

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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“MAN HAS NEVER BEEN WITHOUT A FRIEND”

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So WROTE Mr. Judge, the true friend of all earnest students, of all sincere aspirants. In her turn H.P.B. knew W. Q. Judge as Krishna knew Arjuna, calling him “my devotee and my friend.”

Each server of his kind must become in himself an abode of friendship. And none can become that save and except by seeking the Divine Soul within. The *Gita* teaches that Self is the friend of the self, but also that there is no other enemy to our own Soul so vile and so virile as our petty self.

When centred in the separated and separative self, man lives in a universe of his own making. He sees the cosmos not as it is, but as he fancies it to be. The lower personal self is colour-blind, is tone-deaf; he lives in his own hovels of illusion, making slums in space, and he can never be a friend to others in truth and reality. And the nemesis? — he never can know his true friends.

Sore need of the personal self often reveals its real friend to be the Soul. And fortunate in Karma the person who recognizes the truth that he is in need, a veritable beggar in need. Bereft of worldly goods, man seeks heavenly wisdom; spiritual poverty has to be recognized and the personal self must go down on his knees in recognition of his spiritual adversity; such recognition alone opens the door to the Temple of Friends.

Those who are in that Temple see the cosmos as it is — colourful, singing, balmy, fragrant, one harmony of bliss and beatitude. The universe is not multiplex, is not duplex; it is single and integral. The true Seers, one and all, have this vision and therefore They befriend human-

ity — each member of it. Respecting Nature's process that leaves each mortal free to choose, to will and to act, these Friends wait and watch for every mortal who chooses the better way, who makes the great resolve to act recognizing the solidarity of all men, always and ever.

Man must learn that the separative and separated self is incapable by its very make-up of attracting the friendship of the Great Friends. But when that self has cleansed himself sufficiently even to glimpse that all men are his brothers, between whom and himself there is interdependence, there naturally unfolds in him the seed of friendship for all. That species of friendship which prevails in the world springs, generally speaking, from a distorted vision of Nature and Nature's God. People make friends with their kind; birds of a feather flock together, to chirp and chatter, to pack and pick, and to fatten their own prides and prejudices, which presently must burst, causing pain. Such pain can always be avoided, but, if folly invites it, it can and should be properly used as a purifier. It takes man, if he will move, in the direction of the world of real friendship.

Theosophy advises its votaries to cultivate the spirit of universal friendship by understanding the truth that the Highest sees through the eyes of the lowest; that saints will not help those who deny help to sinners; that sages enlighten those hearts bent upon showing the ways of righteousness to the ignorant, the foolish, the wicked.

Remember that the sin and shame of the world are your sin and shame; for you are a part of it; your Karma is inextricably interwoven with the great Karma.

Now, it is difficult, even for many students of Theosophy, to befriend all, especially those who do not see eye to eye with them, who hold views and beliefs different from their own. There persists the separative self in spite of the acceptance of the fundamental that all men are brothers. All who honour the principle of Universal Brotherhood should observe if within themselves they are beginning to sense the sweet side of life; if they are getting to like their friends better and extending the circle; if they feel themselves expanding in sympathy.

To overcome the machinations of the separated and separative self is to get away from the world of inimical forces and to approach the world of Friends. We have to learn to cultivate friendship for all — strangers and kin, children and adults, servants and masters; such friendships naturally widen the circle to include the heretic, the fool, the sinner, even him who hates us.

An Abode of Friendship! Each Theosophical Lodge, each Theosophical home, every place where students of Theosophy labour, should become an abode of friendship. If our philosophy does not help us to make them that, then we have misunderstood its metaphysics, we have misapplied its ethics. Contemplate these words of Marcus Aurelius:

Like as it is with the several members of an organized body, so is it with rational beings who exist separate; the same principle rules, for they also are constituted for a single co-operation. And the perception of this will more strongly strike thy mind, if thou say often to thyself, "I am a member (*melos*) of the system of rational beings." But if thou say, "I am a part (*meros*)," though thou change but one letter of the Greek, thou dost not yet love men from thy heart. Loving-kindness doth not yet delight thee for its own sake: thou still doest it barely as a thing of propriety, and not yet as doing good to thyself.

THE WEAKENING of the feeling of separateness... can only be achieved by a process of *inner enlightenment*. It is not violence that can ever insure bread and comfort for all; nor is the kingdom of peace and love, of mutual help and charity and "food for all," to be conquered by a cold, reasoning, diplomatic policy. It is only by the close brotherly union of men's inner SELVES, of soul-solidarity, of the growth and development of that feeling which makes one suffer when one thinks of the suffering of others, that the reign of Justice and equality for all can ever be inaugurated. This is the first of the three fundamental objects for which the Theosophical Society was established, and called the "Universal Brotherhood of Man," without distinction of *race*, colour or creed.

—*Lucifer*, August 1888

OBEDIENCE

Is any of you so eager for knowledge and the beneficent powers it confers as to be ready to leave your world and come into ours? Then let him come; but he must not think to return until the seal of the mysteries has locked his lips even against the chances of his own weakness or indiscretion. Let him come by all means, as the pupil to the master, and without conditions.

—MASTER K.H.

OBEDIENCE connotes a vast variety of attitudes and states of the mind. It may be of the enforced variety. On the other hand, it may be totally self-imposed. The man worsted in the fight; the nation overrun by an invader; the feeble groaning under the despotic yoke of the tyrant — all obey through fear and the dread of harm. The labourer, the artisan and the learned also obey and follow a mandate because they are thus able to get the wages for their obedience. In such cases where obedience is the resultant of an outside stimulus, it becomes a thing of barter, a chattel which can be bought and sold in the markets of the world. The effort is akin to that of the hired mercenary who wages the other man's wars. It is not of such obedience that the disciple is in need. The colour of his obedience has to be different.

There are yet other types of obedience which are undesirable. The man of weakened will obeys because he has lost the strength to refuse. The hypnotized subject obeys because he has surrendered his mind to a more dominant will. Obedience in such cases portrays but the servility of a man who cannot but obey — a condition unfit for the religious life. Then there are men who are obedient to their carnal urges. They do sometimes put up the semblance of a fight, but are secretly happy at their own defeat. Religious fanatics and the bigots of science bend their knees to false dogmas and pledge their obedience to men and ideals that abandon them at the gates of death. The truly religious life invites a stern and unflinching obedience to spiritual ideals and universal principles. On the other hand, the urge for self-aggrandizement demands an obedience — equally exclusive — to norms and processes that negate universal cohesion and pander to the personal and vain objectives of a selfish elevation. "Over my dead body" is oftentimes the cry of the latter; "Thy will, not mine, be done," of the former.

Discipline, whether of the right- or the left-hand path, demands the subjugation by oneself of the urge to wander away from the chosen lines of endeavour. It must therefore imply that all ideas, disciplines,

dicta, urges which are in conflict with the chosen goal have to be shunned. The spiritually oriented pledges himself to fight his lower nature, however frequent may be the falls or the degradation. Such an obedience to the laws and rules of his Order raises a conflict within him when acts and thoughts which are antagonistic to those laws present a charmed lure to sidestep "just this once." Happy is he who at each turn pauses to reflect before each action, trying to judge how by each little step he bends his knee to either the shades of darkness or the active forms of day. But whether he pauses to reflect or not, each man continues to make his own choices and karma inexorably marks the tally on the right or the left side of his ledger of life.

All through his life the man acts thus, making his choices momentarily; and whether he will initiate the action or refrain from it will be according to the dictates of a mind which has been either purified or tainted by the action of all his pasts. Were these choices to be considered final, the future for most men would be bleak indeed, for the gates to perdition are high and wide and easy of approach. Reincarnation here plays a merciful part, for the old memories are lost and a new birth with erased memories presents fresh opportunities for confirming or rejecting past choices. But there must come a time in each man's life when the gathered momentum of all his pasts is so strong that a contrary choice is swept clean away, and then obedience becomes absolute to either light or darkness. At such moments, the man stands denuded of all power to change the course laid down by atavism and karmic heredity.

If obedience be an imperative adjunct to discipline, in what spheres does freedom exist? Is the disciple (he who undertakes the discipline) bound to surrender his judgement to the personal or impersonal orders and dicta that come to him *via* his Instructions and his Teacher? Weighty questions these, and their answers should be searched for before the pupil makes his first obeisance to his teacher. The teacher, or, to give him his age-old appellation, the Guru, is, in the words of H.P.B., "always an Adept in the Occult Science, a man of profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter; and one who has brought his carnal nature under subjection of the WILL; who has developed in himself both the power (*Siddhi*) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being. . . ." A chela, therefore, is a student who is accepted by the Guru because he (the chela) "has offered himself or herself as a pupil to learn practically the 'hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.'" All very

true, says the ordinary man, but by what test can the would-be pupil judge of the degree of excellence of his Guru? If the chela is to pledge obedience to his Guru for life and for lives, does he have some yardstick by which to assure himself of a right choice? Or is he left to his own devices, by trial and error to flit from one Guru to another in the hope that in his peregrinations he will chance upon the real Master who is to give him birth in the Hall of Wisdom?

There is a law in Occultism that from the moment the Guru begins really to teach, from the instant he confers any power — whether psychic, mental or physical — on his pupil, he takes upon himself *all* the sins of that pupil, in connection with the Occult sciences, until the moment when initiation makes the pupil a Master and responsible in his turn. It is for this reason that the “Teachers” are so reticent and the Chelas are required to serve a seven years’ probation to prove their fitness and develop the qualities necessary to the security of both Master and pupil. Since in such a relationship there can be no royal road by which favourites may ascend, the pupil is left to his own devices to prepare his make-up for the qualifying tests. Can he be obedient to his conscience, his duties, his resolutions? Is he willing to take the bit into his own mouth and learn to obey the guidance of rein and spur? For a true aspirant, the lines of obedience are spelt out in the *Gita*. Says the text: “Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility.” When these preliminaries are adopted and made a part of one’s life, the wise who know the Truth will be there to communicate it. For, when the disciple is ready, the Teacher is ready also. In order to enter upon such preparation, the pupil is bound to undertake a course of self-discipline as well as adopt a few ascetic rules. The lines of obedience to one’s Higher Self become clearly perceptible to him who turns his face to the Light. But it were useless to strain the eyes at spiritual horizons if the pupil sees humanity not as a vast whole but as so many fragments divided by race, religion or nationality. If the elementary teaching of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity is not understood, the pupil cannot aspire to be a chela of Masters whose one concern is the good of humanity in general.

