

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE KNOWLEDGE WHICH SAVES

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—EDS.]

The Sons of MAHAT are the quickeners of the human Plant. They are the Waters falling upon the arid soil of latent life, and the Spark that vivifies the human animal. They are the Lords of Spiritual Life eternal.—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 103

Remember that the only God man comes in contact with is his own God, called Spirit, Soul and Mind, or Consciousness, and these three are one.—*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 69

FOR the daily exercise of meditation the aspiring neophyte will find in the above two extracts valuable teaching. The practitioner is called upon to reflect on the nature of his Divine Soul and his Eternal Self. His Higher Manas, the Human Ego, is the Real Man, the Thinker. His Higher Self is the Monad, Atma-Buddhi.

The carnal, incarnated person is called upon to contact his Higher Mind, his Spiritual Soul and his Atman or Spirit. This contact is possible because the personality also is consciousness as is the Divine Triad.

The genesis of Higher Manas or of the Human Ego is referred to in the first extract. In our daily meditation we are called upon to repeat the process; we must vivify the personality as the Sons of Divine Mind or Mahat did. Our personal consciousness is that of the human animal, and it defies and defeats the attempt to turn inwards to the parent consciousness of Spirit, Soul and Mind.

The archetypal difficulty of the practitioner is thus described:

But there are weeds that must be destroyed in order that a plant may grow. We must die, said St. Paul, that we may live again. It is through destruction that we may improve, and the

three powers, the preserving, the creating and the destroying, are only so many aspects of the divine spark within man. (*Transactions*, p. 69)

By right study and reflection we have to transform our personal consciousness; we should attempt to rise and assimilate, so as to radiate, the Light of "the only God man comes in contact with," *i.e.*, the Monadic Trio of Spirit, Soul and Mind.

This death and rebirth have to be experienced in embodied existence. Before the death of the body occurs, the weeds of egotism, pride and violence must be destroyed. *Ahankara* is the "I"-making tendency of the personal man; this tendency should be used to "make of pride and self-regard bond-maidens to devotion" and to develop patience and humble submission to the Law.

Blessed knowledge of Karma has deeper and profounder aspects than the "eye for eye, tooth for tooth" dogma. As we sow, so we reap; all students see that, and even a little study reveals that unless we perceive a higher aspect than that of retaliation embodied in the Mosaic law we are entangled more and more in the web of ignorance and suffering.

That aspect of Karma which teaches, in the words of Mr. Judge, that "we make our own storms," that "the hands that smite us are our own," needs to be considered and reflected upon. That we get what we deserve is obvious to the student, but he gets confused when difficulties overtake him in daily and hourly life. He is apt to blame others when *mayavic* appearances make him believe that another pair of hands than his own smote him, that somebody else made the storms. The student mistakes the agents of Karma by not recognizing that they are the agents of his own Karma. The application of this principle of the Law of Compensation takes him a long time; it is not easy to perceive that "causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World."

With mighty sweep of never erring action, it brings to mortals lives of weal or woe, the karmic progeny of all our former thoughts and deeds. (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 37)

Next, the student has to learn to acquire the attitude to karmic precipitations described by Mr. Judge, namely, that whatever comes to us is not only what we deserved but what we desired. This higher and spiritual aspect of the Law can be perceived and practised only when the student has been touched by the power of the Inner Man, the Monadic Trio.

From the point of view of the Divine Man every Karma provides an opportunity for learning. But the outer personal man must develop sufficiently to co-operate with his parent. Ordinary men and women are so engrossed in worldly and selfish pursuits that the voice of the Inner Man is not heard or heeded and the soul is like an encaged bird. "It warbles not, nor can it stir a feather; but the songster mute and torpid sits, and of exhaustion dies." (p. 27)

But assiduity in study enables the practitioner to perceive that the higher Divine and Eternal Man must come to birth. The truth implicit in Mr. Judge's words gives him the key to right practice at this stage in his efforts:

What then is good Karma and what bad? The all-embracing and sufficient answer is this:

Good Karma is that kind which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires.

