

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE THIEF OF TIME

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*

He is not only idle who does nothing, but he is idle who might be better employed.—SOCRATES

For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be; what is once well done is done forever.—THOREAU

When a human soul draws its first furrow straight, the rest will follow surely.—HONORE DE BALZAC

Duty persistently followed is the highest yoga.—W. Q. JUDGE

Procrastination has been well called “the thief of time,” for it is of the quality of *Tamas*, indifference or darkness, which, as Krishna tells Arjuna in Chapter Fourteen of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, “is the deluder of all creatures . . . it imprisoneth the Ego in a body through heedless folly, sleep, and idleness.”

Those who have had the good Karma of being favourably situated to study Theosophy are especially unwise, from the standpoint of their own interest, if they procrastinate. If they do so, they let slip the opportunity which they must have earned, in this life or in previous ones, and who knows whether they may not be thereby postponing the occurrence of such a chance for spiritual growth and service? Such postponement may not only retard their own progress but also that of the Cause of Theosophy and of those whom their example of faithful study and practice of the Theosophical teachings might have led to emulate it.

In “The Great Master’s Letter,” published as No. 33 of the U.L.T. Pamphlet Series, He had written that there was “hardly a Theosophist

in the whole Society unable to help it effectually by correcting erroneous impressions of outsiders, if not by actually propagating the ideas himself."

When that letter was written in 1881, *Isis Unveiled* was the only book available to students of Theosophy in its modern restatement, though valuable additional teachings from Madame Blavatsky's pen had been appearing in *The Theosophist* ever since its launching in October 1879. The two volumes of *Isis Unveiled* and those articles contained much teaching of importance, but the modern student is even better off in having readily accessible, besides these, *The Secret Doctrine* in two volumes, *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, *The Theosophical Glossary* and the many helpful and inspiring articles by Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Judge, Mr. Crosbie and other faithful followers of the Lines laid down by the Mahatmas and their Messenger of this cycle, which offer a wealth of trustworthy explanation and simplification of the teachings as first given out.

Corresponding, however, to the opportunity offered to the modern student is the latter's responsibility to the Cause of Theosophy and to his fellow men. The trusteeship of wealth applies no less to treasures of the mind and the spirit than to physical possessions.

It is true that a great Master once wrote:

Knowledge for the mind, like food for the body, is intended to feed and help to growth, but it requires to be well digested and the more thoroughly and slowly the process is carried out the better both for body and mind.

But He prefaced this by a reminder to His correspondent that it was a life-long task that he had chosen, and by a quotation from Christina Rossetti's poem "Up-hill":

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day?

From morn to night, my friend.

The longest journey has been recognized from antiquity as beginning with the first step, and many of the early steps of the Theosophical aspirant will naturally be on the path of study. Before we can properly pass on Theosophy we must know clearly what its basic tenets are. This is needed even to be sure that we are applying them in our daily life.

The conscientious student will naturally try as far as possible to keep his understanding of what he studies uncoloured by either prejudice or predilection. Almost inevitably, however, the teachings of Theosophy, though conscientiously studied and applied to the best of the student's ability, and though faithfully given out by him as he understands them, whether in conversation, when another's question or remark provides an opening, or from the platform of the U.L.T. as his willing contribution to the Lodge's disinterested efforts at sharing Theosophy with the public, will bear, to a greater or less extent, the stamp of the individual student's own approach to and comprehension of those teachings, as well as of his own mind and heart.

The analogy suggests itself of the different colours of the spectrum revealed when a beam of white light is passed through and dispersed by a prism. The latter represents in this case the sum total of an individual's heredity, environment and life experiences, as well as his Karmic inheritance, mental, psychic and physical, from his own prior lives.

"Humanity," *The Secret Doctrine* tells us, "is divided into seven distinct groups and their sub-divisions, mental, spiritual, and physical," corresponding to the seven chief groups of Dhyan Chohans, there being a special bond, "known to every high Initiate in every age and in every country," between the "*radiations* of one and the same Planetary Spirit." Unrecognized though such a bond might be by ordinary individuals, would it not help to explain why some gain more from equally conscientious and impersonal efforts to present the teachings from the platform by one or another speaker? And, if this be so, is it not desirable that as many earnest students as possible should participate in the propaganda effort of the U.L.T., whether by sharing the insight they have gained by study from the Lodge platform, or by contributing to magazines devoted to the promulgation of pure Theosophy, or even to the general press?

Sometimes excessive modesty or shyness keeps a student from offering his services for platform assignments. Such an individual, if qualified by study to expound the teachings correctly, need not hesitate. It has been truly written that "fire is the same, if temple burn or flax," and Olive Schreiner pertinently demanded: "Is it the trumpet which gives forth the call to battle, whether it be battered tin or gilded silver, which boots? Is it not the call?"

Sometimes a humble individual provides the spark to quicken another's conscience or to fire his aspiration or his zeal. Such was the

case of Benjamin Lundy, described in the Supplement to *The Theosophist* for February 1889 as a member of the Society of Friends in the U.S.A., who early in the 19th century was carrying on such agitation against slavery as was in his power, and, despite his handicaps, kindled the enthusiasm of one of the most stalwart agitators for the abolition of slavery in that country.

He was deaf. He was a poor man. He was in feeble health. He was a bad speaker. But in addition to this he was on fire with the wrongs of the slave. He travelled on foot from town to town and from state to state, holding meetings wherever he could get a few people to listen to his broken words. In 1826 at Boston he converted William Lloyd Garrison. William Lloyd Garrison was an able speaker, and a fiery writer, who went straight forward through prisons and murderous mobs on to that final victory in 1863, when by the proclamation of President Lincoln every slave in the United States was set free.

“Tomorrow,” in whatever language spoken, is a word of hope and promise only if we are doing all that we can today. Otherwise it serves as a narcotic; it can keep us marking time for ever if we become addicted to it, so that

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day....

“Next week,” “next month,” “next year,” “next life,” we say, and so our present opportunities slip away. It is not thus that we shall reach the goal. “Nothing succeeds like success” may have originated as a hard-headed business maxim, but it has its application also to spiritual advance. Those who feel drawn to Theosophy from their first contact with it in this life, whose reaction to its teachings of universal brotherhood, of an impersonal Deity, of the divine nature in man and the existence of Perfected Men, of Karma and Reincarnation, is an inner affirmation, “That sounds true,” may well have been in contact with it in a former life or lives.

Mr. Judge gives us the encouragement, in his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, that “every point of progress gained is never in reality lost,” but we are free-willed beings. We may mark time life after life if we so choose. No one can pull or push us forward against our will.

Should not the efforts of all sincere students, convinced of the *bona fides* of Theosophy, be to acquire knowledge of it in order that they may apply it and pass it on? Says *The Friendly Philosopher*:

“The number of true Theosophists is not legion. The ranks are not crowded. They are not to be known or judged by standards of the world, but by the strength of their convictions. They are one and all *dead in earnest*. . . . They are those who move from age to age invincible and eternal. . . .” Most minds instead of living and acting out their *ideals* in the present, and fulfilling their present known duties to others, waste most of their opportunities in memory and anticipation. To live and act fully and rightly in the present is the whole of life.

In an article entitled “Occultism: What Is It?” which Mr. Judge published in *The Path* for May 1890, and which has been reprinted in U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 18, “Culture of Concentration,” reference was made to “dilettanti” in Occultism, among whom our procrastinators may perhaps be numbered. And it was added:

Meanwhile the world of real occultists smiles silently, and goes on with the laborious process of sifting out the living germs from the masses of men. For occultists must be found and fostered and prepared for coming ages when power will be needed and pretension will go for nothing.

In *Julius Cæsar* Shakespeare put in the mouth of Brutus a strong warning against the dangers of procrastination:

There is a tide in the affairs of men  
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;  
Omitted, all the voyage of their life  
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Even the warning in our teachings about the “moment of choice” which awaits us in the next Round, when the Manasic principle shall have reached its full development, is dismissed by many, perhaps most, as an ordeal to be faced on a day so distant that all consideration of it can be safely and indefinitely postponed. These would do well to heed what Mr. Crosbie wrote on this in his *Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 201):

The moment of choice exists all the time for every individual. In that moment he may take any path, but when the general moment of choice comes, he takes the path to which he has become addicted by his nature and disposition. We are constantly following the line of separateness, or of unity, choosing one way or the other, and the time must come when the differences between those who take the right-hand path, and those who take the left, are so great that there is no possible conjunction between them.

What Mr. Judge wrote in an answer appearing in *The Theosophical Forum* for March 1893, which was reprinted in our pages in January 1944 (Vol. XIV, pp. 44-45), is also pertinent to this subject:

The race as yet has not fully evolved Manas — the 5th principle — and will not until the next round. For that reason it cannot, as a race, make a fully intelligent choice [at this time]. But each man's life now is important, inasmuch as in it he is either sowing seeds of weeds or wheat. If weeds, they may grow so as to choke all the rest; if wheat, then when the time for the great reaping comes he will be able to choose right. Those who deliberately in the 5th round make a choice for evil will be annihilated as far as their souls are concerned; those who drift along and never choose right or wrong, but are whirled off to the indifferent side, will go into that state Mr. Sinnett describes [a state of unconsciousness until the next Planetary Manvantara] . . . while the consciously wicked who deliberately choose wrong will have no place whatever. In a smaller degree it is the same for each man in every life or series of lives; for we are setting up tendencies in one direction or the other, and thus in the end compel ourselves to make very disagreeable choices for next life. And man's little life is a copy in miniature of the greater life included under the word Manvantara. . . .

Is procrastination wise?

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I believe that in every decisive moment of our lives the spur to action comes from that part of memory where desire lies dozing, awaiting the call to arms. We say to ourselves, "Now I have decided to do so-and-so," and straightaway we remember that for years and years we have been wanting to do this very thing.