If we took the trouble to analyse our actions, we would find that we obey an urge, an emotion, a hunger. Not only that, but in the act of surrendering to it we exercise our freedom to relinquish or move out of the orbit of the diametrically opposite virtue. Obedience of the lower order demands servility. Sublimated, it manifests a high form of courage and the force of Will. Man at all times requires a virile

strength to assert his freedom to obey. The average man thinks himself free when in fact he is chained by the hundred cords of desire. To such an one, the spiritual aspirant appears a slave who has signed away his freedom to Teachers whom he may not have even seen in the flesh.

To understand the mechanics of obedience, one has to understand the meaning of freedom. The question has to be put and answered: Does freedom connote a violation of the laws of charity, mercy and justice just because the man has the power if he so will of going in the opposite direction? Freedom does imply an unfettered choice to move in any direction open to the man. It also means that, having so chosen, he has the right to abandon his first choice and opt for something different. New Year's resolutions are thus made and broken. But whatever the position taken, it does mean obedience or alliance with the one and the shunning or excluding of the other. The man's very freedom binds him. He is free to generate causes. He is not free to choose what effects he will have. His choice made in the exercise of his freedom binds him to a course of conduct to which he pledges obedience. This will last till an alien desire so effects a change in his thinking that he changes Masters, and so God and Mammon claim his allegiance by turns. The Jekyll-Hyde combination is not that rare as to be imperceptible in oneself and others. The emplacement of an unshakable obedience is therefore a major factor in the determining of the line of a man's meditation. A shifting allegiance, a vacillating loyalty, marks the behaviour of the man who moves with the herd. When the man for the first time feels the pull towards the True, he feels, be it for a moment, the charmed glow of a vaster life. He basks in it till the time when, oppressed by the spreading of an unfamiliar fog, he too often rushes to the shady slopes of his once familiar hills.

For the guidance of the beginner a few rules can be given, which, if followed, would test the strength of his obedience and resolve.

(1) All tenets and injunctions which are rooted in the Universal have to be respected and honoured by use.

(2) Rules of charity, justice, truth and non-violence have to be observed on all occasions.

(3) The mandates of patience have to be heeded and a brave endurance of personal injustice practised, regardless of the pain and suffering.

(4) The laws of mental and physical purity have to be made an

integral part of one's life.

(5) Obedience to the laws of Brotherhood must be inculcated in oneself and others, and charity must be shown to others' faults and weaknesses. This is a primary duty, obedience to which is imperative.

(6) Regardless of falls and failures, a constant battle has to be waged against one's lower nature. In this, obedience to time-honoured rules provides invaluable aid and guidance.

(7) Obedience must be offered to the behests of the Imperishable as opposed to the transient and the perishable.

There are certain areas of action where there can be no doubt or vacillation about the principles of conduct to which obedience is due. Duties which an individual owes to himself, to his Teacher and to humanity are acts which must be performed. Disobedience to their call is sure to result in evil in the shape of malformations of character, perverted thinking and a general degradation of the human element. It is here that the mettle of the man is tested long before he even thinks of chelaship. Is he prepared to take the bit into his own mouth, put a curb upon the rampant freedom of the animal in him and bend the untamed part of himself to his Will? For, as between good and evil, obedience to the behests of one means a disobedience, a summary rejecting of the suzerainty of the other. Allegiance to the one must mean the disowning of the other. Therefore, wherever there is a failure of duties, there must certainly exist the act of disobedience to the higher, the bending of knees to the lower. Thus each day succeeds another with its record of obedience or of a falling off from the chosen discipline. It shows the measure of the man's stamina to achieve freedom from vice, from the lure and glamour of material things as also from the endless repeating of the same experience because the lesson has not been learnt.

Has the aspirant the faith that his obedience is not misplaced, that, despite all earthly semblances to the contrary, the chosen mentor can never go wrong, can never lead him astray? For, it is on faith and faith alone that the future man is to be formed. It is faith alone which can make obedience unquestioning. It is faith in the impersonal that can make the man go through the travails of a new birth in quest of the impersonal. When this faith descends on the man, obedience transforms itself into reverence, adoration, self-surrender. It is thus that chelas are born.

SYNTHESIS—A NECESSITY

WHY is it that our daily life so often does not reflect our beliefs or our faith? We know, for instance, that reincarnation is true, that karma is an immutable law—that what we are getting, whether pleasant or unpleasant, is the consequence of our own thoughts, feelings and acts in the past, whether of this life or a preceding one; but, in spite of knowing all this, why do we not *act* in the present on the basis of reincarnation and karma? We put aside all thought of the consequences of our present doings that we will have to face in future lives, and act, think and feel as if this life were all that mattered.

Is it because we lack the power to synthesize, step by step, what we know theoretically? Perhaps we think that if only we are good, virtuous, loving, all will be well. Perhaps we feel that as the Fundamentals intrigue us and we take satisfaction in thinking of them, life will look after itself. Perhaps, that if we are truly devoted to the Great Ones, all will be well.

But it is not so. We need to synthesize all aspects of life and knowledge into one whole, and the link that binds them together is none other than the perfect motive for living—“to benefit mankind.”

If we take H. P. Blavatsky, or W. Q. Judge, or Robert Crosbie as our models, we shall find that the motive behind all they did was “to benefit mankind.” And in order that we may be helped, and in turn may help others, they taught us the science of life—of matter or form, visible or invisible, and of that which lies beyond form and matter. They gave us the idea of the Absolute as a background, as an axiomatic truth in any case, and lead us step by step to perceive that all matter, all spirit, all forces, have their seat in that background and that therefore all is one WHOLE.

We can see the multitudinous details of the workings of these three, matter, force, spirit, on one another, and this gives us the science of matter, visible and invisible. We can understand the Universe, cause and effect, cycles, matter, form. We can watch consciousness unfolding itself through all forms, from the very highest to the lowest; from the greatest of archangels, or the Logos itself, to the insignificant worm. By the law of analogy we can see that everything on the material plane follows the same pattern as on the universal plane. We see that miracles are an impossibility and that immutable LAW reigns supreme.

The teachers have taught us that religion at its source is the knowledge of immortality, rooted in spirit; but, to function in the world of matter,

spirit needs a form. These forms are made of dense matter or ethereal shining matter. The practice of religion implies the practice of devotion, and devotion comes from the recognition that there are those who have risen by their own efforts to sublime heights and have made the supreme sacrifice of their own well-earned peace and bliss in order to help mankind to rise to the same heights. We have been told about the Lords of Light, those great souls whose efforts hold back from humanity much of the heavy Karma which would otherwise swamp it. In trouble and sorrow we do, in fact, "lift up our heads," or turn to "something afar from the sphere of our sorrow." This recognition of something greater than we are now, of a blissful condition which we can perhaps faintly glimpse, causes hymns of praise and of gratitude to rise from the heart, as a beautiful sunset awakes in us feelings of joy and wondrous beauty. We must turn our eyes to the sun, to the stars, to the Cosmos itself that is so mysteriously pushed on its way to the perfection of form and matter until the latter equals the intelligence or power that ensouls it.

We have been shown the philosophy of life, the reason why certain moral laws are part of great Nature's laws. Judge's *Letters* are priceless aids in living the life. So are Robert Crosbie's letters in *The Friendly Philosopher*. *The Voice of the Silence* goes further and deeper and is the basis for the practices outlined in the writings of Judge and Crosbie.

With all this wealth of information given to us, why do we fail? Is it not because we do not synthesize the teaching in the First Fundamental Proposition — that our consciousness comes from Spirit itself and that the matter we use has its root in the highest state of matter — with the recognition that if this is so, and Fohat is the intelligence and power waking all to life, then the whole world we move in is holy? We look for spirit outside this world we live in, whereas it must be in the earth we tread on and which provides nourishment for our bodies, in the air we breathe and in the water which pours down from the skies to water the earth and make it fruitful, and is then taken up again into the skies to form the wonderful clouds we see. This attitude would make atmospheric pollution, for instance, an impossible nightmare. We would sense God in the spider's web, universal life in the venom of the snake as well as in the mother's milk. Nothing can be left out; interaction is sure and permanent; what affects one affects all.

We do not link the idea that the Absolute, the background of all, is unthinkable because our mind cannot grasp the infinite, with the necessity for us to look always beyond the separative forms of life into the Darkness which is full LIGHT. We do not link up the vision of

Arjuna with the idea that all is Spirit-matter. We do not envisage the glory of the Universe and its workings as the playground and the school and university of life inhabiting the forms.

We do not link up the idea of one LAW with all planes, but limit it to the plane of matter. Science has found that Law works in physical matter; the Great Teachers of Humanity have learnt and taught that Law works also on other planes, and happiness and growth only come as man obeys those laws. They are not "god-given," but Nature's own reactions which produce due effects, and if we would follow the Plan of Life we must follow these laws.

We do not link up the Third Fundamental with its idea of "no privileges or special gifts in man" save those won by his own "self-induced and self-devised efforts" with the method of the scientist who is searching for facts and trying to understand what he finds. We must prove these statements for ourselves since there is no one else who can accept *our* responsibility to the WHOLE.