And in this the Ego, being guided and controlled by law, by justice, by the necessities of upward evolution, and not by fancy or selfishness or revenge or ambition, is sure to choose the earthly habitation that is most likely, out of all possible of selection, to give a Karma for the real advantage in the end. In this light then, even the lazy, indifferent life of one born rich as well as that of one born low and wicked is right. (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 8-9)

In the progress of time the devotee will see the profound reality of another statement of Mr. Judge's. In *Letters That Have Helped Me* (p. 73) he states:

As They [Masters] are Atman and therefore the very law of Karma itself, They are in everything in life, and every phase of our changing days and years. If you will arouse your faith on this line you come nearer to help from Them than you will recognize.

The realization of our Buddhahood by an inner process begins with the personal consciousness, purified and raised, step by step, by the correct use of knowledge of the Good Law of Justice, Mercy, Righteousness.

Then will come to us the truth implicit in what *Light on the Path* teaches:

Therefore you who desire to understand the laws of Karma, attempt first to free yourself from these laws; and this can only be done by fixing your attention on that which is unaffected by those laws.

RANDOM NOTES FROM "THE THEOSOPHIST"

[After H. P. Blavatsky's arrival in India in 1879, one of the most important tasks to which she set herself was the founding of the magazine *The Theosophist*, the first issue of which appeared in October of that year. During her stay in India, it remained a channel of communication between her and Theosophists all over the world.

Many of the valuable articles she contributed to its pages are available today in book and pamphlet form and have been reprinted also in Theosophical magazines. Valuable, too, are the notes that she, as editor, sometimes appended to other contributors' articles, letters, questions, correcting erroneous ideas and clarifying the Theosophical position. In accord with the policy she pursued — that of absolute impartiality, unsectarianism and respect for others' opinions so long as they respected those of the Theosophists — she often published views of writers with which she did not concur herself, something adding an editorial remark. As these comments of H.P.B.'s contain many hints and explanations of value to the present-day student of Theosophy, they have been culled and arranged under subject headings in the series we are commencing with this issue.

To begin with, we reprint here the remarks made by her under the title "A Reply to Our Critics" (*The Theosophist*, July 1881), explaining her magazine policy. This is followed by some of her editorial comments brought together under the heading "The Scope of Theosophy."—Eds.]

A REPLY TO OUR CRITICS

IN THE ORDINARY RUN of daily life speech may be silver, while "silence is gold." With the editors of periodicals devoted to some special object "silence" in certain cases amounts to cowardice and false pretences. Such shall not be our case.

We are perfectly aware of the fact that the simple presence of the word "Spiritualism" on the title-page of our journal, "causes it to lose in the eyes of the materialist and sceptic 50 per cent of its value" — for we are repeatedly told so by many of our best friends, some of whom promise us more popularity, hence — an increase of subscribers, would we but take out the "contemptible" term and replace it by some other synonymous in meaning, but less obnoxious phonetically to the general public. That would be acting under *false pretences*. The undisturbed

presence of the unpopular word will indicate our reply. . . .