—SEAN O'FAOLAIN

## AN EPITOME OF THEOSOPHY

[W. Q. Judge's *Epitome of Theosophy* is familiar to all students of his teachings. It was originally issued in outline form as "A Theosophical Tract" by the New York Branch of the Theosophical Society, in December 1887, and was published the following month in Mr. Judge's magazine, *The Path* (Vol. II, pp. 320-24), from where we reprint it here. So great was its success in the United States, so great the need elsewhere at that time, when Theosophy pure and simple was revived in the Western world, that the Theosophical Publication Society (T.P.S.) in England requested Mr. Judge to revise it for distribution in Great Britain. Mr. Judge accordingly rewrote entirely the original Tract, enlarging it into a booklet. This manuscript the T.P.S. characterized as "too advanced," giving as its opinion that what was needed was "a stepping-stone from fiction to philosophy." Mr. Judge took exception to this view, and in his letter to the T.P.S. (the fourth in Book II of *Letters That Have Helped Me*), he wrote with characteristic outspokenness:

"If we are to proceed by a mollified passage from folly (which is fiction) to philosophy, then we at once diverge from the path marked out for us by the Masters. . . . I need only draw your attention to the fact that when those Masters began to cause Their servants to give out matter in India, They did not begin with fiction, but with stern facts. . . . We are not seeking to cater to a lot of fiction readers and curiosity hunters, but to the pressing needs of earnest minds. . . . I therefore respectfully urge upon you that the weak and erroneous policy to which I have referred shall not be followed, but that strong lines of action be taken, and that we leave fiction to the writers who profit by it or who think that thus people's minds can be turned to the Truth."

Mr. Judge's wise counsel, supported by H. P. Blavatsky, prevailed with the Managers of the T.P.S., and the *Epitome* booklet was accordingly issued in the summer of 1888.

The original Tract is reprinted here as it is at once comprehensive and fundamental, and offers food for reflection to the sincere reader.—EDS.]

Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion, has existed from immemorial time. It offers us a theory of nature and of life which is founded upon knowledge acquired by the Sages of the past, more especially those of the East; and its higher students claim that this knowledge is not something

imagined or inferred, but that it is seen and known by those who are willing to comply with the conditions. Some of its fundamental propositions are:

1. That the spirit in man is the only real and permanent part of his being; the rest of his nature being variously compounded, and decay being incident to all composite things, everything in man but his spirit is impermanent.

Further, that the universe being one thing and not diverse, and everything within it being connected with the whole and with every other, of which upon the upper plane above referred to there is a perfect knowledge, no act or thought occurs without each portion of the great whole perceiving and noting it. Hence all are inseparably bound together by the tie of Brotherhood.

2. That below the spirit and above the intellect is a plane of consciousness in which experiences are noted, commonly called man's "spiritual nature"; this is as susceptible of culture as his body or his intellect.

3. That this spiritual culture is only attainable as the grosser interests, passions, and demands of the flesh are subordinated to the interests, aspirations, and needs of the higher nature; and that this is a matter of both system and established law.

4. That men thus systematically trained attain to clear insight into the immaterial, spiritual world, their interior faculties apprehending Truth as immediately and readily as physical faculties grasp the things of sense, or mental faculties those of reason; and hence that their testimony to such Truth is as trustworthy as is that of scientists or philosophers to truth in their respective fields.

5. That in the course of this spiritual training such men acquire perception of and control over various forces in Nature unknown to others, and thus are able to perform works usually called "miraculous," though really but the result of larger knowledge of natural law.

6. That their testimony as to super-sensuous truth, verified by their possession of such powers, challenges candid examination from every religious mind.

Turning now to the system expounded by these Sages, we find as its main points:

1. An account of cosmogony, the past and future of this earth and other planets, the evolution of life through mineral, vegetable, animal, and human forms.

2. That the affairs of this world and its people are subject to cyclic laws, and that during any one cycle the rate or quality of progress appertaining to a different cycle is not possible.

3. The existence of a universally diffused and highly ethereal medium, called the "Astral Light" or "Akasa," which is the repository of all past, present, and future events, and which records the effects of spiritual causes and of all acts and thoughts from the direction of either spirit or matter. It may be called the Book of the Recording Angel.

4. The origin, history, development, and destiny of mankind.

Upon the subject of *Man* it teaches:

1. That each spirit is a manifestation of the One Spirit, and thus a part of all. It passes through a series of experiences in incarnation, and is destined to ultimate reunion with the Divine.

2. That this incarnation is not single but repeated, each individuality becoming re-embodied during numerous existences in successive races and planets, and accumulating the experiences of each incarnation towards its perfection.

3. That between adjacent incarnations, after grosser elements are first purged away, comes a period of comparative rest and refreshment, the spirit being therein prepared for its next advent into material life.

4. That the nature of each incarnation depends upon the merit and demerit of the previous life or lives, upon the way in which the man has lived and *thought*; and that this law is inflexible and wholly just.

5. That "Karma," a term signifying two things, the law of ethical causation ("Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"), and the balance or excess of merit or demerit in any individual, determines also the main experiences of joy and sorrow in each incarnation, so that what men call "luck" is in reality "desert" — desert acquired in past existence.

6. That the process of evolution up to re-union with the Divine contemplates successive elevations from rank to rank of power and usefulness, the most exalted beings still in the flesh being known as Sages, Rishis, Brothers, Masters, their great function being the preservation at all times, and, when cyclic laws permit, the extension, of spiritual knowledge and influence among humanity.

7. That when union with the Divine is effected, all the events and

experiences of each incarnation are known.

As to the *process* of spiritual development it teaches:

1. That the essence of the process lies in the securing of supremacy to the highest, the spiritual, element of man's nature.
2. That this is attained along four lines, among others—
  - (a) The eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of broad, generous sympathy in and effort for the good of others.
  - (b) The cultivation of the inner, spiritual man by meditation, communion with the Divine, and exercise.
  - (c) The control of fleshly appetites and desires, all lower, material interests being deliberately subordinated to the behests of the spirit.
  - (d) The careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving results to Divine law.
3. That while the above is incumbent on and practicable by all religiously disposed men, a yet higher plane of spiritual attainment is conditioned upon a specific course of training, physical, intellectual, and spiritual, by which the internal faculties are first aroused and then developed.
4. That an extension of this process is reached in Adeptship, an exalted stage, attained by laborious self-discipline and hardship, protracted through possibly many incarnations, and with many degrees of initiation and preferment, beyond which are yet other stages ever approaching the Divine.

As to the *rationale* of spiritual development it asserts:

1. That the process is entirely *within* the individual himself, the motive, the effort, the result being distinctly personal.
2. That, however personal and interior, this process is not unaided, being possible, in fact, only through close communion with the Supreme Source of all strength.

As to the *degree* of advancement in incarnations it holds:

1. That even a mere intellectual acquaintance with Theosophic truth has great value in fitting the individual for a step upwards in his next earth-life, as it gives an impulse in that direction.

2. That still more is gained by a career of duty, piety, and beneficence.

3. That a still greater advance is attained by the attentive and devoted use of the means to spiritual culture heretofore stated.

It may be added that Theosophy is the only system of religion and philosophy which gives satisfactory explanation of such problems as these:

1. The object, use, and inhabitation of other planets than this earth.

2. The geological cataclysms of earth; the frequent absence of intermediate types in its fauna; the occurrence of architectural and other relics of races now lost, and as to which ordinary science has nothing but vain conjecture; the nature of extinct civilizations and the causes of their extinction; the persistence of savagery and the unequal development of existing civilization; the differences, physical and internal, between the various races of men; the line of future development.

3. The contrasts and unisons of the world's faiths, and the common foundation underlying them all.

4. The existence of evil, of suffering, and of sorrow — a hopeless puzzle to the mere philanthropist or theologian.

5. The inequalities in social condition and privilege; the sharp contrasts between wealth and poverty, intelligence and stupidity, culture and ignorance, virtue and vileness; the appearance of men of genius in families destitute of it, as well as other facts in conflict with the law of heredity; the frequent cases of unfitness of environment around individuals, so sore as to embitter disposition, hamper aspiration, and paralyse endeavour; the violent antithesis between character and condition; the occurrence of accident, misfortune, and untimely death — all of them problems solvable only by either the conventional theory of Divine caprice or the Theosophic doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation.

6. The possession by individuals of psychic powers — clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc. — as well as the phenomena of psychometry and statuvolism.

7. The true nature of genuine phenomena in spiritualism, and the proper antidote to superstition and to exaggerated expectation.

8. The failure of conventional religions to greatly extend their areas, reform abuses, re-organize society, expand the idea of brotherhood, abate discontent, diminish crime, and elevate humanity; and an appar-

ent inadequacy to realize in individual lives the ideal they professedly uphold.

The above is a sketch of the main features of Theosophy, the Wisdom-Religion. Its details are to be found in the rapidly-growing literature upon the subject. . . . There are three stages of interest:

1. That of intellectual inquiry — to be met by works in Public Libraries, etc.

2. That of desire for personal culture — to be met partly by the books prepared for that specific end, partly by the periodical Magazines expounding Theosophy. . . .

3. That of personal identification with the Theosophical Society, an association formed in 1875 with three aims — to be the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood; to promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences; to investigate unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man. Adhesion to the first only is a prerequisite to membership, the others being optional. The Society represents no particular creed, is entirely unsectarian, and includes professors of all faiths, only exacting from each member that toleration of the beliefs of others which he desires them to exhibit towards his own.

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Theosophy is the only philosophy that can be used in every direction in daily life. It can be used in all directions, high or low, because that use comes from an understanding of the Spirit itself, from acting for that Self and as that Self — for the Self acts only through the creatures. Acting for and as that Self in every direction, all else flows into line. All the destruction that is around us, all the misery that we see, has been brought about through our denial of the Holy Ghost — our denial of the Spirit within us. We deny it when we act as if we are our bodies, or our minds. *THAT will not be denied.* So man, meeting all the results of that denial and seeing them to be evil, learns that this is not the way. Then he seeks for Truth, and finding the truth, obtains all that he can desire — hope, happiness and a better understanding of his and all existence.

## EVOLUTION—VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

The philosophy of that law in Nature, which implants in man as well as in every beast a passionate, inherent, and instinctive desire for freedom and self-guidance, pertains to psychology.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 484

... the great evolutionary Law ... must finally prevail because it is the Law of the Deity, an expression of the nature and being of the Unknown, which nature is towards manifestation, self-realization, and re-absorption.