Life, therefore, must become a scientific experiment of the laws of Nature outside and inside ourselves, an ideal to follow and an effort to let the god in us create on all planes in terms of law which is beauty and truth. While man is man, his life itself and every act, thought and feeling must have at its root the synthesis of science, religion and philosophy. Life must be lived as a personality, as an individuality and as a divinity. At present these are not synthesized. When synthesized, the three become one, the personality merging with the individuality, the individuality becoming the vehicle of the divine.

ONE ATOM in this universe cannot move without dragging the whole world along with it. There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake, and it is becoming every day clearer that the solution of any problem can never be attained on racial, or national, or narrow grounds. Every idea has to become broad till it covers the whole of this world, every aspiration must go on increasing till it has engulfed the whole of humanity, nay, the whole of life, within its scope.

—VIVEKANANDA

YOGA VIDYA

[This is the second and concluding portion of an article by
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—EDS.]

II

While the physical body may not be atomized or magnified illimitably, *its weight may be voluntarily changed without transcending natural law in the slightest degree*. Hundreds, if not thousands, are living in India today, who have seen ascetics, while in the state of dharana, rise from the ground and sit or float in the air without the slightest support. We doubt if a phenomenon seen by so many reputable persons will be seriously denied. Admitting, then, that this levitation does happen, how shall we explain it? That has already been done in *Isis Unveiled*, where the author shows that by simply changing the polarity of his body, so as to make the latter similarly electrified to the spot of ground upon which he stands, the ascetic can cause himself to rise perpendicularly into the air. This is no miracle, but a very simple affair of magnetic polarity. The only mystery is as to the means by which these changes of polarity may be effected. This secret the Yogi learns, and Patanjali's name for the Siddhi is *Garima*, which includes *Laghima*. It follows, of course, that he who knows how to polarize his body so as to cause himself to be "light as a flake of cotton" and rise into the air, has only to reverse the process to make his body abnormally heavy. We stick to the surface of the earth because our bodies are of an opposite polarity to the ground on which we stand. Science explains that we are attracted towards the centre of the earth by gravity, and our weight is the measure of the combined attraction of all the particles of our physical body towards the central point at the earth's centre. But if we double the intensity of that attraction, we become twice as heavy as we were before; if we quadruple it, four times as heavy; centuple it, one hundred times as heavy. In short, by a mere alteration of our polarity, we would be giving our flesh the weight of an equal bulk of stone, iron, lead, mercury, etc. And the Yogi has this secret, or Siddhi, also.

Many Hindus — who admit that their sacred books contain accounts of the phenomena of levitation, that is, of walking or floating in the air — affirm that the power has been lost, and that there are none living who can exhibit it, or even the appearance of it, save through

the help of jugglery. This false conclusion is assisted by the tendency of Western education, which but reflects the materialism of modern experimental science — so misnamed, for it is but partly experimental and preponderatingly inferential guesswork. Forgetting that the law of gravitation is, after all, but an incomplete hypothesis which holds its ground for the want of a better one, our young men say that science has defined the laws of gravity, hence levitation is an absurdity, and our old books teach nonsense. This would be sufficient if the premises were not false. Science has but noted the more familiar phenomena of gravity, and knows nothing whatever of its nature, or its variable manifestations under the impulse of the undiscovered primal force. Open any book on any branch of physical science, and the author, if he have any professional reputation to lose, will be detected in the confession of his ignorance of the ultimate cause of natural phenomena. Superficial readers will be deceived by glittering generalizations from partially proved data, but the thoughtful student will ever find the empty void at the bottom. Huxley sums it all up in the self-condemnatory sentence, “we” — that is, *we* scientists, we men who talk so glibly about ancient superstition and ignorance, and would impress Indian youth with the notion that *we* are the very High Priests of nature, the only competent instructors of her mysteries, the key to which we all carry in our vest pockets — “*we know nothing* about the composition of any body whatever, as it is.”

But supposing that not one witness could be found in all our India today to prove the fact of levitation, would we have to let the case go by default? By no means; for, to say nothing of the unbroken chain of lay testimony that stretches from the earliest historic period to our times, we can take that of eminent Western physicians who have witnessed such levitations in the cases of patients afflicted with certain nervous diseases — Professor Perty, of Geneva, and Dr. Kerner, of Wurttemberg, among others. If a phenomenon of such nature takes place in a diseased body, without being regarded as a violation of the “laws of nature,” why should it not occur — provided the same conditions, *i.e.*, a reversed polarity, are furnished it — in a body free from disease? This testimony of science secured, we need not hesitate to cull from contemporaneous records the mass of available proof that the bodies of living men can be and are floated through the air. Who shall deny it? Science? No, for we have seen that it is attested by some of the most eminent scientific men of our day; and to these we may add Lord Lindsay, President of the Royal Astronomical Society, and one

of the Council of the Royal Society itself. One witness of his stamp is enough, and he is on record (London Dialect. Soc. "*Report*," p. 215) as saying that he had seen a certain medium not only float through the air of a drawing-room but carry with him the chair upon which he had been sitting and with it "pushing the pictures out of their places as he passed along the walls." They were far beyond the reach of a person standing on the ground. And he adds the highly important fact — "The light was sufficient to enable me to see clearly." This same medium he saw floated horizontally out of the window in one room of a house, in Victoria Street, London, and in again at the window of the adjoining room. "I saw him," says Lord Lindsay, "outside the other window (that in the next room) floating in the air. *It was eighty-five feet from the ground.* There was no balcony along the windows. . . . I have no theory to explain these things. I have tried to find out how they are done, but the more I studied them, the more satisfied was I that they could not be explained by mechanical trick. I have had the fullest opportunity for investigation." When such a man gives such testimony, we may well lend an attentive ear to the corroborative evidence which has accumulated at different epochs and in many countries.

The case of the levitated "medium" of the modern Spiritualist, affords us an example of a phase of *Laghima* of which no mention is made in the portion of the *Shrimad Bhagavata* under consideration, but may be found in many other manuscripts. We have seen that a Yogi may reverse his corporeal polarity at pleasure, to make himself light as a cotton flake or heavy as lead; and that he acquired this Siddhi by long self-discipline, and the subordination of the general law of matter to the focalized power of spirit. It has also been affirmed that the cataleptic similitude to death, which in India is called *Samadhi*, may be produced in the mesmerized, or magnetized, subject by the magnetizer. We have the report of the late William Gregory, Professor of Chemistry in Edinburgh University, (*Animal Magnetism; or Mesmerism and its Phenomena*, pp. 154, 155), of one of many experiments, at his own house, by M. Lewis, a famous negro mesmerizer:

Case 5. — Mr. J. H., a young and healthy man, could be rendered instantly and completely cataleptic by a glance, or a single pass. He could be fixed in any position, however inconvenient, and would remain ten or fifteen minutes in such a posture that no man in a natural state could have endured for a minute. . . . When Mr. L. stood on a chair and tried to draw Mr. H., without

contact, from the ground, he gradually rose on tiptoe, making the most violent efforts to rise, till he was fixed by cataleptic rigidity. Mr. Lewis said that, had he been still more elevated above Mr. H., he could have raised him from the floor without contact, and held him thus suspended for a short time while some spectator should pass his hand under the feet. Although this was not done in my presence, *yet the attraction upwards was so strong that I see no reason to doubt the statement made to me by Mr. Lewis, and by others who saw it that this experiment had been successfully performed. Whatever be the influence which acts, it would seem capable, when very intense, of overpowering the law of gravity.*

Let us first clearly comprehend the meaning of the word gravity, and then the inference of Professor Gregory will not seem too extravagant after all. In this phase of *Laghima*, observe that the changed polarity of the human body is effected by the magnetizer's will. We have, therefore, one class of cases where the effect is self-produced by the conscious will of the Yogi; another where it occurs involuntarily in the subject as the result of an outside will directed upon him. The third class is illustrated in the example of the floating medium, which Lord Lindsay attests. Here the *aethrobat* — as air-walkers were called by the Greeks — neither practises Yoga Vidya, nor is visibly depolarized by a living magnetizer, and yet his body also rises from the earth, light as a cotton flake or thistledown. If this happens, where is the cause: for cause there must be, since miracle is an impossibility? Modern Spiritualists, as we are informed, vaguely ascribe the fact to the agency of the disembodied spirits of their dead friends, but have given no sufficient explanation of the method employed. One of their most intelligent writers — Miss Blackwell who won the gold medal of the British N.A.S. for her essay on Spiritualism — attributes it to “jets of currents of magneto-vital force,” which sounds vaguely scientific, to say the least. To follow out this branch of the subject would cause too wide a digression for our present purpose. Suffice it that the medium's body is depolarized, or differently polarized, by some force external to him, which we have no warrant for ascribing to the voluntary action of living spectators.

Another branch of this great subject of *Laghima* may now be given. The more it is studied, the more cumulative is the proof that Patanjali was a master of Psychology.