This fact alone ought to prove, if anything ever will, that our journal pursues an honest policy. That established for the one and sole object, namely, for the elimination of truth, however unpopular — it has remained throughout true to its first principle — that of absolute impartiality. And that as fully answers another charge, *viz.*, that of publishing views of our correspondents with which we often do not concur ourselves. "Your journal teems with articles upholding ridiculous superstitions and absurd ghost-stories," is the complaint in one letter. "You neglect laying a sufficient stress in your editorials upon the necessity of discrimination between facts and *error*, and in the selection of the matter furnished by your contributors," says another. A third one accuses us of not sufficiently rising "from supposed facts, to principles, which would prove to our readers in every case the former no better than fictions." In other words — as we understand it — we are accused of neglecting scientific *induction*. Our critics may be right, but neither are we altogether wrong. In the face of the many crucial and strictly scientific experiments made by our most eminent *savants*, it would take a wiser sage than King Solomon himself to decide now between *fact* and *fiction*. The query: "What is Truth?" is more difficult to answer in the nineteenth than in the first century of our era. The appearance of his "evil genius" to Brutus in the shape of a monstrous human form, which, entering his tent in the darkness and silence of night, promised to meet him in the plains of Philippi — was a *fact* to the Roman tyrannicide; it was but a dream to his slaves who neither saw nor heard anything on that night. The existence of an antipodal continent and the heliocentric system were *facts* to Columbus and Galileo years before they could actually demonstrate them; yet the existence of America as that of our present solar system was as fiercely denied several centuries back as the phenomena of spiritualism are now. *Facts* existed in the "pre-scientific past," and errors are as thick as berries in our scientific present. With whom, then, is the criterion of truth to be left? Are we to abandon it to the mercy and judgment of a prejudiced society constantly caught trying to subvert that which it does not understand; ever seeking to transform *sham* and *hypocrisy* into synonyms of "propriety" and "respectability?" Or shall we blindly leave it to modern *exact* Science so called? But Science has neither said her last word, nor can her various branches of knowledge rejoice in their qualification of *exact*, but so long as the hypotheses of yesterday are not upset by the discoveries of today.

“Science is atheistic, phantasmagorical, and always in labour with conjecture. It can never become knowledge *per se*. Not to know is its climax,” says Professor A. Wilder, our New York Vice-President, certainly more of a man of Science himself than many a scientist better known than he is to the world. Moreover, the learned representatives of the Royal Society have as many cherished hobbies, and are as little free of prejudice and preconception as any other mortals. It is, perhaps, to religion and her handmaid theology, with her “seventy times seven” sects, each claiming and none proving its right to the claim of truth, that, in our search for it, we ought to humbly turn? One of our severe Christian Areopagites actually expresses the fear that “even some of the absurd stories of the *Puranas* have found favour with *The Theosophist*.” But let him tell us, has the Bible any less of “absurd ghost-stories” and “ridiculous miracles” in it than the Hindu *Puranas*, the Buddhist *Maha-Jataka*, or even one of the most “shamefully superstitious publications” of the Spiritualists? (We quote from his letter.) We are afraid in one and all it is but:

“Faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast
To some dear falsehood, hugs it to the last...”

and — we decline accepting anything on faith. In common with most of the periodicals we remind our readers in every number of *The Theosophist* that its “Editors disclaim responsibility for opinions expressed by contributors” with some of which they (we) do not agree. And that is all we can do. We never started out in our paper as *Teachers* but rather as humble and faithful recorders of the innumerable beliefs, creeds, scientific *hypotheses*, and — even “superstitions” current in the past ages and now more than lingering yet in our own. Never having been a sectarian — *i.e.*, an interested party — we maintain that in the face of the present situation, during that incessant warfare, in which old creeds and new doctrines, conflicting schools and *authorities*, revivals of blind faith and incessant scientific discoveries running a race as though for the survival of the fittest, swallow up and mutually destroy and annihilate each other — *daring, indeed, were that man* who would assume the task of deciding between them! Who, we ask, in the presence of those most wonderful and most unexpected achievements of our great physicists and chemists would risk to draw the line of demarcation between the *possible* and the *impossible*? Where is the *honest* man who conversant at all with the latest conclusions of archaeology, philology, paleography, and especially Assyriology, would undertake to prove the

superiority of the religious "superstitions" of the civilized Europeans over those of the "heathen," and even of the fetish-worshipping savages?