—*Letters That Have Helped Me*

In these two quotations is epitomized the whole history of evolution, material, mental, spiritual. But to understand them as a practical guide to daily living, the help of H.P.B.'s first book, *Isis Unveiled*, is needed. There we have the key which will help us in the understanding of many things which are otherwise puzzling, and the first important truth we learn is that Law works throughout Nature. The corollary to this, "There is no miracle," has to be accepted at least as a hypothesis.

The question then arises, How does this Law work, and why? It works because there is but one common vital principle which pervades all things. This common vital principle can be controlled by the perfected human will.

In order to begin this task, it is necessary to know the vital principle and its field of operation, which includes not only the human being but also Nature *in toto*. Hence H.P.B. gave the second and third Items in *Isis Unveiled*, showing the threefold aspects of Nature and of Man.

To understand further the practical aspect of this information it is necessary to turn to the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*, where the manifested Universe is said to be composed of Spirit, Matter and Fohat. It is the knowledge of Fohat as "the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation ... the animating principle electrifying every atom into life," which gives the key to progress. What has man to do with Fohat? A more thorough familiarity with what is said under "Kamadeva" in *The Theosophical Glossary* is necessary. "Desire first arose in It, which was the primal germ of mind." Kama in its pure form is that desire which is "for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness, the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative ONE FORCE, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the ABSOLUTE."

It is this same Desire which “Sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered in their heart to be the bond which connects Entity with non-Entity,” or Manas with pure Atma-Buddhi. Make Desire, Fohat (the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation) and Will a three-in-one, a unity, and we have the secret of success.

The Universal Mind manifesting as human consciousness has to seek within the heart for universal good and love, and has to learn how to help all beings and to become part of that infinite tender compassion and mercy as a self-conscious unit.

What is consciousness? It is that which passes through the lower kingdoms of Nature, urged on by natural law which ever strives towards perfection, and which in the human kingdom has to work by self-induced ways and means. But wrapped up as it is in the material form evolved in those past ages when the tamasic element of cohesion as also sensation and instinct came to birth, it has to elevate these faculties by turning them towards their proper uses in their new environment in the human kingdom. The human faculty of self-awareness has to understand its material vehicle, its astral counterpart, and the power of the Spirit functioning within, namely, the will, which is said to be Spirit in action. All of man's faculties and vehicles must be brought under the control of his true will; that is, the desire to know and understand the goal of evolution has to be the foremost driving force. He is now his own creator. Wisdom says he must follow natural law if he would create aright; therefore he must learn how that law functions in all the constituents of his being.

Knowledge of Nature and of man in their inner aspects is said to be the science of magic; its application in practice is the art of magic. Used rightly, spiritual wisdom is born; used wrongly, black magic is the result. Right use requires an “*all-embracing desire* for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness.” But knowledge is also required so that right application may result — knowledge of magnetism and electricity and their effects on all matter, especially on the animal kingdom and man. Wrong desire leads to wrong action which is the opposite of “infinite tender compassion and mercy”; that is, any feeling of selfishness or self-centredness — “myself against the world” — taints all action.

The real field of action is the invisible region, primarily the astral. Says *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 644):

It is a law of occult dynamics that “a given amount of energy

expended on the spiritual or astral plane is productive of far greater results than the same amount expended on the physical objective plane of existence."

There are three stages of growth: manifestation, self-realization and reabsorption. The impelling force is the inherent, instinctive desire for freedom and self-guidance. Reabsorption cannot mean the giving up of self-guidance or of freedom; it must surely mean that self-guidance has become All-SELF guidance, freedom has become union with the ALL, because the individual unit has realized his oneness with the great universal Life and has become a channel for the Law of that Life.

Though all has to be gained by self-effort, there is the dark side. The urge towards freedom and self-guidance often leads to complete lack of restraint and separates man from Nature and from his fellow men, as also from his own spiritual heart. The material and lower part of man is an animal. The inner man has to "domesticate" it as he does some species of the animal kingdom. Through the "blows" of Karma man learns how to domesticate his animal vehicle to some extent, but when he loses all restraint over it he falls even lower than the animal. It is necessary to learn the laws of life, to know what our goal is and what is the quickest way to reach it. Then comes the hard task of disciplining the lower in terms of the higher, with compassion, not with the whip!

Step by step Nature proceeds, and so does man. To "adapt our thought and ideas to our plastic potency" it is necessary to begin now with the small duties and events of life, with the eradication of the little faults and the development of the little virtues. With the ideal before us and proceeding step by step, we shall see how evolution works outwardly and inwardly. For the silent, steady working of the inner change in thought and knowledge we have to have trust and reliance in LAW. The painter or sculptor has to have a design first in his mind. To reproduce it in outer materials, time and patience, effort and knowledge are needed. Thus we can re-create ourselves according to any pattern we desire.

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Where love rules, there is no will to power; and where power predominates, there love is lacking. The one is the shadow of the other.

—CARL JUNG

## THE HIGHER LIFE

There is no subject of greater interest, possessing a more inspirational value, than the subject of the Higher or the Spiritual Life. Every man is divine in spirit. Though he lives in a world of *Maya*, though he exists in a sphere of illusion, the divine spark within him is like a beautiful lotus which comes to bloom in a tank full of mire and scum. As everything aspires after the true, the good and the beautiful in Nature, so also our human mind, though limited, aspires after the truth, goodness and beauty of the Higher Life. The spiritual spark in us makes it possible for us to reach the realization of the higher truths.

The Higher Life is a definite life. Just as the educational life of a school or college is a definite life with its basic principles, so also there are the fundamental principles of the Higher Life.

The first great principle is that man must rise above all that limits, circumscribes and divides. Sri Krishna said on the battlefield of Kurukshetra: "Higher than an ascetic, or a man of learning, or a man of action, is a Yogi. Therefore be thou a Yogi, O Arjuna." A true Yogi is he who is proof against the temptations of the world. Sri Krishna defines Yoga as "skill in action" and also as "equal-mindedness." The first requirement for a man who wishes to lead the Higher Life is to become a Yogi of the *right* kind — not one who goes away to the forest or on the mountain top, but he who, living in the world of *Maya*, sacrificing himself and doing his duty, still remains a devotee of Krishna.

The three stages of the Higher Life are: (1) the Life of Duty, (2) the Life of Renunciation, and (3) the Life of Service.

What is the Life of Duty? Duty is a word very common among us, yet it is a much misunderstood word. In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Dharma* is defined as duty, the right performance of which enables man to open the gateway to the Higher Path. This path is described in many ways. It is the path "as narrow as the razor's edge" of the Upanishads; the path as narrow as "the eye of a needle." The Higher Life is possible for every follower of every faith; the true path can be trodden by all. That is why the true Yogi has risen above all castes and sects. He has given up all the outer forms and formalities. He leads his life and renders his service according to spiritual laws.

The first thing one has to learn is that the Life of Duty is a Life of Discrimination — discrimination between the real and the unreal, the permanent and the impermanent, the eternal and the transitory. One

who has developed this discrimination makes no distinction between race, creed, sex, caste or colour. Because he discriminates, and tries to perform his *duty*, he finds his own place on the ladder of Evolution and sees the step on which he stands — above him a mighty Brotherhood of Adepts, below him a mighty Brotherhood of Humanity. "It is better to perish in the performance of one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger," says Sri Krishna. But how often we forget these words! To perform the *dharma* of another is to snatch away from that other his privilege of performing his own duty. Therefore by walking the way of Duty we know where we stand. Every piece of work is important, however insignificant it may seem.

This performance of duty marks the first stage of our spiritual Evolution. It is the doing of the small duties of life by a man that makes him a spiritual hero. Divinity shines out not only in the great things of life but also in the small ones. And so performance of right *dharma* begins in the family. Duty of the home grows into duty to the city, duty to the State, duty to the nation, and above all duty to the Great Brotherhood of Humanity. All these duties, step by step, a man has to perform if he wants to tread the Path of the Higher Life.

When a man has perfected himself in the Life of Duty, which may take him many a day, many a month, many a year, nay, many a life, he is ready for the next stage. He has to lead the life of Renunciation, has to learn the lesson of *Vairagya*, Dispassion, Desirelessness. A man who is at this second stage has to give away everything. How? Not by going away from the world, but by living in it, by renouncing all interest in the results of action. He performs works because they are beneficial to others, without caring for any praise or recognition. Attachment to the fruits of action brings misery; real joy lies in detachment.

The third stage is that of the Life of Service, the Life of Love. Love for whom? For those higher than we are, for our equals, and for those who stand lower than we do on the ladder of evolution. By discrimination and the performance of duty and of sacrifice the aspirant realizes that everything in the universe has its importance, from the smallest of objects to the greatest of Archangels.

The next question is, Where to lead the Life of Love? In the midst of those surroundings where the Law of Causation has placed us. Our present surroundings are of our own making. To complain of our environment, to think that we would do better if we were placed in another position, is mere foolishness. The aspirant learns to give dispassionate

love to all those surrounding him — sympathy to his inferiors; affection, love and consideration to his equals; and profound reverence and worship to his superiors. He knows that every object is an expression of Divinity. He sees in the wife, the faithful Seeta. He sees in the younger brother, the valiant and devoted Lakshman. He sees in the father the great Maheshwara himself. In the prattling of children he hears the music of Krishna's flute. He sees the Divine glory in everything around him. He knows that in each human heart there is a bright gem, though it lies hidden at present. Because his love is all-embracing, he becomes one with the All. He sacrifices himself for others; he leads a life of humility and self-abnegation. Sacrifice is based on the law of love, and he recognizes that those who are perfected in love belong to the mighty Brotherhood of Adepts who are all engaged in the service and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Seeing this, he grows in piety, in strength, so that humanity may become more pious, more strong. Always remembering what the Great Ones have said, "If you want to serve us, serve our Humanity," he serves his fellow men, and serving them he gains knowledge of the Supreme.

The aspirant thus proceeds step by step, serving others, making sacrifice. Because he sacrifices, he gets Knowledge. He learns control of mind, control of action, tolerance, endurance, one-pointedness and faith. All these he makes part of himself by Meditation.

