian Tamil word “catamaran.” . . . The largest temple in Mexico City founded in the 16th century was the temple of Lord Siva. It had 3,000 Devadasis, a typical South Indian custom, recently abolished by the Union Government. I have brought with me pictures of seven-storeyed gopurams and temples with one thousand pillars still standing in Central America. Vishnu, Hanuman, Vamana and Kurma were worshipped all over Central America. Hanuman masks are sold at tourist shops in Mexico.

Turning to the subject of snake worship, one sees further kinship between the two countries, for the ancient Mexicans are known to have celebrated a festival very similar to India’s Naga-Panchami. In Mexico are to be found many familiar Naga temples, serpent columns and balustrades. Shri Morarji Desai, the Indian Finance Minister, who has visited the villages inhabited by the Red Indians in Mexico, is stated to

have agreed with Dewan Chaman Lal that they were the descendants of the Nagas of Assam. A shrine in the Mexican town of Milla has its parallel in the majestic thousand-pillared temples of South India, such as the one in Rameshwaram, and of Angkor. Madame Blavatsky's words on this theme will be of interest:—

Some of the descendants of the primitive Nagas, the Serpents of Wisdom, peopled America, when its continent arose during the palmy days of the great Atlantis (America being the *Patala* or Antipodes of Jambu-Dwipa, not of Bharata-Varsha). Otherwise, whence the traditions and legends — the latter *always more true than history*, as says Augustin Thierry — and even the identity in the names of certain “medicine men” and priests, who exist to this day in Mexico? We shall have to say something of the *Nargals* and the *Nagals* and also of *Nagalism*, called “devil-worship” by the Missionaries. (*S.D.*, II. 182)

In this context, Columbus' believing that he had discovered India when he touched the shores of the American continent seems not to be wrong in one sense, for the Hindus were there long before him. When one remembers that every new investigation reveals fresh evidence of the existence of Indo-American links long before recorded history, H. P. Blavatsky's apt quotation from Donnelly's *Atlantis: the Ante-Diluvian World* is most suggestive, as it contains, to quote her, “the words of one of the most intuitive writers of the day” and is “admirably illustrative of the opinions of the occultist, who awaits in patience the dawn of the coming day”:—

We are but beginning to understand the past; one hundred years ago the world knew nothing of Pompeii or Herculaneum; nothing of the lingual tie that binds together the Indo-European nations; nothing of the significance of the vast volume of inscriptions upon the tombs and temples of Egypt; nothing of the meaning of the arrow-headed inscriptions of Babylon; nothing of the marvellous civilizations revealed in the remains of Yucatan, Mexico, and Peru. We are on the threshold. Scientific investigation is advancing with giant strides. Who shall say that one hundred years from now, the great museums of the world may not be adorned with gems, statues, arms, and implements from Atlantis, while the libraries of the world shall contain translations of its inscriptions, throwing new light upon all the past history of the human race, and all the great problems which now perplex the thinkers of today. (*S.D.*, II. 793)

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## EXTRACTS FROM UNPUBLISHED LETTERS

Dharma is the law of self-nature, not of the lower self-nature but the incarnated ego's self-nature. The incarnated ray of the human ego is one thing and that ray getting involved with Kama is another thing. We must make a distinction between Kama-Manas and the *Antahkaranic* being which separates itself from Kama and goes in the direction of the parent overbrooded by Atma-Buddhi. The individual *Dharma* of the ego is really of the nature of the Atma-Buddhi-Manasic Monad in relationship to its Parent Star or original Dhyani-Buddha.

Narrow and circumscribing feelings and thoughts, which conventions consider good, remain narrow and circumscribing for the soul. This is the real test of the earnest student of Theosophy. As Mr. Judge points out, we often have the defects of our qualities. Do we not often form a wrong conviction or an overestimate of what we call our duty? If we apply the word *Dharma*, the property of the soul, it must manifest in action as burning is manifested by fire; then we would not be worried about right and wrong duties. The fire gives warmth, but the fire also burns up and destroys; our duties or actions must be such that they give warmth and comfort to others, but at the same time consume and destroy the personal ties and possessions of our own lower nature. This is the idea that you should keep in mind in this period when things must look very grim.

We have to do duties and remain detached. This is the Buddhi Yoga of the second chapter of the *Gita*. We have to become devoted and think of Masters all the time, and that need not mean neglecting the duties of earning a livelihood or doing tasks at home, which too can and should be theosophized.