History affords many proofs that even inanimate objects, such, among others, as huge bronze and marble statues, may be differently polarized,

and illustrate the condition of *Laghima*. It being an established maxim that it is easy to learn from an enemy, let us first call the Heathen-hating, Pope-adoring bigot Des Mousseaux of France to the witness-stand. This contemporary champion of Roman Catholicism is a voluminous and sharp writer, but in his eagerness to prove the divinity of his own religion unwittingly gives the most numerous proofs of the superiority of the despised Heathen in psychological science. True, he ascribes every phenomenon to the Devil, but few readers of this journal will be frightened by this poor tattered "bogey." In his *Les Hauts Phénomènes de la Magie* he admits that "several thousand" of these animated statues are noticed by unexceptionable witnesses, and bids us stand aghast at these evidences of diabolical interference in the affairs of men. He quotes from Titus Livy the account of the statue of Juno at Veii — the Etruscan rival of Rome — which miraculously answered the taunting question of a Roman soldier at the sack of the city by Camillus. "Juno," said the soldier, "will it please you to quit the walls of Veii and settle yourself at Rome?" The statue inclined its head to signify assent, and then audibly replied, "Yes, I will"; whereupon, being lifted upon the shoulders of the conquerors, the huge image "seemed instantly to lose its weight, and rather follow them, as it were, than make itself carried." According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant.*, Book I, ch. xv) the household gods (*penates*) carried away from the Troad to Lavinium and placed in a new temple rose from their pedestals and floated back to their old places, though the temple doors were fast shut; and this happened a second time. In M. Brasseur de Bourbourg's *Histoire de Mexique* (Vol. II, p. 588, and Vol. III, p. 664) is mentioned a curious building — no less than a prison for gods. Herein were confined by chains and under secure bolts and locks, the tutelary gods of the people conquered by the Mexicans, under the belief that as long as these images could be prevented from transporting themselves back to their own countries, their several ward-nations would be kept under subjection; which proves that under its local Mexican name Patanjali's *Laghima* science was generally known to those ancient people of India's antipodes.

Lucian (*de Syria Dea*) describes a scene of which he was eye-witness in a temple of Apollo. When the god wished to express his will his statue would move on its pedestal; if not immediately taken upon their shoulders, by the priests, it would sweat, and "come forth into the middle of the room." When being carried, the statue would become preternaturally light in weight, and once Lucian, the sceptic and priest-

scoffer, saw it levitated. "I will relate," says he, "another thing also which he did *in my presence*. The priests were bearing him upon their shoulders — he left them below upon the ground, while he himself was borne aloft and alone into the air." In the mouth of such an unbeliever and shrewd observer as Lucian is known to have been, this testimony is of great importance.

We have thus purposely drawn upon other than Aryan or other cis-Himalayan sources for the proof we needed of the existence of a *Laghima* property in nature. Since our Indian youth are having so poor an opinion of their own literature, they may be willing to see the case proved without recourse to it. And doubtless, after running around the circle of foreign authority, and then stooping to consult some humble *shastri* about the contents of the Veda and later home writings, they may discover that their own ancestors were not such superstitious fools, after all, but did, in fact, give the Western world its entire patrimony of philosophy and spiritual science. Following out the same policy, let us transfer to these pages from those of the *Quarterly Journal of Science* (February 1875) a list of aethrobats whom the Roman Catholics have canonized into saints, and which the Editor (Mr. Crookes) takes from the Bolandist's *Acta*, giving volume and page in each instance. Before doing so, we will premise by saying, for the benefit of our Oriental readers, who this Mr. William Crookes is. This gentleman is one of the most eminent living chemists of England, and among the best known throughout the western world. His attention has for years been largely given to the application of chemical science to the development of the useful art, and in this direction he has done a deal of important and valuable work. He discovered (in 1863) the new metal *Thallium*, and gave to modern science that delicate little instrument, the Radiometer, which measures the force in the heat rays of a beam of light. One of the cleverest of the Fellows of the Royal Society, and Editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, he felt it his bounden duty, in the Summer of 1870, to investigate mediumistic phenomena and expose the fraud, if such it should prove to be. Before entering upon the inquiry, he laid down with minute particularity the tests that exact science would demand before accepting the phenomena as manifestations that a new force had declared itself. So sternly exacting did they seem, the whole scientific body applauded his intention, and prematurely rejoiced over the certain exposure of the "humbug." But the end was not to be as expected; the "new force" beat Mr. Crookes completely, upset all his theories, confounded and shocked the Royal Society, immeasurably

strengthened the spiritualist party, and gave such an impetus to this branch of scientific enquiry as to threaten a total reconstruction of Western ideas of Force and Matter. Though Mr. Crookes' inquiry first occupied itself with the simple percussive sounds, called "raps," it soon widened so as to embrace the visible apparition of "materialized spirits," and, later, the question of levitation.

The consideration of this part of the subject led to the appearance of the article from which we will now quote the above mentioned list of aethrobats whom the Roman Catholic church has crowned as "saints"!

Forty Levitated Persons, Canonized or Beatified

Name, Country and Condition	Date of Life	Acta Sanct.	Vol.	Pages
Andrew Salus, Scythian Slave ..	880— 946	May	VI	16
Luke of Soterium, Greek Monk ..	890— 946	Feb.	II	85
Stephen I, King of Hungary ..	978—1038	Sept.	I	541
Ladislaus I, Ditto (his grandson)	1041—1096	June	V	318
Christina, Flemish Nun ..	1150—1220	July	V	656
St. Dominic, Italian Preacher ..	1170—1221	Aug.	I	405, 573
Lutgard, Belgian Nun	1182—1246	June	III	238
Agnes of Bohemia, Princess ..	1205—1281	March	I	522
Humiliana of Florence, Widow ..	1219—1246	May	IV	396
Jutta, Prussian Widow Hermit ..	1215—1264	May	VII	606
St. Bonaventure, Italian Cardinal	1221—1274	July	III	827
St. Thomas Aquinas, Itln. Friar ..	1227—1274	March	I	670-1
Ambrose Sansedonius, Itln. Priest	1220—1287	March	III	192
Peter Armengol, Spanish Priest ..	1238—1304	Sept.	I	334
St. Albert, Sicilian Priest	1240—1306	Aug.	II	236
Princess Margaret of Hungary ..	1242—1270	Jan.	II	904
Robert of Solentum, Italian Abbot	1273—1341	July	IV	503
Agnes of Mt. Politian, Itln. Abbess	1274—1317	April	II	794
Bartholus of Vado, Italian Hermit	1300	June	II	1007
Princess Elizabeth of Hungary ..	1297—1338	May	II	126
Catharine Columbina, Sp. Abbess ..	1387	July	VII	352
St. Vincent Ferrer, Sp. Missionary	1359—1419	April	I	497
Coleta of Ghent, Flemish Abbess ..	1381—1447	March	I	559, 576
Jeremy of Panormo, Sicilian Friar	1381—1452	March	I	297
St. Antonine, Archbp. of Florence	1389—1459	May	I	335
St. Francis of Paola, Missionary ..	1440—1507	April	I	117
Osanna of Mantua, Italian Nun ..	1450—1505	June	III	703, 705
Bartholomew of Anghiera, Friar ..	1510	March	II	665
Columba of Rieti, Italian Nun ..	1468—1501	May	V	332-4, 360
Thomas, Archbishop of Valencia ..	1487—1555	Sept.	V	832, 969

Name, Country and Condition	Date of Life	Acta Sanct.	Vol.	Pages
St. Ignatius Loyola, Sp. Soldier ..	1491—1556	July	VII	432
Peter of Alcantara, Spanish Friar ..	1499—1562	Oct.	VIII	672, 687
St. Philip Neri, Italian Friar ..	1515—1595	May	VI	590
Salvator de Horta, Spanish Friar ..	1520—1567	March	II	679-80
St. Luis Bertrand, Sp. Missionary ..	1526—1581	Oct.	V	407, 483
St. Theresa, Spanish Abbess ..	1515—1582	Oct.	VII	399
John á Cruce, Spanish Priest ..	1542—1591	Oct.	VII	239
J. B. Piscator, Roman Professor ..	1586	June	IV	976
Joseph of Cuportino, Italian Friar	1603—1663	Sept.	V	1020-2
Bonaventure of Potenza, Itln. Friar	1651—1711	Oct.	XII	154, 157-9

The compiler, Mr. Crookes, adds the following reflections:

“As the lives of all these are pretty fully recorded, we have the means of drawing several generalizations. It is plain that all displayed the qualities most distinctive of the present ‘spirit-mediums,’ and many were accompanied from childhood by some of the same phenomena, though I find nothing resembling the ‘raps.’ The hereditary nature of their gifts is shown by the Hungarian royal family producing five examples; and it is also notable, on this head, that out of 40 there should not be one of British or French birth, although some of the most remarkable spent much of their lives in France, and all other Christian races seem represented. A feature absolutely common to the whole 40 is great asceticism. Only four married, and all were in the habit of extreme fasting, ‘macerating’ their bodies either with hair shirts or various irons under their clothes, and many of submitting to bloody flagellations. Again, all, without exception, were ghost-seers, or second-sighted; and all subject to trances, either with loss of consciousness only, or of motion and flexibility too, in which case they were often supposed dead; and the last in our list, after lying in state for three days, and being barbarously mutilated by his worshippers, for relics, was unquestionably finally buried alive.¹ Many were levitated only in these unconscious states; others, as Joseph of Cupertino (the greatest aethrobat in all history), both in the trance and ordinary state and (like Mr. Home) most frequently in the latter, while a very few, as Theresa, seem to have been always conscious when in the air. Several were, in certain states, fire-handlers, like Mr. Home. The Princess Margaret was so from the age of ten. Many had what was called the ‘gift of tongues,’ that is,

¹ This appalling story of insane superstition, to be paralleled probably among no non-Catholic people on earth, will be found in *Acta Sanctorum Octobries*, Vol. XII, pp. 158-60

were caused (doubtless in an obsessed state) to address audiences of whose language they were ignorant. Thus the Spaniard, Vincent Ferrer, is said to have learnt no language but his own, though he gathered great audiences in France, Germany, England and Ireland. Connected with this, we should note how general a quality of these persons was eloquence. All the men (except the two kings), and most of the women, were great preachers, though few wrote anything, except Bonaventure and Thomas in the 13th century, and Theresa in the 16th, who were the greatest Catholic writers of their ages. It is also very notable that the list contains the founders of six religious orders — the first special preaching order, Dominicans, the Jesuate Nuns, Minim Friars, Jesuits, Carmelite Nuns, and Oratorians; and all of these, except the second, great and durable.