When he is sufficiently advanced, he finds his Master. He remembers the Master's words and goes forth into the world of men to serve those whom They serve, to love the race which They love. He scatters the flowers of gentleness and kindness, realizing that all men are his brothers. As he progresses, he serves more, loves more, sacrifices more, and, after crossing portal after portal of Initiation, he reaches the Goal of Perfection. The Higher Life begins with duty and ends with sacrifice. Peace, bliss and joy are his who serves. The perfect server and sacrificer finds himself merged in the Great Universe of Life. Through him shines forth the power of Divinity itself; he radiates the Divine love; he uplifts men and women and makes the world a better place to live in.

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## CONCENTRATION

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*“There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous.”*

Concentration of the mind means the permanent predominance of one set of ideas or thoughts over the rest. Our mind is so constituted that it has a natural tendency to be lost in the labyrinth of the senses. Guided by unlimited desires, the mind hovers over a thousand and one objects of sense, and the attention being thus divided, the mental energy so spent is not productive of far-reaching results. Biographies of great men show that the real difference between them and the common herd lies in the power of concentration of thought. Scientists, philosophers and wise men acquire such a wonderful control over the mind that they can, at will, immerse themselves in their special subjects, with all-absorbing attention. To discover great and grand truths, we must set the whole mental energy in one direction only. If we want to act up to any grand and sublime ideal, the ideal should be made to stand out in bold relief before the mind's eye. It is a curious fact that a mental impression, if sufficiently strong and lasting, is capable of reacting on the system, and this reaction has been found to mould even the physical frame in a peculiar way. The process known as *Bhramarikaran*, in our Shastras, is an instance exemplifying the truth of the assertion, and modern gynæcologists have in a manner corroborated the observation of our ancient and revered *Rishis* by describing the effect of terror, or any lasting mental impression, on the human organization. The effect of fright, caused by the sight of a *Kanchpoka* (beetle) on the delicate organization of a *Telapoka* (cockroach) is so great that in course of time (two or three weeks) the insect known as the cockroach is transformed into a beetle. This fact has come under my personal observation. In gynæcological works various instances are recorded of the effect of fright on pregnant women, this effect being transmitted to the unborn offspring whose features were moulded accordingly. If, then, a mental impression is so powerful and its effects so very far-reaching, there can be no doubt that, by proper culture and training, we can bring the mind to such a state that only one set of impressions will be permanently predominant in it, and the results of such impressions will be proportionate to their intensity.

The practice of concentration of thought, if carried out steadily for

some time, is seen to produce (1) psychic exaltation, (2) perceptive exaltation, and (3) moral exaltation. But the mere exaltation of the psychic, perceptive and moral faculties is not of itself an indication of the success of such practice. For, in the incubation period of insanity, these faculties are first exalted and then perverted. There is no hard and fast line of demarcation between sanity and insanity. We cannot, with any degree of certainty, define the limit where sanity ends and insanity begins. Dr. Johnson has traced, with the hand of a master, the insidious advances of diseased thought. He says:

Some particular train of ideas fixes upon the mind; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind in weariness or leisure recurs constantly to the favourite conception and feasts on the luscious falsehood, whenever it is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed. She grows first imperious and, in time, despotic. These fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

Dr. Winslow speaks on the same subject as follows:

An attentive observer, tracing the first period of the evolution of a fixed idea, witnesses one of the most curious spectacles imaginable. He sees a man the prey of a disposition imposed by insanity, striving from time to time to rid himself of it, but ever falling back under its tyrannical influence, and constrained by the laws of his mind to seek for some form under which to give it a body and a definite existence. He will be seen successively to adopt and to repel divers ideas which present themselves to him and laboriously striving to deliver himself of a delirium which shall be the expression, the exact image of an internal condition, of which he himself, after all, suspects not the existence. This first phase in the evolution of the fixed idea, this gradual and progressive creation of delirium, constitutes the period of incubation of insanity.

In insanity, too, the psychical faculties are first exalted. Tasso composed his most eloquent and impassioned verses during paroxysms of insanity. Lucretius wrote his immortal poem "De Rerum Natura" when suffering from an attack of mental aberration. Alexander Cruden compiled his "Concordance" whilst insane. Some of the ablest articles in "Aiken's Biography" were written by a patient in a lunatic asylum. The perceptive faculties, also, are, in the insane, first exalted and then perverted. Illusions of the senses and delusions of the mind are sometimes

noticed among the incipient symptoms of acute affections of the encephalon; finally insanity and other cerebral diseases often manifest themselves, in their early stages, by exaltations and perversions of the moral sense.

These two states of the mind, then, are found to be closely related to each other. There is only a single step intervening between the "sublime" and the "ridiculous," and that step is self-control. Directly the will ceases to exercise a proper influence over the understanding and the emotions, the mind loses its healthy balancing power. In insanity the power of self-control is weakened or altogether lost by a voluntary and criminal indulgence of a train of thought which it was the duty of the individual, in the first instance, to resolutely battle with, control and subdue. But in the practice of concentration, the power of self-control is immeasurably enhanced. Evil thoughts are never allowed to cast their phantasmal shade across the clear mental horizon. But if this practice be carried out without due regard being paid to the collateral subjects of self-purification and unselfishness and without the guidance of a master, the chances are that the mental equilibrium is overturned and it degenerates into the ridiculous. Religious fanaticism, sectarian bigotry, superstition and credulity are the natural outcome of a want of self-control. How important it is to trace the connection between a total want of sensibility in regard to those impressions which affect the salvation of man from misery and bondage, and a super-exalted sensibility in regard to such matters! Both are, to a great extent, dependent on certain unhealthy conditions of the body. In my opinion, the attention of the physician should be particularly directed to the physical condition of the functions of organic life, when he witnesses instances of a specially exalted or depressed condition of the religious feelings, not clearly traceable to the operation of the sixth principle in man. I am aware that there is a disposition on the part of those who take an *ultra*-spiritual view of the mind's operations to exaggerate truths which ultimately grow into dangerous lies.

"What cheer," says Emerson, "can the religious sentiment yield, when that is suspected to be secretly dependent on the seasons of the year and the state of the blood?" "I knew," he continues, "a witty physician who found theology in the biliary duct and used to affirm that if there was disease of the liver, the man became a Calvinist, and if that organ was healthy he became a Unitarian." In reply to this piece of leasantry I would observe that many a man has considered himself spiritually lost whilst under the mental depression caused by a long con-

tinued hepatic and gastric derangement; and instances occur of persons imagining themselves to be condemned to everlasting punishment, or that they are subjects to Satanic visitation or hold personal communion with Moses and Jesus Christ, owing to the existence of visceral disease and a congested condition of some one of the great nervous centres.

Self-control, then, is the prime factor which serves to distinguish the “sublime” from the “ridiculous” and to keep the mind within legitimate bounds. But in order to ensure success in the practice of concentration of the mind, it were well to have a clear conception of the import of the term self-control. It is not enough merely to keep control over this or that passion, over this or that wrongful action, but by self-control we should learn to keep complete and full control over all the passions, evil thoughts and deeds that together form our lower nature. There is nothing so difficult as to keep constant and unremitting watch and ward over our ignoble self. The practice of negative virtues is none the less serious or difficult than the performance of active charity and benevolence. If we relax the stern wakefulness of the reason and will — even for a single moment — if we allow the insidious advances of even one impure thought for a single moment, there is no knowing into what ignoble depths we may be hurled. Once admission is granted to an unhallowed sentiment, it seldom fails to strike root in congenial soil. Man being a composition of the Seraph and the Beast, what heart has been, at all times, free from malevolent passion, revengeful emotion, lustful feeling, unnatural and, alas! devilish impulses? Is not every bosom polluted by a dark leprous spot, corroding ulcer or centre of moral gangrene? Does there not cling to every mind some melancholy reminiscence of the past which throws, at times, a sombre shade over the chequered path of life? We may flatter our pharisaical vanity and human pride by affirming that we are free from these melancholy conditions of moral suffering and sad states of mental infirmity, but we should be belying human nature if we were to ignore the existence of such, perhaps only temporary, evanescent and paroxysmal conditions of unhealthy thoughts and phases of passion.

There are four great obstacles that stand in the way of the practice of concentration of thought, and these are termed in Sanskrit (1) *Bikshepa*, (2) *Rasaswadan*, (3) *Kashaya* and (4) *Laya*.<sup>1</sup>

(1) *Bikshepa* is that natural tendency of the mind which makes it ever and anon fly from a fixed point. This habitually diffusive tendency of the mind is one of the causes of our bondage. The practice of

<sup>1</sup> In attaining to *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*, the reader is reminded, these four obstacles appear with but slight modifications.

concentration is recommended in our *Shastras* with the primary object of counteracting this evil tendency. But the apparently insurmountable nature of this tendency is never manifested so strongly as when we try to battle with it. Every beginner knows how frequently his mind unconsciously wanders away from the groove wherein he has been so assiduously striving to keep it. Exert yourself to the best of your endeavours to keep the image standing clearly before you, it gets blurred and indistinct in almost no time, and you find, to your utter discomfiture, the mind diverted into quite an unexpected and unlooked-for channel. The channels through which the mind thus slips away stealthily, afford it impressions either of pleasurable or painful character, and according to the predominance of the one or the other, the second and third obstacles are said to present themselves. (2) *Rasaswadan*, therefore, is that state of mind in which it broods over pleasurable ideas. Our mind is in such intimate sympathy with those impressions which are called pleasurable, that when it once reverts to a train of similar ideas, it is very hard to turn it away from them and fasten it upon the point from whence it wandered. (3) *Kashaya*, again, is that condition in which the mind is lost in the recollection of unpleasant thoughts — thoughts whose withering influence and death-like shadow over the mind have been many a time the cause of blighting, saddening and often crushing the best, kindest and noblest of human hearts! (4) The last, though not the least, of the obstacles to abstract contemplation and concentration of thoughts is what is termed *Laya* or passivity of the mind.