Having said so much, we have made clear, we hope, the reason why, believing no mortal man infallible, nor claiming that privilege for ourselves, we open our columns to the discussion of every view and opinion, provided it is not proved absolutely supernatural. Besides, whenever we make room to "unscientific" contributions it is when these treat upon subjects which lie entirely out of the province of physical science — generally upon questions that the average and dogmatic scientist rejects *a priori* and without examination; but which the real man of science finds not only *possible* but after investigation very often fearlessly proclaims the disputed question as an undeniable fact. In respect to most transcendental subjects the sceptic can no more disprove than the believer prove his point. FACT is the only tribunal we submit to and recognize it without appeal. And before that tribunal a Tyndall and an ignoramus stand on a perfect par. Alive to the truism that every path may eventually lead to the highway as every river to the ocean, we never reject a contribution simply because we do not believe in the subject it treats upon, or disagree with its conclusions. Contrast alone can enable us to appreciate things at their right value; and unless a judge compares notes and hears both sides he can hardly come to a correct decision. *Dum vitant stulti vitia in contraria currunt* — is our motto; and we seek to prudently walk between the many ditches without rushing into either. For one man to demand from another that he shall believe like himself, whether in a question of religion or science is supremely unjust and despotic. Besides, it is absurd. For it amounts to exacting that the brains of the convert, his organs of perception, his whole organization, in short, be reconstructed precisely on the model of that of his teacher, and, that he shall have the same temperament and mental faculties as the other has. And why not his nose and eyes, in such a case? Mental slavery is the worst of all slaveries. It is a state over which brutal force having no real power, it always denotes either an abject cowardice or a great intellectual weakness.

Among many other charges, we are accused of not sufficiently exercising our editorial right of selection. We beg to differ and contradict the imputation. As every other person blessed with brains instead of calves-foot jelly in his head, we certainly have our opinions upon things in general, and things occult especially, to some of which we hold very firmly. But these being our *personal* views, and though we have as good

a right to them as any, we have none whatever to force them for recognition upon others. *We* do not believe in the activity of “departed spirits” — *others*, and among these many of the Fellows of the Theosophical Society, do — and we are bound to respect their opinions, so long as they respect ours. To follow every article from a contributor with an *Editor’s Note* correcting “his erroneous ideas” would amount to turning our strictly impartial journal into a *sectarian* organ. We decline such an office of “Sir Oracle.”

The Theosophist is a journal of our Society. Each of its Fellows being left absolutely untrammelled in his opinions, and the body representing collectively nearly every creed, nationality and school of philosophy, every member has a right to claim room in the organ of his Society for the defence of his own particular creed and views. Our Society being an absolute and uncompromising *Republic of Conscience*, preconception and narrow-mindedness in science and philosophy have no room in it. They are as hateful and as much denounced by us as dogmatism and bigotry in theology; and this we have repeated *usque ad nauseam*.

Having explained our position, we will close with the following parting words to our sectarian friends and critics. The materialists and sceptics who upbraid us in the name of modern Science — the Dame who always shakes her head and finger in scorn at everything she has not yet fathomed — we would remind of the suggestive but too mild words of the great Arago: “He is a rash man, who outside of pure mathematics pronounces the word ‘impossible.’” And to theology, which under her many *orthodox* masks throws mud at us from behind every secure corner, we retort by Victor Hugo’s celebrated paradox: “In the name of RELIGION, we protest against all and every religion!”

(July 1881)

THE SCOPE OF THEOSOPHY

[An article by Gerald Massey on “The Theosophists” drew from H.P.B. an editorial comment which reads in part:]

The comprehension of what occult science really is, has spread in Europe so very imperfectly as yet, that we must not be impatient even with this curiously entangled view of the subject. European mystics, when further advanced in the tedious study of unintelligible books, will often be hardest to persuade that they must go back some distance on the paths they have travelled, before they can strike into those which