“The great majority of them, though often seen suspended, were at heights from the ground described only as ‘a palm,’ half a cubit, a cubit, and thence up to five or six cubits, or, in a few cases, ells. But the Princess Agnes and the Abbess Coleta were, like Elijah, carried out of sight, or into the clouds; and Peter of Alcantara and Joseph of Cupertino to the ceilings of lofty buildings. The times that these and others were watched off the ground often exceeded an hour; and the Archbishop of Valencia (1555) was suspended in a trance 12 hours, so that not only all the inmates of his palace and clergy, but innumerable lay citizens, went to see the marvel. On recovery, with the missal he had been reading in his hand, he merely remarked he had lost the place.² In this and all cases the subjects were either praying at the time, or speaking or listening to a particular religious topic that, in each case, is recorded to have generally affected that person either with trance or levitation. We have seen that Apollonius vanished on declaiming his favourite verse of Homer. So the topic of the Incarnation would cause Peter of Alcantara to utter a frightful cry, and shoot through the air ‘*ut sclopeto emissus videretur*’; that of Mary’s birth would have a like effect on Joseph of Cupertino; and Theresa, after obtaining by prayer the cessation of her early levitations, was yet obliged to avoid hearing John á Cruce on the Trinity, finding that this topic would cause both him and her

² This prelate, the annual income of whose see was 18,000 ducats, had no sooner settled in his palace than he got rid of all luxurious furniture, and made it a hospital or poor house; himself often sleeping on straw, if beds ran short for the paupers. Charles V had named another person for this see, the secretary to whom he was dictating mistook the name, and taking another paper said, “I imagined your Majesty to have said Thomas of Villanova, but the error will soon be rectified.” The emperor said, “By no means; the mistake was providential, let it stand.”

to be raised with their chairs from the floor. A contemporary painting of them in this position, beside the grating where it occurred, has been engraved in the volume above cited. Joseph of Cupertino, on entering any church having a Madonna or his patron, St. Francis, as an altarpiece, would be borne straight thereto, crying 'My dear mother!' or 'My father!' and remain with his arms and robe so among the candles as to alarm all with the danger of his catching fire; but always flying back to the spot whence he had risen. Others were raised up to images or pictures, as the Abbess Agnes in early girlhood, often before a crucifix. . . .

"Of invisible transfers to a distance, the only subjects seem to have been Columba of Rieti, said to have been carried from her mother's house in that town to the nunnery that afterwards received her at Spoleto, 20 miles distant, and the river transits of Peter of Alcantara. The lives of Joseph of Cupertino, indeed, allege that the rare miracle of 'geminatio corporis,' or bodily presence in two different places the same day, was twice vouchsafed to him while dwelling at Rome. . . . There is doubtless plenty of exaggeration, and many stories of this kind must be apocryphal, but the notable fact is that they are told only of the same persons as the fully-attested levitations and other phenomena parallel to the modern so-called Spiritism."

The student of Patanjali will remark two facts in connection with these air-walkers — *they were all ascetics*, and not only were all but four unmarried, and, presumably, chaste, but inflicted upon their bodies the extreme rigors of maceration, that is to say that same stern repression of the physical appetites and desires which is common among our Indian Yogis and Sannyasis. Though they knew not the fact, they were in reality practising the extremest austerities of the Yoga system. Another fact will not fail to be observed, *viz.*, that the thaumaturgic power was in several cases hereditary. We of the East know how often it happens that this abundance of psychical power passes down the generations in certain families — that, in short, there are "born magicians" as certainly as there are born poets, painters, or sculptors. If we may credit the records of Western Spiritualism the quality of "mediumship" is also known to run in families. Neither of these examples of heredity will surprise any student of either physiology or psychology, for the annals of the race are full of proof that the child is but the evolution of his double line of ancestors, with, in individual cases, a tendency to "breed back" to some one relative on either the paternal or maternal side. Among the most interesting of English medical writers upon this sub-

ject, is Dr. Charles Elam, of London. Though not a professed psychologist, he has collected in his *A Physician's Problems* some most valuable data for the student of that science, supplementing them with judicious and intelligent criticism. "The various races of men," he says (*op. cit.*, p. 33), "have characteristics quite as distinctly marked. . . . But races consist of individuals; it is clear, therefore, that to a certain extent individuals have the power of *transmitting their own specific psychical nature.*" M. Giron, a great physiologist, remarks that 'acquired capacities are transmitted by generation, and this transmission is more certain and perfect in proportion as the cultivation has extended over more generations.' Sir H. Holland, Esquirol, Dr. Virey, Montaigne, Riecken, Boethius, among moderns, and Hippocrates, Homer, Horace, Juvenal, among ancients, are a few of the great authorities who have noticed the constant assertion of this law of nature. Herodotus, the "Father of History" to Western people who know nothing of our Indian literature, mentions the heritage of caste, of profession, and of moral and intellectual qualities. He speaks of Evenius as possessing the power of divination and transmitting it, *as a natural consequence*, to his son, Deiphonus. Men of Eastern birth may, in considering these facts, the more readily understand why so many more great psychologists and philosophers have flourished in this part of the world than at the West, where the rugged conditions of life, especially the climate, food, and the common use of stimulating beverages, have so largely tended to the development of the animal at the expense of the spiritual nature, ever since the exodus of people from the warm Eastern climes to settle those countries. The love of mystical study and the tendency to practise asceticism are inherent in our blood, and absorbed through our mothers' milk. Generations after generations of white men pass away without producing a single adept of the Secret Science, while it would be hard to find a parallel to this in India — even in these degenerate days, when our cleverest young scholars are worshipping Western idols, and it almost seems as if the very recollection of Yoga and the Yogis were dying out of the popular mind.

THE CHALLENGE OF THEOSOPHY

THE REASONS for which people are attracted to Theosophy are as different as are the people themselves. Some feel the need to satisfy their intellectual curiosity, to increase their mental baggage, so that they may be the better able to compare and criticize. Others come to Theosophy because they are baffled by life and seek a solution to their problems. Still others are attracted by the Ethics of Theosophy and the lofty ideals it presents; in other words, by the practical side of the philosophy, or the aspect implied in the words "living the life." For all those who take up the study of Theosophy, one particular aspect of it may have greater attraction than the others.

What we need, as earnest students of Theosophy, is to realize where we stand, to establish our motive with honesty, because to work for the Cause of Theosophy in a real way we need to devote ourselves to all three aspects of study, application and promulgation.

What is the Cause of Theosophy? It is the Cause of the perfectibility of Man, of the victory of Altruism over Selfishness, of the realization of the Unity of all Life, of Universal Brotherhood. To serve this Cause we must grasp the tenets of the philosophy, so that study is a primal requisite. The knowledge acquired helps us to proceed with the next step, which is application, or the work in and upon ourselves. But, for many, acquiring knowledge has such a captivating effect that they do not realize what they are missing by neglecting the application aspect, which is the life-giving force of Theosophy.

It is not easy to apply what we learn; it requires humility and dedication, and the courage to try again and again, to take stock objectively of what we are, with all our liabilities and assets; it requires devotion to our ideal and courage to keep on fighting in ourselves all that stands in the way of our drawing nearer to it. Without application, knowledge remains sterile.

Acquiring knowledge is, in its first stage, the intellectual work of accumulating the facts contained in the teachings of Theosophy. If we do not proceed further and rest content solely with this course of study, we will certainly be increasing our intellectual storehouse; but let us not deceive ourselves: we shall not be working for the Cause of Theosophy. Application is required, but it does not by any means result spontaneously from the study of the philosophy of Theosophy. It has to be learnt by constant attention and awareness of the experiences we

pass through, and by checking and re-checking our responses and decisions in the light of the Ethics of Theosophy.

It is at this stage, when we try to live according to ethical norms, that we are confronted with the challenge of Theosophy, for it is now that the enemies within and without stand arrayed against us. It is now that our lower nature stands in the way of our attempts to live up to our highest ideal; and, as we try, we arouse opposition, or even antagonism, from those around us. This may be out of ignorance on their part of what prompts the earnest student of Theosophy, or it may be the rejection by them of a challenge calling for effort. But, if *we* accept the challenge and persist in application with devotion, our reward is invaluable: true assimilation of the teachings. As food is assimilated or absorbed into the bodily system, so have the teachings of Theosophy to be absorbed or converted into the very essence of our way of thinking, which will determine our modes of action.

So we see that application and assimilation are two processes that complement each other. In Mr. Judge's words, "A man must *live* what he knows. Until he has lived it, he cannot know it." In every case where assimilation of the teachings has been as thorough as the capacities of the student permit, the result will be a certain degree of wisdom, and a way of life reflecting this, which is a means of promulgating Theosophy within the reach of all of us. It is not given to every student of Theosophy to become a speaker or a writer, but, by exemplifying through the way we lead our everyday lives what Theosophy means to us, we can create, by the power of example, a centre of influence. As W. Q. Judge says, "Every situation ought to be used as a means," every situation calling upon us to take up the challenge to do better, to give ourselves to the very best of our abilities in the performance of our duty. As H.P.B. says in *The Key to Theosophy*, "Duty is that which *is due* to Humanity; to our fellow-men, neighbours, family, and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves." By learning to fulfil our duty in this sense, with the discrimination which the study of Theosophy helps us to acquire, we should be able to realize that the performance of duty is not an unavoidable chore and a heavy and troublesome weight, as so many feel, but a privilege to foster, a source of unalloyed happiness for ourselves, provided our motive is the happiness of others and not of ourselves! It is the privilege of Man on his way to true Self-consciousness.

FOR EVER FRESH, THOSE VERNAL BLOOMS!