In fact all these obstacles might be reduced to two categories of (1) *Bikshepa* and (2) *Laya*, i.e., diversion of the attention and total passivity of the mind, the other two being included in the first. *Laya* or passivity of the mind is that state in which the mind is a perfect blank, and which, if continued for a short time, merges into sleep. This state of the mind, if induced during contemplation, is replete with dangers and should be perseveringly guarded against. It is a state which presents an opportunity to any passing elementary, or what is worse, it may offer the best conductivity to the "magnetism of evil." The best remedy against all these obstacles is an iron will to overcome them, and a dogged and persistent drill and discipline of the mind in the shape of the daily and intelligent observance of our *Nitya Karma*.

—SREE KSHIROD SARMA, F.T.S.

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## THE FOUR GOLDEN LINKS

In her *Key to Theosophy*, in the sub-section, "The Relations of the T.S. to Political Reforms," H. P. Blavatsky gives four principles which should be applied "so that social co-operation may be promoted and true efforts for social amelioration be carried on." She designates these as "universal Unity and Causation; Human Solidarity; the Law of Karma; Reincarnation." These, she says, "are the four links of the golden chain which should bind humanity into one family, one universal Brotherhood."

We should note the wording she uses, especially the word "should," because it implies that humanity is not so bound, and that only a knowledge of and a belief in the four links can make Brotherhood a reality.

What is there in these ideas that will help to bind humanity into one universal Brotherhood? If we turn to what H.P.B. says elsewhere in *The Key to Theosophy*, we shall find a basis for her statement. This is what she says about the first of the four links — universal Unity and Causation:

We believe in a Universal Divine Principle, the root of ALL, from which all proceeds, and within which all shall be absorbed at the end of the great cycle of Being. (p. 62)

Our DEITY is neither in a paradise, nor in a particular tree, building, or mountain: it is everywhere, in every atom of the visible as of the invisible Cosmos, in, over, and around every invisible atom and divisible molecule; for IT is the mysterious power of evolution and involution, the omnipresent, omnipotent, and even omniscient creative potentiality. (p. 64)

If, as seen from the above quotations, there is a Universal Divine Principle which is the root of all, and if it is all-pervasive and every atom and molecule is a part of it, then it necessarily follows that everything in our visible and invisible universe is bound together in one great Whole. All have come from the same source; all will return to it at the end of the great cycle of being. Not only that, but inasmuch as we have all come from it, we must have an aspect of it mirrored in ourselves and shared equally by all. Just as all sunbeams come from the same sun, none being superior to the other, any more than one drop of the ocean is superior or inferior to any other drop derived from the same source, so all things and creatures in our universe are united by reason of their living together in the same great ocean of life, or the one Universal Divine Principle.

Where does the idea of Universal Causation come in? If we look at the words "omniscient creative potentiality" in the second of the above quotations, we shall find a clue. For, there must be the creative, dynamic aspect of this Deity which causes it periodically to bring forth all things and creatures.

It is an eternal and periodical law which causes an active and creative force (the logos) to emanate from the ever-concealed and incomprehensible one principle at the beginning of every mahamanvantara, or new cycle of life. (p. 62 fn.)

Therefore, we can see not only that the idea of universal unity is a binding force, but also that the same force, which is both active and creative, brings all things into manifestation. This is not done in a haphazard fashion at the whim and fancy of some personal God, but is done according to law, as the above quotation points out — an "eternal and periodical law" which is ever active in the universe. It is this law which is the connecting link between past, present, and future, and is the active aspect of the one Universal Divine Principle.

While universal Unity and Causation are facts in Nature, whether or not we accept them as such, Human Solidarity, the second of the links, must be worked for. The dictionary definition of solidarity, "community of interests and responsibilities," gives us a hint. As H.P.B. puts it:

Unless every man is brought to understand and accept as an *axiomatic truth* that by wronging one man we wrong not only ourselves but the whole of humanity in the long run, no brotherly feelings such as preached by all the great Reformers, pre-eminently by Buddha and Jesus, are possible on earth. (pp. 46-7)

Unless and until mankind is able to accept that in essence all are members of one vast family by reason of the sameness of their origin, no brotherhood is possible, except in a partial sense. Just as an injury to any part of our body eventually affects the whole body, so, too, every member of the human race is united with every other by reason of our coming from the same source; and, as H.P.B. says, any injury we cause must eventually spread throughout the whole human family. If the evil men do spreads to all their fellow men, so does the good, because

it is an occult law . . . that no man can rise superior to his individual failings, without lifting, be it ever so little, the whole body of which he is an integral part. . . . In reality, there is no such thing as "Separateness." (p. 201)

This last sentence, "In reality, there is no such thing as 'Separate-

ness,' ” is a very telling one, for an understanding of it brings home to us, as nothing else can, just how much interdependence and interaction there is among human beings.

Having understood the basis underlying the first two links, we are in a position to accept the laws of Karma and Reincarnation. In regard to Karma, H.P.B. says:

Our idea of the unknown Universal Deity, represented by Karma, is that it is a Power which cannot fail, and can, therefore, have neither wrath nor mercy, only absolute Equity, which leaves every cause, great or small, to work out its inevitable effects. (p. 197)

And again:

Our Philosophy has a doctrine of punishment as stern as that of the most rigid Calvinist, only far more philosophical and consistent with absolute justice. (p. 138)

In other words, we receive in exact measure what we have sown; there is no “escape.” It is only by the recognition of the law of Karma that we know how and why human solidarity must be worked for. While it is true that no man receives more or less than his just due, we do help or hinder others, and each is in reality his “brother’s keeper.” We never act alone.

One incarnation is not enough to exhaust all the causes generated in the past or to learn all that there is to be learnt from this school of Life, and, therefore, we must come into incarnation again and again until we have exhausted all past and present Karma, and have made none for the future, for we have become one with the Universal. Thus it is that Karma is the power behind reincarnation.

Reincarnation, which means a series of births for each Ego, implies that that reincarnating Ego is furnished with a new body, a new brain, and a new memory — “new” in one sense, yet very old in another, because the new personality in each succeeding rebirth is the aggregate of *skandhas* or attributes of the old personality. The thoughts and feelings, works and deeds, that we have generated in the past are not wiped away, and we must reap their effects in this incarnation. “It is this, and this alone,” says H.P.B., “that can account for the terrible, still only *apparent*, injustice in the distribution of lots in life to man” — why some live in dire poverty, and others in luxury. But we must remember what the Buddha taught, that a man might be a king in one incarnation and be a ragged wanderer in the next, “for things done and undone.” H.P.B.

states that this doctrine of reincarnation has not its equal on earth "for logic, consistency, profound philosophy, divine mercy and equity."

In regard to these two laws, Karma and Reincarnation, H.P.B. says that a belief in them is the only way to uproot the most fertile source of all crime and immorality — the belief that it is possible for people to escape the consequences of their own actions.

Once teach them that greatest of all laws, *Karma* and *Reincarnation*, and besides feeling in themselves the true dignity of human nature, they will turn from evil and eschew it as they would a physical danger. (pp. 245-46)

We see, therefore, that while these four golden links *should* bind humanity into one universal Brotherhood, this can only come about when certain conditions have been fulfilled, *i.e.*, when we believe in a Universal Divine Principle, when we accept as an axiomatic truth that by wronging one man we wrong not only ourselves, but the whole of humanity; and, finally, when we realize that Karma and Reincarnation are fundamental *laws*.

In the words of one of the Mahatmas:

The term "Universal Brotherhood" is no idle phrase. . . . It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind; and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*.

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The practical Theosophist will do well if he follows the advice of the Masters now many years in print, to spread, explain and illustrate the laws of Karma and Reincarnation so that they may enter into the lives of the people. Technical occultism and all the allurements of the Astral Light may be left for other times. Men's thoughts must be affected, and this can only be done now by giving them these two great laws. They not only explain many things, but they have also an inherent power due to their truth and their intimate connection with man, to compel attention. Once heard they are seldom forgotten, and even if rebelled against they have a mysterious power of keeping in the man's mind, until at last, even against his first determination, he is forced to accept them. . . . "Teach, preach, and practise this good law for the benefit of the world, even as all the Buddhas do."

—*The Path*, July 1890

## MERCY—JUSTICE

The general concept of mercy is that it is the power (usually exercised arbitrarily) of withholding punishment for a known wrong done, *i.e.*, a magistrate, governor or king may remit (within limits) the sentence imposed on a convict. *Webster's Dictionary* defines it as "clemency, leniency, disposition to forgive; pity, compassion."

Justice, long considered a prerogative or function of kings and their delegates, has traditionally been represented by equipoised scales; injustice, by the unbalanced scales. Is the latter state mercy? The dictionary says justice is "conformity to law; impartiality, fairness, honesty in dealings."

Those who know they have done wrong and who fear the just consequences, generally seek mercy, or the remission, or postponement, or delay, or mitigation of due punishment, by prayers to God or gods, or by petitions to a court of law, etc.

What underlies the whole concept of justice is an innate recognition of the operation of Law in the Universe—in Nature and in Man; of the fact that moral law prevails as inexorably on the ethical plane as it does on the physical. Innately, we know that Law is implacable: "Utter-true its measures mete . . . tomorrow it will judge, or after many days."

Modern science demonstrates the reign of Law throughout the departments of physical Nature that it has investigated and analysed. To an increasing degree, it expresses the relationships and interactions in Nature in mathematical terms.

Orthodox religions have traditionally considered themselves arbiters of the moral nature of man, and the priests of all religions have generally arrogated to themselves the role of intermediaries between man and God, or gods. Innately, many feel the falseness of this position, but most have neither the knowledge to eradicate the fear of the unknown, nor the enthusiasm and energy to search for Truth by themselves.

Why and how does Theosophy explain and reconcile the apparently opposing concepts of justice and mercy? Simply because the Theosophical philosophy takes into account all factors. Let us see what these are.

In regard to God, Theosophy says that It is a Universal and Eternal PRINCIPLE, all-pervasive and immanent in the essential nature of all men and all beings in the entire universe. The goal of life is the ultimate

perfectibility of all beings — the conscious awareness of the wisdom inherent in one's omniscient spiritual nature, which is but a ray of the One Spirit, the One God. Priests and orthodoxies are eliminated at one stroke, for each man is in contact with the ray of the Deity within himself, and can know it for himself and by himself.