lead to the fully illuminated regions of Eastern knowledge. They are naturally loath to confess that much time has been wasted; they try to make the fragments of esoteric Eastern philosophy they may pick up here and there, fit into the vacant places in the scheme of things they have painfully constructed for themselves, and when the fragments will not fit, they are apt to think the corners want paring down here and there, and the hollows, filling up. The situation which the European mystic does not realize is this: The Eastern occult philosophy is the great block of solid truth from which the quaint, exoteric mysticism of the outer world has been casually thrown off from time to time, in veiled and symbolical shapes. These hints and suggestions of mystic philosophy may be likened to the grains of gold in rivers, which early explorers used to think betokened somewhere in the mountains from which the rivers sprang, vast beds of the precious metal. The occult philosophy with which some people in India are privileged to be in contact, may be likened to the parent deposits. Students will be altogether on a wrong track as long as they check the statements of Eastern philosophy by reference to the teachings and conceptions of any other systems. In saying this we are not imitating the various religionists who claim that salvation can only be had within the pale of their own small church. We are not saying that Eastern philosophy is right and everybody else is wrong, but that Eastern philosophy is the main stream of knowledge concerning things spiritual and eternal, which has come down in an unbroken flood through all the life of the world. That is the demonstrable position which we, occultists of the Theosophical Society, have firmly taken up, and all archaeological and literary research in matters connected with the earliest religions and philosophies of historical ages helps to fortify it. The casual growths of mystic knowledge in this or that country and period, may or may not be *faithful* reflections of the actual, central doctrines; but, whenever they seem to bear resemblance to these, it may be safely conjectured that at least they are reflections, which owe what merit they possess to the original light from which they derive their own.

Now the tone of such articles as that we have reprinted above is quite out of harmony with this general estimate of the position. Mr. Massey's mental attitude is that of a power in treaty with a collateral power: "Give us this and this bit of information which you perhaps possess; we offer you in return some valuable hints derived from Western science. Weld them into your own inquiries, and you will, perhaps,

bring out some fresh conclusions." Such an attitude as this is absolutely ludicrous to anyone who has had the means of realizing, even in a small degree, what the range and depth of Eastern occult philosophy really are. To say that offering knowledge or discoveries of any sort to the Masters of Occult Philosophy is carrying coals to Newcastle, is to say nothing. There may be some small details of modern science which occult philosophy has not anticipated (centuries ago), but if so, that can only be because the genius of occult philosophy leads it to deal with the main lines of principle and to care as a rule very little for details — as little as for the material advantage or comfort they may be designed to subserve. Such broad conceptions as the theory of evolution, for example, have not only been long ago known to Eastern occultists, but as developed in Europe, are now recognized by them as the first faltering step of modern science in the direction of certain grand principles with which they have been familiar — we will not venture to say since when. . . .

(December 1881)

[Under the title "Drama of the Latter Days," an unsigned contributor sent in a satire in dramatic form, depicting the return of Jesus and the reception he is accorded by the various churches and sects of Christendom. H.P.B. introduced it with the following remarks.]

. . . Without in any way lowering down the Christ system, or even the *ideal* Christ, we can say what is but too easy of proof, that, properly speaking, there is no "Esoteric Christianity," no more than there is Esoteric Hinduism, Buddhism or any other "ism." We know of one Esoteric doctrine — "the universal secret Wisdom-Religion" of old. The latter embraces every one of the great creeds of the antiquity, while none of these can boast of having it in its entirety. Our mission is to gather all these scattered rays, bring them back to one focus, and thus help those who will come after us to unveil some day the glorious sun of Truth. Only humanity must be prepared for it — lest it should be blinded by the unexpected splendour. The true Theosophist, he who works for the sake of truth — not for his own self and personal predilections — ought to respect every religious system — pander to none

(March 1884)

[A chapter from the *Life of Bruno*, translated by N. Trübner, was published in *The Theosophist* to show "how, sooner or later, universal truths will break through the clouds of ignorance and vindicate themselves in this world of routine and prejudice." The

following is from H.P.B.'s introductory note.]

We regret — space forbidding — to be unable to reproduce it not only more fully, but to give in each instance chapter and verse from the Aryan philosophies of which Giordano Bruno could know nothing, and in which the reader would find a complete identity of thought and conclusion. But we shall not refrain from the temptation of republishing at least those parts which show the extraordinary similarity of thought regarding the most puzzling mysteries of nature and man, between most of the great minds that lived during our period of history — beginning with Pythagoras and ending with the German metaphysician Schopenhauer. . . . The martyred philosopher, Giordano Bruno, seems to have come to the same conclusions as Lessing, Germany's great author, and both to have taken them bodily from our Occult Doctrines. As every new discovery in the world of science vindicates one or another of the esoteric tenets, so every time that a hitherto unknown page of the history of a great thinker is published, it brings out to light some philosophical thought that has its very source in the teachings of Occult Science.