Our daily chores may seem bothersome, but they teach (1) patience, (2) steadfastness and (3) how to derive joy by looking up to their archetypes. "Hitch your wagon to a star," and the slowness and fatigues of the jogging journey begin to disappear. That is what we have to do. We can and should be and are learning. "A calm reliance on the Law," you say — that is the real thing we need. If we actually had it we would neither fret nor be bothered, and anxiety and worry would vanish. As to patience, if you try to develop it in small things you will not only find it possible but will also speed up the unfoldment.

You will find as you strive that each effort leads to success — however slow in coming that success be. Of course, it is but natural that your ordinary family vocations "bore" you; but don't be bored, my friend. You are acquiring a new attitude and readjustments are always troublesome. Keep on loving all and working for them. The ties of Home are kindred to the ties of Heaven.

About the duty of another being dangerous: Judge's Aphorisms clarify several points. It always seems to me that much simplification results by a primary application of the teaching — "That which is not *necessary* for you to do is not your duty." A big bulk falls away; among it all "the duty of another." Lending a helping hand is our duty; Judge's Aphorism is very clear. There the genuine difficulty is that the "help" depends on our knowledge and capacity to understand so as to help. Of course it *is* a very difficult problem; but *Vairagya* as one of the seven aspects of Compassion Absolute gives us the clue and very often reveals what should be done and how. One factor: in helping another we must not do his job but must aid him to accomplish it.

Our duty to our Higher Self may produce what looks like conflict of duties in the personal life; but if we apply to our myriad duties the Law of Necessity we see daylight and are able to resolve the conflict. That which is necessary alone is regarded as duty. It does estrange us sometimes from family and friends. But if we live truly according to Esoteric Principles the bonds and bondage of Karma fall away. One should not break them; the Good Law and Its Custodians remove afflictions of personal Karma. It is said, Karma always opens the door.

Of course the Law of Necessity is difficult of application. But it certainly helps us to eliminate many a so-called duty. Then naturally arises conflict of duties on a higher spiral. There the need must be felt by the soul. Helping of others — kin, friends or strangers — is the need of one's own soul, as much as it is needed by those others. But in this "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work" becomes our guide. Between duty and inclination the choice is to be made; also to avoid impulsive words and actions and to be deliberate in speech and deeds is necessary. It is a Great Game — the recreation side of the School of Occultism.

The Law of Necessity offers awkwardnesses and obstacles; inclinations call out in the name of necessity. *Sva-dharma's* one aspect is duties which are congenital; but the perceiver and determinator of every *dharma* is the lower self of likes and inclinations. Then comes the next stage — the conflict of duties; that is where you now are. Immediately follow higher motives and inclinations and the conflict is between the lower and the higher, as you are experiencing at this hour. It is at this stage that we have H.P.B.'s pointer — justice to one's own soul-self. Theosophical work is not a matter of choice only. Do we not need it? Do we not feel the deep necessity to attend to the chosen job? Body needs nourishment — all recognize that; some of us recognize the need for mental and for soul food and the latter Theosophical work and service provide. As we develop discrimination we are able to see to which duty preference is to be given and in that resignation (inner) is the aid. Conservation of time and energy goes a great way in our success.

Once again I am exceedingly sorry to point out to you that in trying to do many things your execution of your own duties is becoming poorer. Why meddle in things which don't concern you? Well, I know you have not been well bodily; then why not *stricily* attend to your own *dharma* and not try to help here and there? All that is necessary for you in your relationship to others is to be friendly, not to do things for them involving time and energy. Unless you learn to use your leisure to recoup your own strength and magnetism you will fast deteriorate in doing your own work. This is not a threat; it is a warning. I suppose I can never make you catch up with the work so as to have respite. Whenever you have time it is spent in unnecessary work. You would be able to accomplish more if you minded your own duties, without inventing something in the name of duties.

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When one stops to think, to weigh, and to consider what is one's duty, or which of many duties should be performed first, it is indeed perplexing and difficult to know *what* to do. But if you will do just what lies before you without thinking about all the other things and without troubling your mind about all the things you can't do, then it will be all different and everything will grow brighter for you. Do what you have to do now, and don't trouble about other things; they will be looked after in due time; but what will help you in all these matters is to be content, to do what you can, and to let the rest go; act with a high motive; have kindly feelings towards all; do some little act of kindness every day and try to realize that the end of all this will be happiness and peace for all humanity. Then a foretaste of that peace will enter your own heart. There is a bright side to life and what makes the brightness is the love which each of us may have for humanity.