If this be so, then the many laws that science records are the uniform, impersonal and punctual workings of the Universal Mind throughout Nature. This binds every aspect of Nature, every faculty, every being to every other; there can be no "escape," no propitiation. If Nature's laws are so relentless, so just, how, then, are they merciful? The mercy aspect is to be found in the implacable, unchanging nature of Law; because it is merciful, it puts wrongs right; without emotion it demands that right shall prevail, that harmony shall be established, and so it gives us the opportunity to learn the lesson that life has to teach.

The Third Fundamental Proposition of the Theosophical philosophy posits the harmonious evolution of all beings in the universe and the ultimate merging of self-consciousness into Universal Consciousness; the mind faculty of personal perception broadens into universal perception. To gain this perception, we have to see that all beings of whatever nature or degree interact on one another, on all planes — physical, emotional, mental, moral, spiritual. This is the basis of Brotherhood, the basis of mercy, of charity, but we do not yet see it; or, if occasionally glimpsed, we do not retain awareness of the vision and do not use it practically to motivate our every thought and deed.

Why, then, do we do wrong? It is because our desires and wants, united with the mind faculty, create in us a sense of "I-ness," of separateness, of selfishness. The vision of Unity is temporarily obliterated by personal sensation.

What, then, can we do? The solution lies in the study and understanding of the three universal Fundamentals outlined above, in working out their implications in daily life, and in proving their validity for ourselves. Then comes self-improvement, the building of virtue into our characters because we realize that "rigid Justice rules the World." We thus become Law-abiding.

Karma is the name given to the universal Law of cause-effect-cause. The justice of the Law resides in its exact balancing of the effect with the force generated to create the cause. Its mercy resides in the fact that it gives us another chance to learn and to improve and to work on ourselves. No one is damned eternally or punished for ever. This is not the

### Law of Nature.

True mercy is not personal favour shown to an individual. If we could see that in their highest aspects mercy and justice are synonymous, then we would set aside emotional considerations and accept the situations we are placed in by Karma as opportunities for which we ought to be grateful, opportunities to work out effects and to surmount undesirable characteristics in ourselves. True forgiveness would then imply ceasing to brood over past wrongs—the application of the teaching: “Look not behind or thou art lost.”

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The evil we see in others, and which we criticize, is in truth in our own selves; from ourselves we draw it out, and on ourselves it falls back again. We see clearly only those faults which we already possess, or which we are about to acquire. The evil flame whose glow we see casting its light on others is in our own selves. Each but picks out of his environment for gossip that vice or failing which an astute observer can see is enslaving him. No confession could be so intimate or so frank for indeed there is no better way of probing into our own character than to ask: “What is the fault which above all others I attribute to my neighbour?” Be assured that it is nearest to what you are doing, and that you observe clearest what is happening in those depths into which you are about to fall. Who speaks evil of another is after all maligning himself; for at bottom, slander is the history after the event, or anticipating it, of our own fall.

—MAURICE MAETERLINCK

# THE DIVINE VIRTUES

## KSHANTI

This *Paramita* is defined as "patience sweet, that nought can ruffle." It follows *Dana*, or the cultivation of love immortal, and *Shila*, or the establishment of harmony in word and act. We have seen how in practising the *Shila* virtue it is difficult not to lose hope when the path ahead is not clear, and how the beginning of the perfection of the virtue of patience has to be made. We saw how fear breeds doubt and impatience. Therefore, to have patience means that there is sufficient faith and strength to walk steadfastly the Path that leads to the goal ahead, and to recognize that the soul is indestructible and the goal reachable.

Patience is not *Viraga*, though the beginning of the cultivation of the *Viraga* virtue has to be made, for we can patiently await the fructification of our hopes only when we have become indifferent to pain and pleasure, impervious to both. Therefore, Mara, the power of illusion which prevents us from rising above the pairs of opposites and from taking a balanced point of view, is our enemy.

We see again how necessary at all stages is the firm faith based on the knowledge we already possess of the immutability of LAW. This faith must be cultivated. *Nothing matters except to go on* — to formulate to oneself certain things as true that we feel to be true, and then increase our faith in them, as Mr. Judge wrote. However fearful we may be, we will not lose our balance if such faith is ever with us. Courage comes with the faith that the *real* in us is indestructible, that nothing can hurt us but ourselves, for all troubles really come from within and not from without. The within is the field of operation for all troubles, and it is there that they are to be dealt with.

"To dare, to will, to achieve and keep silent" is the motto of the true Occultist. Courage and patience come from the heart and are truly possible only when we rely on the heart. The power of the Spirit chases away all darkness, and if the heart is responsive to the Spirit, then it, too, dispels all darkness, illusion and doubt. But we must allow time to work the miracle, and must remember the teaching that at the right time the results will appear.

We are told what is the root cause of doubt and darkness. We hide the light of Spirit because we are still selfish. "No light that shines from Spirit can dispel the darkness of the nether Soul, unless all selfish thought has fled therefrom." And what causes selfish thought? The

absence of the realization of the indestructibility of man, and the presence of the belief that body is all-important. We must get to the point when we can say, "I have renounced this passing frame; I have destroyed the cause: the shadows cast can, as effects, no longer be."

We are told that at the threshold of the next *Paramita* we have to face the great war between the higher in us and the lower. "One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both." The remaining portals on the *Paramita* Path cannot be passed by the lower man ruled over by the lower mind which awakes illusion. Mind must, therefore, conquer body and senses and emotions before the next step is taken on the Path. Let us learn well that the "Soul cannot be hurt but through the erring body." Body must be seen as an instrument of the Soul; it cannot be allowed to act on its own, in a separative, isolated manner. To give up the feeling of separation is to feel the strength of unity. To close one's eyes is to lose sight of the goal. Inattention, passivity, thought of one's safety or well-being and forgetfulness of others, are fatal. From fear comes terror; from terror, death. We have to leave behind attachment to the body, leave behind the conception of "I-am-ness." Instead, there has to be the strength to fight on and on, for there can be no return!

Once this is accomplished, we pass through the gate of *Kshanti* and start on another, even more difficult, Path. To make progress on this Path, we must reach the condition indicated in *Light on the Path* and "look for the warrior and let him fight" in us. Patience should have taught us to have "no longer any care as to the result of the battle." Why? Because the result we envisage is personal; all that is important is "that the warrior shall win, and you know he is incapable of defeat." Cool and unwearied, we can learn by the power gained through pain and the destruction of pain. The woe of life and the efforts made to overcome it enable us to learn the lesson that life has to teach, and that lesson of harmony is in the form of a melody, a song. Then we have to "remember it faithfully," so that it becomes a part of us and so that we learn the meaning of the mystery which surrounds us. We are now ready to pass on.

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## “PATH” CORRESPONDENCE ON “THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY”

[Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. IX, pp. 25-26, for April 1894.—Eds.]

### LIFE AND DEATH.

SIR: Will you kindly explain a little more fully what you mean by the following passage in the *Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 36<sup>1</sup>: “So in sleep we are again absorbing and not resisting the Life Energy; when we wake we are throwing it off. But as it exists around us like an ocean in which we swim, our power to throw it off is necessarily limited. Just when we wake we are in equilibrium as to our organs and life; when we fall asleep we are yet more full of life than in the morning; it has exhausted us; it finally kills the body.”

If we are throwing off the life energy during the day, how is it that we are more full of life in the evening than in the morning? —STUDENT

Ans.—As said above, our power to throw off the life force accumulated is limited. From this limitation it results that we come to a point when our resistance grows less, just as in the entire life-span a year comes when we begin to go down the hill of life. As it lessens we are drawing near to the hour when the need of sleep will arise. Sleep is that condition of the body needed for procuring the equilibrium between *Jiva* and body. Equilibrium is about established when we wake, and then the organs begin to resist the further influx of life and to throw off some of what we have taken in. Life constantly presses us just as the electric fluid tries to fill the object placed in the electric field; we cannot resist this pressure every day beyond a certain number of hours, and we fall asleep because Life has disturbed the equilibrium. Resting in sleep, that equilibrium is again established, to be again overcome the next day, or, rather, in the next period of activity. This constant struggle being kept up for years, the bodily organs are not able to stand the wear and tear, and hence the body dies. Thus Life destroys the body. Construe the words “throwing it off” as meaning *resisting it*, and you will dispel the slight confusion arising in a book written so quickly as this one.

### ON KARMA.

SIR: (1) On p. 97<sup>2</sup> of the *Ocean* you refer to the treatment of the Red Indians by the Americans, and seem to take for granted that the Indians did not merit such treatment. (2) Again, you say those Indians will be

<sup>1</sup> Indian edition, p. 39.—EDS., THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

<sup>2</sup> Indian edition, p. 102.—EDS.

reborn in conquering peoples. If so, would not this process of retaliation go on constantly? (3) Animals seem to suffer and enjoy. If absolute justice rules, how do you account for their case? E. L.

*Ans.* (1) I fully agree that if people go on retaliating or hurting each other, evils will never cease and there will be an endless series of hates. But I do not take it for granted that the Indians did not merit in the eye of Karma as a law what they received. But man is not that law. His duty is compassion. The Americans as a higher race should have treated the Indians kindly instead of robbing and murdering them. Inevitably they will in their next rebirth follow out that practice and influence. But if we know Karma as the law, then we must act in the line of compassion and slowly but surely destroy the hate that exists, replacing it by love. We are not conscious agents of Karma. If we assume that position we assume to judge and execute, and may refuse to take up the good Karma of helping another who has offended. It is just the constant retaliation of men educated under such laws as the Mosaic or any like it, which has created a civilization of retaliation, of selfishness, and egotistical individualism. No. 2 is included in this reply. (3) Animals have Karma, or consequence of act, but they have not man's responsibility. While they seem to suffer and enjoy, it is all without any self-consciousness, and hence is less in itself and less lasting in effect. Their Karma is bound up with man, and he is the responsible one and will have to bear the responsibility, although they feel the burden directly. All of the foregoing is, of course, my own opinion.