(October 1883)

[Under the title "The Hermetic Brethren," *The Theosophist* reprinted an extract from *The Rosicrucians* by Hargrave Jennings, which ended with the words: "...the Rosicrucians pass through the world mostly unnoticed, and...people generally disbelieve that there ever were such persons, or believe that, if there were, their pretensions are an imposition. It is easy to discredit things which we do not understand..." H.P.B. added the following comment.]

We came across the above, the other day, in the course of reading, and copy it to show that the difficulty which our sceptical public feels in crediting the existence of the *trans*-Himalayan recluses is no new thing. The jeering pleasantry of Archdeacon Baly, who told the Church Missionary Convention that "Theosophy was a new religion based on juggling tricks" is but the echo of the sneers of the generations in which Thomas Vaughan, Robert Fludd, Count de Saint-Germain, Theophrastus Paracelsus and other "Hermetic" philosophers lived and studied. Our Theosophical Society pays the penalty of its reaffirmation of the Truth of Hermetic Science, not merely in receiving the world's ridicule, but also in having it try to ignore a deal of honest work of the practical sort, which we have done, and are doing.

(March 1882)

[A letter from M. Alphonse Cahagnet, French scholar and student of magnetism and mystical thought, accepting the Honorary Fellowship diploma of the Theosophical Society conferred on him, was published with the following introductory remarks.]

... If the Western psychologists can throw light upon our Asiatic Yoga-Vidya, so can the latter send its brilliant rays into every corner of the modern field of exploration, to make the shadows disappear and enlighten the path towards the Hidden Truth. Some of our eminent new *confrères* have promised to come to India one day, in which case they would do good and receive good in return. With a close union between all classes of students of Occult Science — spiritists, spiritualists, magnetists, Indian mystics, and the theosophists — a great advantage would inevitably result to the cause of truth, and the mocking laugh of the sceptic, the ignoramus and the fool would be answered by irrefutable FACTS.

Our Society for the first time in history offers a broad and easy bridge by which to cross the chasm.

(February 1881)

[The following was published by H.P.B. as an untitled note.]

The *Revue Spirite*, edited by that honoured and thoughtful French spiritist, our friend, Mr. Leymarie, F.T.S., has devoted many pages to Theosophy during the past three years, and commended our Society's plans and principles to public notice. In a recent issue appears a review of our progress from the beginning to the present time. "We may say," it remarks, "that even now this Society is on the highroad towards a grand success. Its birth seems likely to be the beginning of a most important philosophical and religious movement in both hemispheres; while at the same time contributing to a moral regeneration among the Hindus, so sadly degenerated by centuries of different oppressions.... In our opinion the Theosophical Society is a great centre of research, and its magazine, *The Theosophist*, the channel through which we (Europeans) may to a certain extent share in the same."

For the magnetists none, of course, are so well authorized to speak as Baron du Potet and M. Alphonse Cahagnet. The former wrote us (see Vol. I, 117): "Receive me, then, as one closely identified with your labours, and rest assured that the remainder of my life will be consecrated to the researches that your great Indian sages have opened out for us." The latter said: "The foundation of such a Society as yours

has always been the dream of my life."

History teems with examples of the foundation of sects, churches, and parties by persons who, like ourselves, have launched new ideas. Let those who would be apostles and write infallible revelations do so; we have no new church but only an old truth to commend to the world. Ours is no such ambition. On the contrary, we set our faces like flint against any such misuse of our Society. If we can only set a good example and stimulate to a better way of living, it is enough. Man's best guide, religious, moral, and philosophical, is his own inner, divine sense. Instead of clinging to the skirts of any leader in passive inertia he should lean upon that better self — his own prophet, apostle, priest, king, and saviour. No matter what his religion, he will find within his own nature the holiest of temples, the divinest of revelations. . . .