LETTER 3

DEAR VIJAY,

Why apologize? Your letter, which reached me a couple of hours ago, is most welcome. Don't I prove it by proceeding to answer it forthwith, having delayed only to get into dry garments after being caught in the torrential rain accompanying a thunderstorm which found me at the farthest limits of the garden? That is the worst of this crippled leg; I move at a snail's pace, even *in extremis*. Consequently I spend much of the day sitting, and as I am likely to do so for the remaining hours of this evening, you may be sure I am heartily glad to have your long letter to ponder over and reply to, especially as it means consulting W.Q.J. through my worn copy of *Vernal Blooms* if I am to attempt to answer your latest questions helpfully.

You want advice about "others." What is our right attitude to "others"? You say your last letter concerned your own self only and that you realize you should have begun with other people. Well, I don't quite agree. I think some personal readjustment is called for in the first place before you can effectively carry out your good intentions and begin to radiate sweetness and light to all around.

No, no, I'm not laughing at you! But you do, if you'll forgive me, sound a trifle pompous. That is something W.Q.J. never is. Like the saints of old, he has a beautiful simplicity and sincerity. Some day you must read his published letters — *Letters That Have Helped Me* is the title. They'll help *you*, beyond a doubt. But just at the moment perhaps this of mine will serve.

The right attitude to others? I should have thought you were the last who could need to ask that. Even in our boyhood I was constantly struck by your natural kindness. It is kindness that is incumbent on us at all times, but not, let me hasten to add, in any sentimental sense. Rather is it an unvarying goodwill to all, not in proportion to their merits but for the sake of the SELF in them, and this at the cost, if need be, of our own pleasure and comfort, or of what seems so to the egoic personality.

Mr. Judge quotes one of the oldest books in existence when he says that "*The Voice of the Silence*, expressing the views of the highest schools of occultism, asks us to step out of the sunlight into the shade so as to make more room for others, and declares that those whom we

help in this life will help us in our next one." Here we have one of the basic doctrines of Theosophy, namely, that in our contacts with others we are continually making Karma. As spiritual beings living in bodies, we are all "united together in fact, not in theory; are all made of one substance. Our souls vibrate together, feel for each other, suffer for each other, and enjoy for each other." I have quoted this already in my first letter to you, but it cannot be repeated too often, both for its own sake and for its connection with our other great doctrine, that of Reincarnation. For on our attitude to others our own future depends largely. "We are all spiritually immortal beings, and in order to receive our deserts we must all come back to the place where we have done the good or the evil." Mr. Judge says unequivocally: "After you die you have a slight period of rest, and then return to this civilization which you have made, and for which you are responsible, and for which you will suffer if its evils are not eliminated."

Do you see how far-reaching are the effects of right conduct towards others? They devolve upon the true self, which, like an actor, plays many parts on the stage of life throughout its cycle of incarnations. Right relationships with others are a means of disciplining the false self, that egoic entity so full of greed and passion, envy, ambition, pride and all the other lower attributes.

Do you know the phrase "the knot of the heart"? Mr. Judge explains to us clearly what this is. "It is the astringent power of self — of egotism — of the idea of separateness." Here in a nutshell, Vijay, is the answer to your question. Your attitude to others should be such as to destroy the sense of separateness. Lacking this, says Mr. Judge, "all the possible virtues and acquirements" we may have are valueless. "These are all nothing if charity be absent." "Charity" he defines simply as "love of our fellows." He will not have the word misunderstood. "Charity is not a gift of money, but charitable thought for every weakness, to every failure." And again he recurs to Karma. "Shall those whom we now know or whom we are destined to know before this life ends be our friends or enemies, our aiders or obstructors in that coming life?" He mentions a strange feature of these relationships. Both friendships and enmities "last always more than three lives." So those well disposed to us "will be more and still more our aids if we increase the bond of friendship of today by charity. Their tendency to enmity will be one-third lessened in every life if we persist in kindness, in love, in charity now."

None knew better than Mr. Judge what it is to suffer from actual enemies, but even if we are so fortunate as to be spared *these*, are not we all too often "annoyed and hindered" by "others whose mere looks, temperament, and unconscious action fret and disturb us?" Inevitably, we have a longing "to rebuke them, to criticize, to attack," but "it is a mistake for us," says Mr. Judge, "to so act." Taking the long, the very longest view possible, it is to the Karmic advantage of all if we remain patient and tolerant. "The opposite course, as surely as sun rises and water runs down hill, strikes interest from the account and enters a heavy item on the wrong side of life's ledger."

Is not it a grand goal to aim at, the establishing of friendships for aeons to come? Such lofty, inspiring thoughts are constantly presented to us by our Theosophic teachers, but always linked, please note, with practical action on the earth-plane, for "Theosophy is a dead thing if it is not turned into life." You will never find W.Q.J. preaching a mere vague idealism. What he wants to see is "a living, actual Theosophy." Over and over, in different contexts, he impresses upon us the necessity for an "ethical application" of its great doctrines, urging that "a sincere application of its principles *to life and act* should be made."

Again, (am I repeating myself?), note how this opportunity comes to us through our associations with others. I dare say it might be *possible* for a desert island castaway to manage to live Theosophically, but he would certainly be up against many hindrances, for "the person who revolves selfishly around himself as a centre is in greater danger of delusion than anyone else, for he has not the assistance that comes from being united in thought with all other sincere seekers."

So never fear — you seem to tend to — that your limited hours of solitude and silent study may hinder your progress on the Path. *I*, perhaps, have too much of these. But we must each remind ourselves, again to quote Mr. Judge, that sometimes we all too readily form "a mistaken estimate of what is good and what is not good for the soul." The important thing is to turn our circumstances, whatever they are, to the best account, and this you, Vijay, take my word for it, can do through those very people who, you say, "are for ever around, making even mental privacy impossible." Certainly you must secure a quiet space for your daily meditation, so that you can "make of your mind a still and placid surface on which the Lord of the palace in the heart can reflect pictures of Truth." But those same people, those "others," are all the time affording you grand chances of practising tolerance,

discrimination and sympathy, using the discipline of right speech, controlling self-assertion and impatience, maintaining what Mr. Judge calls "a proper attitude of mind."

What more can you do for others? I suspect, my friend, you want a list of "do's! But in all the pages of *Vernal Blooms* I fail to find one, and who am I, pray, to draw up an action-schedule for you when W.Q.J. himself withholds so over-simplified a commodity? His mode of teaching is very different. It takes the form of "a call to work for the race and not for self, a request to bring to the West and the East the doctrines that have most effect on human conduct, on the relations of man to man, and hence the greatest possibility of forming at last a true universal brotherhood." Don't you see how this greater includes the lesser — how it is the ultimate duty we can possibly discharge? — not exempting us, of course, from little daily acts of service, concerning some of which he writes with tender feeling. "Every impulse from above, every prompting of the Divine within, should meet at once with a hearty welcome and response. If you feel as if something urged you to visit some sick or afflicted neighbour or friend, obey the suggestion without delay," is one such instance. Again, "if some pathetic story of suffering has moved you, act on the emotion while your cheeks are still wet with tears." And regarding a quality mentioned earlier, albeit differently — "Each Theosophist should not only continue his private or public acts of charity, but also strive to so understand Theosophical philosophy as to be able to expound it in a practical and easily understood manner, so that he may be a wider philanthropist by ministering to the needs of the inner man."

You see how in that last injunction W.Q.J. returns to what lies nearest to his heart, to what he regards as incumbent upon all of us — "ministering to the needs of the inner man." In this he is following in the steps of his *guru* H.P.B., seeking like her to change the *Manas* of the race, and we, however humbly, must do likewise if we would discharge our sacred duty to "others."

But Vijay, I understand you. You are grieved, as I am, by the signs of Kali Yuga. 'Tis an age of crude, rank materialism, brazen egotism, false values, lust and violence. You would have liked to be able to write or preach or teach, to turn men's minds to better things, instead of merely going into business to please your father, though it is good honest business, conducive to human welfare.

My friend, are you short-sighted? Look around and see the mag-

nificent opportunities that lie ready to your hand for furthering the main purpose of Theosophy, which, as you well know, is Brotherhood. By your example, even more than by your words, try, then, to get each man you meet to grasp this great truth — “that he is united with everyone else, and is responsible for the progress of his brother. He will then come to act according to right ethics. And until he so believes, he will not, and our sorrows will increase.”

Here I sit in my study, and for me it is more or less “the day of small things,” to borrow that phrase of the old Hebrew prophet Zechariah — meaning that I am limited to the use of my pen. But you, Vijay, are out in the great world; no, rather I see you as standing in a sort of mighty power-house, and “ramifying in every direction are the levers that move and bring about results, some of those levers — absolutely necessary for the greatest of results — being very small and obscure. They are all of them human beings, and hence we must carefully watch that by no word of ours the levers are obstructed. If we attend strictly to our own duty all will act in harmony, for the duty of another is dangerous for us.”

You should value that “we.” W.Q.J. includes you, you see, as comrade and co-worker. Is not it an apt illustration with which to bring my letter to a close? — characteristic of him, both visionary and practical. But no. I’ll add another, a very simple one, which comes straight to all us pilgrims on the Path. “We advance most rapidly when we stop to help other wayfarers.”

Your friend and fellow-student,

NARAHARI

MAN is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed. The entire universe need not arm itself to crush him. A vapour, a drop of water suffices to kill him. . . . All our dignity, then, consists of thought. By it we must elevate ourselves, and not by space and time which we cannot fill. Let us endeavour then to think well: this is the principle of morality. By space the universe encompasses and swallows me up like an atom; by thought I comprehend the world.

—BLAISE PASCAL

TRUE PROGRESS

IS IT AIDED BY WATCHING THE ASTRAL LIGHT?

[The following first appeared in *The Path* for July 1890 over the signature of Bryan Kinnavan, one of the pen-names of W. Q. Judge. It was reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT for October 1938.—EDS.]