### "LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME"

[Reprinted from *The Path*, Vol. IX, pp. 56-57, for May 1894.—EDS.]

DEAR PATH: Seeing in the April issue the statement that the *Letters* compiled by Jasper Niemand were written by William Q. Judge, I would ask further: Were the *Letters* real, that is, not written for publication, and was each one written by the same person? Yours,

READER

*Ans.* The Letters were written by me in the regular course of correspondence with the persons to whom they were sent, and were not then intended for publication, nor did I even dream of subsequent publication. Each letter as found in the book was written by one person, that is to say, myself,

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

# STUDIES IN THE HEART DOCTRINE

## I.—THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE HEART

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, Vol. XVI, pp. 30-31, for January 1946.—Eds.]

With the advent of Theosophy in 1875, our Western world's religion, philosophy and science became re-styled. Fresh modes of strange, rare colours and line were assembled to re-dress these forms, dying forms too long awaiting resuscitation. This "new" philosophy came clothed in a different garb of language, trimmed with words, terms and expressions strange and unfamiliar to Western ears.

"The Heart Doctrine" is one of these expressions, the signature of Theosophy. Teaching glowing and rare, representing a priceless jewel set in the corona of the Kingly Science, the Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy. In the East it was ever known. Wise Sages taught it to their disciples; cautious Gurus chanted it to the faithful.

India has been called the cradle of the race. The Heart Doctrine is the Song which Mother India has sung from time immemorial to the young-eyed Immortals nursed in that spiritual cradle. Let us open our hearts to receive its melody, let us elevate our minds to comprehend its purity. Thus with sensitive perception we may detect the dominant motive sustaining that harmony. "Heart" possessing the power of Thought, adjusting word and act when used by Spiritual Man, is neither physical nor personal.

Further, "Heart" in its relation to the head is not used in an exclusive sense, as it includes the latter. We do know that within man's head is the brain, an organ for thought and reason. Do we know that within man's Heart there is a "brain" where dwells the Real Man, the Thinker, whose greatest thoughts are from the Heart? Further, there is a definite distinction between a head thought and a heart thought.

This affords a key to the psychology of the Heart. This Teaching postulates that man is a Soul. As the word psychology means the science of the Soul, it appears logical to assume both a Heart doctrine and a science of the Head (both heart and head as instruments being necessary for man's existence on earth). In these Studies we are concerned with the latter only in its various aspects of relative importance.

Science has no answer to: "What is Life?" That explanation can be found in the Eastern psychology or Theosophy. Science does know that life is connected in some mysterious way with the heart, as when

its beat stops life is supposedly finished. Theosophy presents an explanation partially revealed in the following statement: Life ever is, the Spiritual Heart being the Universal focal point through which Life advances and recedes.

There is a saying to the effect that "the human heart has not yet fully uttered itself." The truth of this lies in the fact that the human heart is a limited instrument, bound by perspectives personal and selfish. Only by certain cleansing methods, a few of which will be discussed in these Studies, will it ever be able to understand and to attain to the extent of its powers, can it be raised to the impersonal and divine.

The teaching of the Heart Doctrine forms the basis of every Truth. It can be realized only partially in the mystic Halls of Learning, the Halls of Thought, Will and Feeling, when guided merely by the head. The complete knowledge derived from any one of these Halls requires an illumination proceeding from the Heart.

Carrying the Heart's Light, torch of many lives, we can enter these Halls to study ourself; a self difficult to discern among the shadows limning those walls — dark shadows of untrue thoughts and selfish desire, of weak will or diseased imagination and its evil memories. The eyes of the Soul are as dependent upon light for seeing as are our physical eyes.

Pursuing our study with singleness of purpose and perseverance, undismayed by the scorch of passion, unrent by suffering, head may unite with Heart, and Self-knowledge be born from that union.

Many of our difficulties are due to the fact that we are more interested in the objects and conditions of material existence than in the light which renders them visible and real. Lacking this light, the senses afford limited testimony, somewhat analogous to that which represents the experiences of the blind. In addition to this, our mind faculties of thought, will and feeling are directed to the phenomenal world with little understanding of the Light or Life that gives them their temporary existence.

Every object has its own Heart, Soul, or Reality. As human beings we desire to make permanent, to have and to hold, those objects which are dear, or to avoid those not so dear.

The Light of the Heart is the psychological X-ray which penetrates beneath the surface mould of light and shadow to the Soul of every object. That X-ray needs pure instruments, whether of thought, will or feeling. When these are used with unselfish motives to benefit all beings, to educate and heal, then comes Vision, sometimes called Spiritual Clairvoyance. Then we perceive that evil is the darkness of ignor-

nce, that change is rooted in changelessness, impermanency in permanence.

We have now reached the stage so graphically described in *Light on the Path*, having approached the Unattainable, having entered the Light, even though we can never touch the Flame. Discerning the Real we no longer desire the unreal.

This is the Light from the Heart. In this vision we meet the "young-eyed Immortals"; we recapture Eternal Youth.

The Cradle Song has awakened our Hearts to the Soul's compassionate response to "every sigh and thought of all that lives and breathes."

When I walk by and you say to your friend, "There goes So-and-So," what do you mean? What you see are my clothes, my shoes, my hat, my glasses, my face, and my hands. Is that all of Me? You'll agree there is more inside. But what you see I call my NUMBER ONE. My shoes serve my feet by keeping them from being bruised; my clothes protect me from the elements; my glasses are tools for my eyes. But you do not see ME. Then is my physical body, denuded of these things, I? No, for I say to my legs, "Walk over there"; I say to my hands, "Lift this book!" I say to my eyes, "Look at this flower"; I say to my tongue, "Repeat these words." My legs and arms are tools, as my glasses are tools. So my physical being is not I. I call my physical being my NUMBER TWO. And still you do not see ME. Then is my mind which directs my body, I? No; for when I think evil or do evil, something beyond my mind lashes it; it stands me up and calls me to account. It sits in judgment. Like Natural Law, it can be flouted, but it is there all the time. Often when I read, I go over the same sentence time after time without getting any meaning; I am in a "brown study." Something beyond my mind is dominating me. When I am "lost in thought," I am not consciously thinking; so back of the thinking mechanism which I operate consciously, there is something else. My thinking mechanism I call my NUMBER THREE. And the something back of it, I call my NUMBER FOUR. The NUMBER FOUR is I.

—HERMAN SCHNEIDER

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The latest scientific thinking on the giver of warmth and light, and of life itself — the sun — is outlined in the November 1965 *National Geographic* by Dr. Herbert Friedman of the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington. His distinguished contributions to knowledge of the sun have earned numerous awards and citations. We quote first from his article and then present the Theosophical view.

What [Dr. Friedman asks] makes the sun shine so steadily? . . . It is atomic, or nuclear, energy that fires the stars . . . the nuclei, or cores, of hydrogen atoms collide, uniting to form helium nuclei and giving off bursts of energy. . . .

Modern astronomers can gauge the size and distance of the sun very accurately, using triangulation with other celestial objects. Its diameter of 864,000 miles compares with earth's 8,000. The sun's distance from earth averages 93,000,000 miles. . . .

When we compare earth's size with that of the sun, we find that the sun would hold some 1,300,000 earths, and that it contains nearly 330,000 times as much mass as the earth. . . . We have good reason to believe that at the centre of the sun, close to half a million miles deep, pressure reaches 100 billion atmospheres. (An "atmosphere" is 14.7 pounds per square inch, the weight of the column of air over a square inch of earth's surface at sea level.)

To produce such great pressure, we know that gas must be heated to a temperature of about 16,000,000°C. How hot is 16 million degrees? Sir James Jeans, in *The Universe Around Us*, calculates that a pinhead of material at the temperature of the sun's core would emit enough heat to kill a man a hundred miles away.

Although the density at the centre of the sun must be about 11.4 times that of solid lead, the sun remains gaseous everywhere. That is, the atoms are free to move about, unlike those in a solid, which are fixed in a regular pattern. . . .

Seventeenth-century man found it easy to visualize the end of the world in flames from a passing comet. Today's scientists foresee a much different finale. Perhaps five billion years hence, they suggest, the sun will exhaust its hydrogen fuel and flare into a "red giant" star that will engulf the nearer planets.

In *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 149), Madame Blavatsky repudiated "the fallacious conception of a 'white-hot, incandescent Sun' perpetually radiating away his heat without compensation into Space." Occult Science teaches that "the Sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid*, nor yet a gaseous

glow; but a gigantic ball of electro-magnetic Forces, the storehouse of universal *life* and *motion*, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the *Maha Yuga*."

The Theosophical doctrine is that the sun is not hot at all, its "heat" being but a terrestrial conversion of its magnetic energy. It is "but one of the myriad *magnets* disseminated through space — a reflector," wrote Madame Blavatsky in 1877, adding that "the sun has no more heat in it than the moon or the space-crowding host of sparkling stars" (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 271).

The spectroscope has helped us to see that the elements, with which the modern chemist is familiar, *must in all probability* be present in the sun's outward robes — *not in the sun itself*; and, taking these "robes," the solar cosmic veil, for the sun itself, the physicists have declared its luminosity to be due to *combustion* and *flame*, and have mistaken the vital principle of that luminary for a purely *material* thing, and called it "chromosphere." (*S.D.*, I. 528)

Madame Blavatsky also remarked that "none of the ancients, the sun-worshippers included, regarded our visible sun otherwise than as an emblem of their metaphysical, invisible, central sun-god." She describes the dual aspect of the great luminary in the following manner:

The Sun is matter, and the Sun is Spirit. Our ancestors — the "heathen" — along with their modern successors, the Parsis — were, and are, wise enough in their generation to see in it the symbol of Divinity, and at the same time to sense within, concealed by the physical Symbol, the bright God of Spiritual and terrestrial Light. . . . It is the "Spirit of Light," the first born of the Eternal pure Element, whose energy (or emanation) is stored in the Sun, the great Life-Giver of the physical world, as the hidden Concealed Spiritual Sun is the Light- and Life-Giver of the Spiritual and Psychic Realms. (*S.D.*, I. 479, 481)

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Currently, some of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which rank among the most important archaeological discoveries of the century, are being exhibited at the British Museum. Some scholars believe that these documents may in time lead to a completely fresh interpretation of the origins of Christianity. An article in *The Sunday Times* (London) describes the broad direction of a path of research being developed at present by one of Britain's representatives on the eight-man Scroll

editing team, the Manchester University philologist John Allegro.