The Theosophical Society includes members of nearly every known religion, sect, and philosophy, none of them clashing or interfering with the other, but each trying to live in peace with his neighbour. The universal tolerance preached by us is but the active protest against mental slavery. We have, as is known, purely Buddhistic, purely Christian, and purely orthodox Hindu branches, and societies allied with us; and union *is* strength. But of this anon.

(March 1881)

[Under the title "Buddha in the Boudoir," a "clever 'skit'" was reproduced from the *London World* of July 2, 1884, with the following comment.]

Theosophy is now most undeniably one of the chief topics of talk in not only British, but European drawing-rooms generally. It is not likely to sink out of sight after "having its day," like the several frivolous subjects which have "been the fashion" from time to time. For, unlike them, this strikes down to the very root of human existence; the others touched only its surface. The Oriental philosophy is the sole panacea for the spiritual sickness that now affects the Western mind. The more they examine it, the more will they find that upon its solid basis of absolute truth alone can they rebuild the structure of religious thought which has been shattered by modern science. How deeply instructive should all this be to educated Asiatics, whose confidence in their ancestral teachings has been unsettled by the pernicious influence of materialistic pessimism!

(*Supplement to The Theosophist*, October 1884)

[The President of the Hindu Sabha, A Sankariah, published in his *Journal* an appeal to its members to give special attention to the objects of the Association. He says in part: "Our definition of Hindu is one who respects the Rishis of India and loves the nation devoted to them . . . every educated Hindu should acquire as much proficiency as is possible for him in the Vyasiyam . . . Yet still after publication of eight numbers of the *Journal* we have to confront the anomaly of Hindus wishing to know what is the Vyasiyam and who is a Hindu." H.P.B. comments:]

Our esteemed Brother seems to wonder that "*after the publication of eight numbers of the journal*" he, the Editor, has "to confront the anomaly of Hindus wishing to know what is the Vyasiyam and who is a Hindu." His surprise may cool, perhaps, when we have told him that after *six years* of the Theosophical Society's existence, and after the publication of *twenty-one* numbers of *The Theosophist* journal, full of the objects and aims of its Society, we encounter nearly daily the "anomaly" of its *Members* and *Fellows* wishing to know "what is Theosophy" and "who or what is a Theosophist"! Some of them, we find, laboured under the extraordinary impression that no sooner were they *initiated* than they would find themselves able to cross the Himalayas astride on a cloud, converse with the "UNKNOWABLE" face to face, or — secure at once an appointment for High Court Judgeship!

(*Supplement to The Theosophist*, July 1881)

[In the following comments appended to a letter from an unnamed correspondent, published under the title "Genteel Beggars," H.P.B. castigates those who join the Theosophical Society in the hope of thereby obtaining worldly advancement of any kind.]

I take this opportunity, with the approval of the President-Founder, of once for all warning such selfish and unblushing aspirants, that our Society was not founded for the purpose of affording relief to those who, by idleness, prodigality and often worse, have incurred debts. We never bought, nor do we intend at any future time of *buying* our recruits and proselytes, though we are always ready to help to the best of our ability our modest and worthy members, whenever they are in trouble. Our Society was established for far nobler purposes, and nothing in them would warrant our degrading these lofty aims by offering, in addition to them as a bait, a money *premium* for joining it; and were we to admit persons of the character of the writer of the above given letter, we should, far from doing good, be doing harm. Every needy and un-

successful man in the land would be applying on such terms for fellowship, and our ranks would be filled with a class of persons ill calculated to further our nobler aims, one of which is to render mankind — especially Hindus — self-dependent, self-respectful and dignified as were their glorious forefathers.

In direct connection with the present, we would call attention to Para VI of the *Rules* of 1883, where the borrowing and especially the *begging* of money from each other is strictly prohibited "unless business should be transacted between the two entirely outside their connection with the Theosophical Society."...