I trust you will go on unfalteringly. Do not be depressed by anything. It is of no use. Besides it may be avoided if you will avoid setting down, to be achieved, any certain results as to persons, numbers, times or otherwise. We must be satisfied with what the time and Karma give us after we have done our duty and the best.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

“What are the new experiences forced upon us by the new environment in which we now find ourselves?” was a question that came up repeatedly before the Tagore Centennial International Literary Seminar which met in New Delhi in the middle of November (*The Times of India*, November 14th). The advance of technology and the concomitant stress and violence in much of contemporary literature appalled the writers. Mr. Louis Untermeyer of the United States reported to the seminar that in America today there were even rapid-reading machines which made one read faster and faster — but certainly not better.

Mr. Aldous Huxley, in his essay on the “Literature of Modern Life,” read by him, listed the more important psychological consequences of being alive today, which had to be explored, analyzed and turned into literature. Modern literature, he said, helped those who exposed themselves to it “to realize more fully the anxiety, the sense of futility and helplessness, the cynicism, unrelatedness and isolation, which their over-menacing, over-organized, over-populated and over-urbanized environment now compels them to feel.”

First on Mr. Huxley’s list came the consequence of being contemporary with nuclear bombs and the cold war. “This, for many people, is an experience of vague, chronic anxiety, associated very often with a sense of the futility of existence, the pointlessness, in a world that may at any moment be destroyed, of forethought, effort and aspiration.”

Then came the effect of modern social organization and the concentration of power in the hands of fewer and fewer people.

Dr. Zaki Naguib Mahmoud, Professor of Philosophy in the Cairo University, was still more vehement in his denunciation of the “mechanical obliteration of individuals.” He commended a return to the spiritual values of the East. He explained, however, that his views did not exclude a certain minimum attention towards man’s physical well-being.

Sir Isaiah Berlin, Professor of Social and Political Theory at Oxford, spoke on “Tagore and the Consciousness of Nationality.” “Internationalism is a noble ideal,” Sir Isaiah said, “but it can be achieved only when the links in the chain — that is, every nation — are strong enough to bear the required tension.”

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Abraham Lincoln, once challenged for speaking kindly about the Confederates, his enemies, when he should rather destroy them, replied, “What, Madam, do I not destroy them when I make them my friends?” It seems a pity that the truth implicit in these words should be lost sight of in this, our age, when fear of nuclear warfare plagues the minds of men and women everywhere. In civilized countries the settlement of private quarrels by force has for long been condemned as criminal folly, but in international disputes between these same countries force is

regarded as justifiable. We do not even ask how long this double standard must prevail.

Anthony Storr, writing in the *New Statesman* (London) of October 6th, under the heading "Living with the Enemy," considers the abandonment of the conventional policy of blackening one's opponent to be an important step in the reduction of international tension. Men always look for scapegoats upon whom to project their own aggression and are all too easily convinced that an opponent is a personification of evil rather than a man like one of themselves. So long as each side continues to make propaganda which portrays the other as wholly wrong and itself as wholly right, resolution of international conflict is bound to be put off. The assumption that the opponent is as rational and human as ourselves is therefore a necessary step.

The following words of Mr. Storr contain food for thought:—

Pure enmity is an entirely negative and destructive emotion. But if an opponent cannot be destroyed, one is forced to accept the fact of his continuing effective existence; and such acceptance will contain the germ of a positive rather than a negative attitude towards him.

It may be dangerous to argue from personal to collective psychology: but one cannot help being impressed by the similarity of the international situation and the emotional problems of the individual.

Many people are plagued by enemies within themselves — murderous impulses, dishonest desires, sexual compulsions and other feelings which they both hate and fear. It is a great step forward when such people realize that they cannot get rid of such impulses, but can only transmute them. The individual has to learn to live with the parts of himself he deplures; but once he adopts this attitude, he finds to his surprise that what he had previously rejected has a positive value. His aggression, for instance, comes to subserve his desire for independence, and his infantile sexuality turns into an increased capacity for love. It is the attitude that the "enemy" is utterly alien which, within the individual, leads to irreconcilable conflict; and it seems probable that the same is true in international politics.

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It is gratifying for the student of Theosophy to find religious leaders questioning the relevance of contemporary religious expression to reality and revising their concept of God. Roland B. Gittelsohn, rabbi of Temple Israel in Boston, writing on "Have We Outgrown God?" in the *Saturday Review* of September 16th, 1961, indicates some of the changes we must effect in our understanding of God in order to make religion relevant to life. "It is not God whom we have outgrown," he states, "but a concept of God that was geared to an intellectual milieu long since left behind us."