Many of the earlier books and commentaries on the subject had hinted that the Scrolls gave rise to important questions concerning the historicity of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. Further clues, Mr. Allegro believes, could lead to a break with the traditional assumption that the Gospels contain a *historical* record of the origins of Christianity. The Gospels might, he thinks, be viewed as a collection of myths with a moral and religious purpose, in which the person of Jesus is secondary.

Between the emotional approach, which regards the Gospels as divinely inspired, and the factual approach, which offers no satisfactory explanation of how Christianity developed in the first place, the Scrolls may now offer, as the *Times* article puts it,

an academic middle way, interpreting the Christian story as a record, in mythical form, not of a spiritual *discovery*, but of a spiritual *search*; in which the account of the life and teachings of Christ is an attempt to draw together the entire tradition in a dramatic, meaningful way. The full import of the Christian message may therefore be discovered only partly in the Gospels, and partly in the thought and circumstances of the times, especially those of the first Christians, who we know were dispersed, persecuted Jewish visionaries.

In this context the Scrolls, with their direct documentary evidence of the life and ideas of unorthodox Jewish thinkers of Christ's own times, are of the highest importance.

The Scrolls are now held by most scholars to be commentaries written by the Essenes, a Jewish sect which had its headquarters at Qumran, beside the Dead Sea. Mr. Allegro is stated to be of the opinion that

the lost religion of the Essenes, now illuminated by the Scrolls, will provide a "missing link" between classical Judaism and its most potent offshoot — Christianity. . . .

Already it is known that the Essene rule, enshrined in the community's "Manual of Discipline," displayed many parallels with early Christianity. The spiritual climate of the Scrolls and that of early Christianity are also similar. Both anticipate an *imminent* Day of Judgment. The Qumran Scrolls, moreover, reserve their bitterest denunciations, as did Jesus and John the Baptist, for the orthodox spiritual leaders in Jerusalem.

Essene ritual contains passages akin to the story of Christ's feeding of the multitude and the ceremony of the Last Supper. And the healing powers of Jesus and his followers find a reflection

in the name Essene which probably means "healer" or "wonder-worker," and references in the Scrolls to the healing activities of the Essenes.

One of the most exciting aspects of Scroll research is the frequency with which typical Christian phrases occur, which not only suggest a link but also illuminate the Gospel meaning. Thus, the "poor in spirit" who figure in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Scrolls are evidently anything but feeble individuals. The Scroll reading suggests that they are people who have made a deliberate act of renouncing worldly pleasures.

Even some of the "unique" aspects of the Gospel story, Christ's advent and crucifixion, Allegro thinks may be anticipated in the Scrolls. . . .

Who were the Essenes? *The Theosophical Glossary* states that "Essene" is "a hellenized word, from the Hebrew *Asa*, a 'healer.' A mysterious sect of Jews said by Pliny to have lived near the Dead Sea *per millia sæculorum* — for thousands of ages." The following quotations from *Isis Unveiled* could suggest a new line of research to Scroll interpreters:

The great similitude traced by some critics between the rites and observances of the earliest Christians and those of the Essenes may be accounted for without the slightest difficulty. The Essenes . . . were the converts of Buddhist missionaries who had overrun Egypt, Greece, and even Judea at one time, since the reign of Asoka the zealous propagandist; and while it is evidently to the Essenes that belongs the honour of having had the Nazarene reformer, Jesus, as a pupil, still the latter is found disagreeing with his early teachers on several questions of formal observance. He cannot strictly be called an Essene. . . . He is the founder of the sect of the new nazars . . . a follower of the Buddhist doctrine. (II. 132)

If there were no *Christians*, there were Chrestians long before the era of Christianity; and the Essenes belonged to the latter as well as to all other initiated brotherhoods, without even mentioning the Christnites of India. . . . "The Worship of Christ was not universal at this early date," explains Mackenzie, "by which I mean that Christolatry had not been introduced; but the worship of *Chrestos* — the Good Principle — had preceded it by many centuries, and even survived the general adoption of Christianity, as shown on monuments still in existence. . . ." (II. 323-24)

As for Jesus and the four Gospels, Madame Blavatsky wrote in

the same work:

... if he [Jesus] was an initiate of either the Pythagorean Essenes, the Chaldean Magi, or the Egyptian Priests, then the doctrine taught by him was but a portion of the "Secret Doctrine" taught by the Pagan hierophants. . . .

Contradictory as they [the four Gospels] often are, there is not a single narrative, sentence, or peculiar expression, whose parallel may not be found in some older doctrine or philosophy. Notwithstanding the paucity of old philosophical works now extant, we could find no end of instances of perfect identity between Pythagorean, Hindu, and New Testament sayings. . . . What is needed is a Christian public that will examine what will be offered, and show common honesty in rendering its verdict.

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Under the title "Student Mobs," J. B. Priestley writes in the *New Statesman* (London) of November 26th on a problem confronting many countries today, including India. He deplors the trend among university students to turn themselves into mischievous and sometimes dangerous mobs and suggests severity rather than indulgence in dealing with them. Students are not supposed to be ignorant and stupid. They are supposed to have developed a sense of responsibility in order to deserve higher education. They should be the last and not the first to create howling destructive mobs. Says Mr. Priestley:

We live in a curious age. We are offered glimpses of a genuine world civilization slowly emerging—the UN special agencies, organizations like Oxfam, and here and there, as I have seen for myself, remote enterprises, dedicated to healing or education, with international staffs or selfless enthusiasts. And such glimpses warm the heart and brighten hope. But along with these are sights and sounds that suggest that the whole fabric of civilization, the work of centuries, is rapidly being torn apart. Two official policies clash, and instantly embassies, consulates, centres of information services, are surrounded and then attacked by howling mobs of students, at once defying law, custom, usage. . . .

What we see in these student faces illuminated by burning cars and bonfires of books is not the glow of political enthusiasm but a frenzied delight in destruction. Whatever country or party they may be demonstrating for or against, what really inspires them is an urge towards violent demolition. . . .

We live, I repeat, in a curious age, which is trying hard to

abolish want and disease but is also abolishing, without trying, any regard and respect for other people's possessions. And it is in the countries where lads are now most carefully and expensively nurtured that they proceed to knock hell out of everything. . . . A woman who had taught in junior schools for 40 years told me that the most recent children were far and away the most destructive she had ever known: they just wanted to smash things. . . .

Our destructiveness and violence today do not seem to come from any surplus of energy but from a neurotic or even psychotic heartlessness, a cold disregard of other persons, a hatred of life. And something very much like it, only of course further developed and more subtle, has crept like a huge cold serpent into too much of our fiction and drama. There are people among us who don't seem to belong to the human race. . . . Though I am familiar with all the usual explanations — H-bomb, no religion, bad homes and irresponsible parents, dead-end jobs, boring environment, and the rest — I remain puzzled, never entirely convinced, still wondering if there might not be some unknown factor, a vast X in the dark.

There are, of course, many factors that contribute to the trend towards violence among the youth of today, but the problem is primarily a *moral* one. The failure to instil moral standards in the younger generation is undermining our civilization. Religions have not taught men any other or higher reason why they should have regard and respect for other people and behave as human beings should behave than the hope of reward and the fear of punishment; and when they let go their belief in divine caprice and divine injustice, the foundations of their morality are sapped. Lacking a true basis, the youth of today exhibit, in the words of Mr. Priestley, "a neurotic or even psychotic heartlessness, a cold disregard of other persons, a hatred of life."

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In the November 1965 issue of *Soviet Land* appears in abridged form a chapter from a book written by Volf Messing, a telepath, from which we cull below:

It has long been known that the thinking activity of man is accompanied by the genesis of electric currents in the brain. They are splendidly photographed and recorded in the form of dented curves on wide paper tapes. Furthermore, the more intensely, the more energetically the person thinks, the more clearly defined are the curves. It means that when thought originates, electric currents and the electro-magnetic field that accompanies

them also appear. Why can we not consider this as the material substance which takes part in the transmission of thought? . . . We must experiment. We must ascertain whether the electro-magnetic field takes part in the transmission of thoughts. . . .

I had an occasion to be present during some discussions about what telepathy is: atavism, which has been preserved from our super-distant ancestors, or, on the contrary, a trait which the people of the future will possess in full measure. . . . To tell the truth, I am not much interested in whether telepathy is atavism or a property of the man of tomorrow. What interests me is something else: every person, I mean literally every person, who conscientiously rummages his memory, will recall one or the other case that testifies to the existence of telepathy.

Without a comprehensive study of the "electro-magnetic field" referred to above, and which Theosophists know as the astral light, or the universal ether — repository of human thoughts and a medium for the influencing of one mind by another — modern investigators in the field of extra-sensory perception, including telepathy, needs must grope in the dark. The normal conditions necessary for the operation of telepathy were summarized clearly by Madame Blavatsky in *The Key to Theosophy* as long ago as 1889. "The time is not far distant," she wrote, "when the World of Science will be forced to acknowledge that there exists as much interaction between one mind and another, no matter at what distance, as between one body and another in closest contact":

When two minds are sympathetically related, and the instruments through which they function are tuned to respond magnetically and electrically to one another, there is nothing which will prevent the transmission of thoughts from one to the other, at will; for since the mind is not of a tangible nature, that distance can divide it from the subject of its contemplation, it follows that the only difference that can exist between two minds is a difference of STATE. So if this latter hindrance is overcome, where is the "miracle" of *thought transference*, at whatever distance?

"Nature has linked all parts of her Empire together by subtle threads of magnetic sympathy," wrote a Master of Wisdom, "and there is a mutual correlation even between a star and a man." The vast hierarchy of sentient life, therefore, can be thought of as being in a sort of constant telepathic and psychic communication. Each form of consciousness, whether simple or complex, is forever affected by the dynamic influence radiating from every other centre.

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