PERHAPS those who have engaged in discussions about whether it is more advisable to become acquainted with the Astral Plane and to see therein than to study the metaphysics and ethics of theosophy, may be aided by the experience of a fellow student. For several years I studied about and experimented on the Astral Light to the end that I might, if possible, develop the power to look therein and see those marvellous pictures of that plane which tempt the observer. But although in some degree success followed my efforts so far as seeing these strange things was concerned, I found no increase of knowledge as to the manner in which the pictures were made visible, nor as to the sources from which they rose. A great many facts were in my possession, but the more I accumulated the farther away from perception seemed the law governing them. I turned to a teacher, and he said:

“Beware of the illusions of matter.”

“But,” said I, “is this matter into which I gaze?”

“Yes; and of grosser sort than that which composes your body; full of illusions, swarming with beings inimical to progress, and crowded with the thoughts of all the wicked who have lived.”

“How,” replied I, “am I to know aught about it unless I investigate it?”

“It will be time enough to do that when you shall have been equipped properly for the exploration. He who ventures into a strange country unprovided with needful supplies, without a compass and unfamiliar with the habits of the people, is in danger. Examine and see.”

Left thus to myself, I sought those who had dabbled in the Astral Light, who were accustomed to seeing the pictures therein every day, and asked them to explain. Not one had any theory, any philosophical basis. All were confused and at variance each with the other. Nearly all, too, were in hopeless ignorance as to other and vital questions. None were self-contained or dispassionate; moved by contrary winds of desire, each one appeared abnormal; for, while in possession of the

power to see or hear in the Astral Light, they were unregulated in all other departments of their being. Still more, they seemed to be in a degree intoxicated with the strangeness of the power, for it placed them in that respect above other persons, yet in practical affairs left them without any ability.

Examining more closely, I found that all these "seers" were but half-seers — and hardly even that. One could hear astral sounds, but could not see astral sights; another saw pictures, but no sound or smell was there; still others saw symbols only, and each derided the special power of the other. Turning even to the great Emanuel Swedenborg, I found a seer of wonderful power, but whose constitution made him see in the Astral world a series of pictures which were solely an extension of his own inherited beliefs. And although he had had a few visions of actual everyday affairs occurring at a distance, they were so few as only to be remarkable.

One danger warned against by the teacher was then plainly evident. It was the danger of becoming confused and clouded in mind by the recurrence of pictures which had no salutary effect so far as experience went. So again I sought the teacher and asked:

"Has the Astral Light no power to teach, and, if not, why is it thus? And are there other dangers than what I have discovered?"

"No power whatever has the astral plane, in itself, to teach you. It contains the impressions made by men in their ignorance and folly. Unable to arouse the true thoughts, they continue to infect that light with the virus of their unguided lives. And you, or any other seer, looking therein will warp and distort all that you find there. It will present to you pictures that partake largely of your own constitutional habits, weaknesses, and peculiarities. Thus you only see a distorted or exaggerated copy of yourself. It will never teach you the reason of things, for it knows them not.

"But stranger dangers than any you have met are there when one goes further on. The dweller of the threshold is there, made up of all the evil that man has done. None can escape its approach, and he who is not prepared is in danger of death, of despair, or of moral ruin. Devote yourself, therefore, to spiritual aspiration and to true devotion, which will be a means for you to learn the causes that operate in nature, how they work, and what each one works upon."

I then devoted myself as he had directed, and discovered that a philosophical basis, once acquired, showed clearly how to arrive at

dispassion and made *exercise* therein easy. It even enabled me to clear up the thousand doubts that assail those others who are peering into the Astral Light. This, too, is the old practice enjoined by the ancient schools from which our knowledge about the Astral Light is derived. They compelled the disciple to abjure all occult practices until such time as he had laid a sure foundation of logic, philosophy, and ethics; and only then was he permitted to go further in that strange country from which many an unprepared explorer has returned bereft of truth and sometimes despoiled of reason. Further, I know that the Masters of the Theosophical Society have written these words: "Let the Theosophical Society flourish through moral worth and philosophy, and give up pursuit of phenomena." Shall we be greater than They, and ignorantly set the pace upon the path that leads to ruin?

—BRYAN KINNAVAN

THERE IS one general law of vision (physical and mental or spiritual) but there is a qualifying special law proving that all vision must be determined by the quality or grade of man's spirit and soul, and also by the ability to translate divers qualities of waves of astral light into consciousness. There is but one general law of life, but innumerable laws qualify and determine the myriads of forms perceived and of sounds heard. There are those who are willingly and others who are *unwillingly* — blind. Mediums belong to the former, sensitives to the latter. Unless regularly initiated and trained — concerning the spiritual insight of things and the supposed revelations made unto man in all ages from Socrates down to Swedenborg and "Fern" — no self-tutored seer or clairaudient ever saw or heard *quite* correctly.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

BUILDING THE INNER CHANNEL

H.P.B. makes a very interesting statement in the Introductory to *The Secret Doctrine* (I. xix): “Buddhi is the faculty of cognizing the channel through which divine knowledge reaches the ‘Ego,’ the discernment of good and evil, ‘divine conscience’ also.”

What is this channel by which divine knowledge reaches the Ego, the Higher Manas? Following the law of analogy, just as *antaskarana* is the channel between the Higher Ego and the Lower Ego in the body — a channel which exists, though unrecognized by us at present, and which becomes more and more definite through the constant turning upward of the Lower Manas to the Higher Manas — so too can we say that there is a channel between the Higher Self and the Higher Ego? What constitutes this channel?

Just as thought travels from the lower manasic level to the higher level by the channel or bridge of *antaskarana* until the higher can manifest through the lower, so we learn that in this concept of the channel between the Higher Self and the Higher Manas or Individuality, there is the first step to be taken. This first step is to have “an intuitional perception of one’s being the vehicle of the manifested Avalokitesvara or Divine Atman (Spirit).”

How can we begin to gain this intuitional perception? When read or heard theoretically this instruction remains but a mental picture. We have to transform this mental picture by meditating thereon into a line of ideation. To keep this line intact and make it permanent it is necessary to have purity of thought.

Besides meditating on the mental picture at a set time every day, we have to try to remember it all the time throughout our daily life and its activities. This is possible because the potentialities of both Higher Manas and Buddhi are locked up in Lower Manas. In other words, we are told, “Hold fast to the Image of Buddhi-Manas within yourself and in thinking and feeling, in speaking and acting hour by hour, look for the potentialities of Buddhi-Manas in the Personal Ego, and let them radiate forth beams of service impersonally rendered to all.” (“Let Go”: THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, February 1937, November 1961)

This is the practical aspect of the building of the channel.

Another way to understand this channel is to recognize the existence of a bridge called conscience. “Conscience is *Antahkarana* — the internal

organ—and it is both the voice of experience accumulated in the world of matter and the channel of divine light streaming forth from the world of Spirit. Conscience rightly activated bridges the gulf which ordinarily exists between mental and moral activities” (“Studies in The Voice of the Silence”: THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, October 1940, February 1964). Conscience, therefore, stretches from the memory of past experiences right up to the full activity of the universality of Buddhi. Will a proposed action benefit all or only a few? This gives us also a test to prove to ourselves whether we are acting as personal beings or as Egoic beings, in conformity with the Divine Will.

Just what is Will? What is Spiritual or Divine Will? How can it be cultivated and developed? It can be developed by acting always on a universal basis, not on the basis of the desire-fraught personality. And this on all planes of human life. If we recognize Will to be Spirit in action, once again we have a clue to its understanding.

We are always acting. Let us constantly test our motive. Are we thinking universally, non-separatively, for the good of all? Are we ourselves living a life of integrity, with compassion flowing from the heart in an ever-widening sphere till it flows through the whole of the manifested Cosmos and beyond?

We are given the stages of this development. To get beyond the sphere of the self-centredness of ordinary life we have first to recognize mentally the ideal and goal. Then, by meditating on the fact that each of us, as a personal being, is, in fact, the vehicle of the Ego or Individuality, the Manasic being, we arrive at the stage of the Krishna, Buddha, Christos, or God within us. Let us bear this in mind until it becomes clear and well-defined.

The mind has to be trained to remember to reflect this ideation so that it “catches a glimpse of the Inner Divinity and the great Master becomes a real being living in us. The student has to learn to develop the necessary sensitivity or receptivity of his brain in order that his own Adi-Budha, Atman or Christos may work through him as constantly as is possible.” (“Passivity versus Receptivity”: THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, January 1937)

Let us remember constantly that we are made up of thought; as a man thinks, so he becomes.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Recent trends in human reproduction are causing grave concern to many thinkers. A medical-research team at Cambridge University in England has already successfully removed, fertilized and cultured human ova to produce nearly two dozen "test-tube" embryos. Some biologists believe that in time researchers will be able to produce a mature baby entirely outside the womb. *Newsweek* for November 23, 1970, comments:

Through these and other experiments in biological and medical technology, modern science is rapidly learning — much faster than society at large yet realizes — to play God with human nature. Advancements in genetic engineering, in particular, offer the prospect of controlling human reproduction for generations to come. Soon, predicts Joshua Lederberg, a Nobel Prize-winning geneticist, man will have the means, through a technique called "cloning" (asexual reproduction using isolated adult cells) to duplicate human beings from a single human parent, thereby bypassing both egg and sperm. And this technique, says biochemist James F. Bonner of the California Institute of Technology, will enable science "to order up carbon copies of people" on a mass-production scale. Thus, having learned to enjoy sex without great fear of reproduction, man may soon master the means of reproduction without enjoying the sex that used to go with it.

What implications does the "new embryology" with its apparent defiance of inherited ethical norms hold for mankind? Scientists, who tend to believe that "man *ought* to do what he *can* do," often fail to calculate the long-term effects of their researches and discoveries. Controlling human reproduction through the use of artificial insemination, steel wombs, sperm and egg banks and embryo transplants may be technically feasible, but what problems may not be created by such interference with the evolution of human life? The next step, we are told, will be to try to alter human nature by genetic engineering or by making babies in test tubes. But what do scientists know of the real nature of man?