It was believed at one time that God was a cosmic person; that he existed beyond and independent of Nature, acting upon it from out-

side; that he could intervene at will in the orderly processes of Nature and perform miracles. Such a concept of God, Rabbi Gittelsohn points out, is no longer viable for modern man. We should now be able to conceive God, he writes, as Energy or Power or Force or Intelligence rather than as a Person. He, or It, operates within and through Nature, infusing it from beginning to end rather than activating it from without. He is not a "cosmic magician" and cannot interrupt or suspend the laws of Nature.

Men once believed that every rock or tree housed a godlike spirit within it, that idols were gods, that God dwelt only in the houses they had built for him. There are many even today who insist on constraining God within a conceptual framework that has become meaningless; their faith — however urgently felt or eloquently articulated — becomes irrelevant to the compelling realities of everyday existence. "This is why," says Rabbi Gittelsohn, "a generation that shows so many outward signs of religious revival can at the same time exhibit such appalling evidence of immorality."

Rabbi Gittelsohn raises important questions:—

In the light of our newer interpretation of God, how can we explain human suffering, especially when at times it comes excessively to those who seem to strive most mightily for ethical improvement? What role is there, if any, for prayer? What, if anything, survives death? No religion will endure if it fails to offer its adherents reasonable replies to such questions as these. No religion will for long be tenable if it fails to fulfil — in our terms and on the level of our needs — the purposes religion has served in the past: to explain the meaning of the universe and of life; to fortify us as we confront life's inevitable tragedies; and, most important of all, to spur us on to higher levels of ethical aspiration and attainment than we could otherwise reach.

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The tremendous progress made during the past 30 years in the study of extrasensory perception and the knowledge gained about telepathy and clairvoyance have rendered the old explanations of spiritualistic "communications" inadequate. In the past, mediumistic utterances tended, barring fraud, to be accepted as "communications" from the dead. Modern parapsychology, however, has suggested, as brought out by Marian L. Nester in "New Methods of Parapsychology," appearing in the *Autumn Tomorrow*, that a medium's knowledge of deceased persons may often come, not from the spirit of the dead, but telepathically from the mind of the "sitter," the person who comes to the medium for a sitting. In other words, it is now felt that in many cases the medium might not at all be communicating with the dead but might be simply reading the mind of the sitter. A long-range research programme is being conducted by the Parapsychology Foundation in New York

City to find out how often ESP (extrasensory perception) can explain such phenomena.

Not only have methods been developed for appraising and analyzing mediumistic utterances, but researchers have also worked out ways to separate medium from sitter, "for it has long been known that in a valid, objective study of this sort of communication, the interested sitter should be separated from the sensitive." Both methods of analysis are being utilized in the long-range research project of the Parapsychology Foundation.

"The whole field of mediumship," the *Tomorrow* article states,

remains highly complex. But research nowadays has at its disposal new insights in psychology, parapsychology, statistics, physiology; new experimental approaches, new philosophical theories. Thirty years ago investigations tended to stress physical phenomena, *per se* complicated and hard to analyze. Modern research, such as the present project, chooses a simpler basis of operation with elements that can be more easily isolated for one-by-one study. The laboratory approach itself is a major factor, for as Hereward Carrington truly wrote: "An entirely detached attitude is the rarest thing in the world to encounter. The best that we can hope for is to be as detached and impersonal as possible."

The question asked by this research is not "is survival proved?" but simply "what happens?" The age-old claims for survival are being brought into the laboratory where they can be closely examined. And in this study, mediumistic readings have a special and useful place because they do lend themselves to objective analysis by known scientific methods.

Apart from the possibility that the medium may be reading the mind of the sitter, Theosophy has been teaching for decades now that the medium forms a channel by means of his nervous fluid, and that of others near, with a deceased person's shell — the astral body that has coalesced with the principle of desire — this shell being thus galvanized into an artificial life. The old impressions on the astral body give up their images to the mind of the medium; various messages and reports are then obtained from it, but not one is from the spirit of the deceased. Though mistaken for the work of the spirit, it is all drawn from the living, when it is not the mere picking out from the astral light of the images of what has been in the past. In certain cases there is an intelligence at work that is wholly bad, to which the medium is subject, and which will explain why many of them have succumbed to evil, as they have confessed.

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