As has been borne out on many an occasion, scientists are acquiring the knowledge to make discoveries and unleash forces, but not the wisdom to control them. Replying to the argument that if man can breed better races by genetic manipulations, why should he not do it, for, basically, it is up to man to shape his own life, *Newsweek* states:

Perhaps, but as recent research in nuclear physics amply

demonstrates, scientific revolutions also tend to shape man and to create unexpected crises in his society and his environment. . . .

Few contemporary moralists, in fact, question the value of improving the quality of biological life. But to some of them the production of test-tube embryos implies a dangerous willingness to sacrifice nascent human life for dubious goals. Society is likely to approve such experimentation, says Lutheran scholar Philip Hefner, so long as "we remain dazzled by biotechnology or submissive to political pressure." As a case in point, Hefner cites increasing societal acceptance of abortion on demand. "What concerns me," says the Chicago theologian, "is what happens to the values of a society which routinely destroys fetuses." . . .

These and other questions of medical morality arise in the laboratory, but they extend to the very perimeters of society. Biochemist Leon Kass believes the decision to produce life — even more than the decision to end it — ought not to be left to the private judgment of a team of physicians and scientists or even to the collective judgment of the medical and scientific communities. "This is a decision which deserves full public deliberation and resolution," says Kass, a staff member of the National Academy of Sciences. "Let us not make blunders about the awesome powers now gathering for manipulating the bodies and minds of men."

Similar views have been expressed by many others, among them Lord Ritchie-Calder, who in an address of his printed in the November *Humanist* suggested that

there are profound ethical problems involved in manipulating the process of evolution. I am certainly not alone in my misgivings. George Beadle, Nobel prizewinner for his work on DNA, has warned that we should not embark on gene-manipulation and produce an irreversible process, especially as there is so much more we can do culturally to improve the species without preempting posterity. Francis Crick, another Nobel prizewinner for his work on the DNA helix, has said that the development of biology is going to destroy, to some extent, our traditional grounds for ethical beliefs and it is not easy to see what to put in their place. . . .

I believe that the time has come when we must insist on the moral responsibility of the scientists and redefine the ethic of science. The multiplication of disparate discoveries each justified by single-minded exponents of science as a contribution to knowledge but cumulatively without responsible oversight, is threatening

manifest dangers. . . . The scientists must be the trustees of the knowledge they acquire.

Evidence supporting the Occult teaching that life is everywhere present continues to accumulate. Scientists are finding the presence of terrestrial life in many hitherto unexpected places. One variety of tiny plant, for instance, survives in hot sulphuric acid; others flourish at 9°F. below zero. The presence of living organisms has now been found even in clouds floating through the earth's atmosphere. (*Time*, November 2, 1970)

Writing in *Natural History*, microbiologist Bruce Parker of Virginia Polytechnic Institute brings forth evidence to show that tiny animals and plants are feeding, growing and even reproducing high in the sky. He found that after a rainfall, particularly after a thunderstorm, the amount of free nutrients normally associated with living organisms suddenly increased in an experimental goldfish pond. Further tests confirmed that life processes were indeed taking place above the earth. In one experiment, airborne samples were placed in containers of radioactively labelled carbon dioxide. When exposed to light, the algae cells immediately began taking up carbon dioxide, proof that photosynthesis was under way and that the plants were not dormant. How minute plants can live in a cloud is explained thus:

Many of them are large enough to act as nuclei for slowly condensing droplets of water—an essential ingredient for all earthly life. The tiny organisms also have an amazingly varied diet available even in unpolluted clouds: oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, ammonium, nitrogen oxides, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide, methane, butane and acetone. Such necessary minerals as potassium, phosphorus, calcium, iron and magnesium could be transported to the clouds in airborne soil and dust particles.

Says *The Secret Doctrine*:

Occultism does not accept anything inorganic in the Kosmos. The expression employed by Science, "inorganic substance," means simply that the latent life slumbering in the molecules of so-called "inert matter" is incognizable. ALL IS LIFE, and every atom of even mineral dust is a LIFE, though beyond our comprehension and perception, because it is outside the range of the laws known to those who reject Occultism. (I. 248-49)

In our fast-changing society, when there is a tendency, especially on the part of the young, to break away from all old ideas and traditional values it is well to consider views such as those expressed by Will Durant in *The Lessons of History*, an epilogue to his ten-volume *Story of Civilization*:

Out of every hundred new ideas ninety-nine or more will probably be inferior to the traditional responses which they propose to displace. No one man, however brilliant or well informed, can come in one lifetime to such fullness of understanding as to safely judge and dismiss the customs or institutions of his society, for these are the wisdom of generations after centuries of experiment in the laboratory of history. . . . It is good that new ideas should be heard, for the sake of the few that can be used; but it is also good that new ideas should be compelled to go through the mill of objection, opposition, and contumely; this is the trial heat which innovations must survive before being allowed to enter the human race.

This is quoted by Richard L. Tobin in an editorial entitled "It Takes All Kinds" in *Saturday Review* for August 15, 1970. Overturning everything we know and are has, as he points out, never appealed to the towering minds of the past. He concludes his article with these words:

What we are trying to say here, particularly to the impatient young who proclaim violence as the way out and as the only, if simplistic, solution to every modern crisis, is that it takes all kinds to make a world and that not all of our ancestors were utter fools, nor all of our former ideas errant. The new generation must learn to use the past, not destroy it; build upon it a new and lovely brotherhood many men have dreamed of. But the past, if prologue, is the rock foundation from which the new structure must rise. Isaac Newton said: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." And Albert Einstein added: "My inner and outer life are based on the labours of other men, living and dead." To toss away (or blast away) the carefully laid foundation would be to lose incalculable time, a setback we can no longer afford.

There is much that history can teach us, and those who brush it aside as simply a "fortuitous flux" void of plan or sequence, rhythms or patterns, cycles or evolution, indeed miss much. It has been said that "those who ignore history are condemned to relive it, for history, like everything else, proceeds in cycles.

Thus we see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress. The great kingdoms and empires of the world, after reaching the culmination of their greatness, descend again, in accordance with the same law by which they ascended; till, having reached the lowest point, humanity reasserts itself and mounts up once more, the height of its attainment being, by this law of ascending progression by cycles, somewhat higher than the point from which it had before descended. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 34)

An interesting controversy has developed over the techniques used in the construction of the pyramids in ancient Egypt. The generally accepted theory is that vast ramps were first built to carry the huge stone blocks to a height of 480 feet. This has been challenged by an American research engineer, Dr. Olaf Tellefsen, in the November issue of the official journal of the American Museum of Natural History.

According to his calculations, an average pyramid required 2.3 million blocks of stone ranging in weight from one kilogram to 14 tonnes. The transportation of some of the bigger blocks to a height of 480 feet, he argues, would have required ramps at least a mile long. This would have called for a mammoth additional labour force that the region could not possibly have provided and engineering feats even greater than the construction of the pyramids themselves.

Dr. Tellefsen puts forward the theory that the technique was probably the same as is used today in various parts of the Egyptian countryside. This consists of a sturdy log pivoted on a six-foot-high fulcrum, one end of which is tied to the weight that has to be shifted, while the other is gradually loaded with small weights till a balance is achieved. In the process the heavy object gets raised to a higher point, and the process is repeated till the desired level has been reached.

This theory, too, has its limitations and perhaps we need to look elsewhere for an explanation as to how the pyramids were built. But let us ask ourselves first: Who were their builders? "The MIGHTY ONES perform their great works, and leave behind them everlasting monuments to commemorate their visit, every time they penetrate within our mayavic veil (atmosphere)," says an Occult Commentary (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 434-35). We are taught, further, that "the great Pyramids were built under their direct supervision." Therefore the technique used in their construction could hardly have been anything known to present-day architects. How the levitation and transport of

huge blocks of stone as of any other heavy bodies could be effected is suggested in the article on "Yoga Vidya" reprinted in this issue from Vol. I of *The Theosophist. Isis Unveiled* (I. xxiii-iv) explains the phenomenon in this wise:

The starting-point here is the recognized electro-chemical principle that bodies similarly electrified repel each other, while those differently electrified mutually attract. . . . The earth is a magnetic body; in fact, as some scientists have found, it is one vast magnet, as Paracelsus affirmed some 300 years ago. It is charged with one form of electricity — let us call it positive — which it evolves continuously by spontaneous action, in its interior or centre of motion. Human bodies, in common with all other forms of matter, are charged with the opposite form of electricity — negative. That is to say, organic or inorganic bodies, if left to themselves, will constantly and involuntarily charge themselves with, and evolve the form of electricity opposed to that of the earth itself. Now, what is weight? Simply the attraction of the earth. . . . How, then, can we get rid of this attraction? According to the electrical law above stated, there is an attraction between our planet and the organisms upon it, which holds them upon the surface of the ground. But the law of gravitation has been counteracted in many instances, by levitations of persons and inanimate objects; how account for this? The condition of our physical systems, say theurgic philosophers, is largely dependent upon the action of our will. If well regulated, it can produce "miracles"; among others a change of this electrical polarity from negative to positive; the man's relations with the earth-magnet would then become repellent, and "gravity" for him would have ceased to exist. It would then be as natural for him to rush into the air until the repellent force had exhausted itself, as, before, it had been for him to remain upon the ground. The altitude of his levitation would be measured by his ability, greater or less, to charge his body with positive electricity. This control over the physical forces once obtained, alteration of his levity or gravity would be as easy as breathing.

The same means can be employed in acting upon objects like huge stones. The trained WILL of an Adept can bring about a change of polarity and of gravity in any heavy object that needs to be transported or levitated. This may not yet be admissible by science, nevertheless there are ample proofs that such a phenomenon may be performed by those who know.