Truly, were our Society to let go unnoticed such extraordinary pretensions, it would soon have on its hands a task far surpassing that of the Hydra-headed monster's killing; for, no sooner would one such claim be disposed of, than a hundred more would crop up to take its place....

(September 1883)

BEHOLD the kindness done without any obligation: even the heavens and the earth are too poor to repay it.

A kindness done in the hour of need may look small: but it outweigheth the whole world.

Behold the kindness done without thought of recompense: the ocean will look small when compared with its worth.

The benefit received may be small even like a tiny millet seed: but in the eyes of the worthy its measure is that of a mighty palmyra tree.

Gratitude is not to be measured merely by the measure of the assistance given: its measure is alone the nobility of him that receiveth the benefit.

—TIRUVALLUVAR

LOOSENING THE PERSONAL

TO KNOW ANYTHING, one has to hold that thing as a subject of experiment and view it unhampered by considerations of likes and dislikes. The consciousness that views and weighs and judges has to be unfettered, its powers not limited nor circumscribed by the ever narrowing boundaries of selfish motivations.

It would be wrong to assume that knowledge and the powers flowing from it do not come either to the selfish man or the man of evil. They do. However, such men touch the knowledge of things at levels at which the lower human consciousness functions. They do not have access to the spiritual side of things with its potency for the exercise of tremendous forces. Even then, the fact that such men can subordinate great powers for their wicked purposes cannot be denied. It is dangerous to ignore this fact.

Occult knowledge deals with the essence of things and therefore with Nature's finer forces. It gives the key to the stupendous forces that reside in the secret side of Nature and therefore of man. Keeping such knowledge away from the ambitious as also from the shallow and the foolish is the responsibility of the Wise. The imposing of an oath of secrecy by ancient secret societies was no mere playing at heroics. It is of the greatest importance that the esoteric aspects of knowledge be kept in safe and trusted hands.

When a student of Theosophy starts yearning for occult knowledge, he rarely knows what he desires. The word "occult" means "hidden." Occult knowledge is, therefore, knowledge that is kept hidden from the ordinary run of men. Why, then, does the student desire for himself the unveiling of that which has been purposely secreted from prying eyes? Does he feel that he is already an entity apart from the mass? For most students, it is curiosity that is back of the desire. Possibly there is the desire to shine, a desire to know more than others. For the studiously inclined, there is the urge to expand the vision beyond the horizons of the day. But occult knowledge is much more than worldly knowledge which is beyond human horizons. This knowledge confers on the recipient incredulously potent powers which he may use either on the white or the black side of life. A potential focus of danger is created when occult knowledge is given out even to the most promising of aspirants. This danger becomes real if the neophyte in moments of instability breaks his bond of secrecy. He may not be guilty of a deliberate viola-

tion. Yet he may do incalculable harm to himself and his fellow students by inadvertently disclosing the secret knowledge to those in whose hands that knowledge may become harmful to mankind.

It is therefore right that before desiring to secure the keys that will open the doors to the hidden knowledge, the student ponder over his own record as to how wisely he has used the powers which even his present limited knowledge has endowed upon him. More important still has he to judge for himself whether during psychic upheavals he has denied himself the use of the powers of thought and speech to escape the results of his own wrongdoings, or worse still, to pass the burden of his merited suffering on to another. A man who yields to temptations cannot but disqualify himself. Selfishness in any form and on any plane is the agent which makes the student slip into black magic in one of its lesser or more virulent forms.

The greatest enemy of the student as of the man of learning is the stranglehold that the personality exerts on him and that forces him to use hands and mind heart to advance his own interests. There are men for whom the concepts of universality and brotherhood rank subservient to their ideals of personal advancement. For them, there is no mystery of the self to be solved. They were born separate — they choose to remain separate. They cannot be bothered with the welfare of others. If those others stumble and fall and fail, they could not care less. How very dangerous would it be to release occult knowledge to persons and nations who hold such views! What dire mischief can be caused by the sincere student who, being entrusted with occult knowledge, does not hold it secret and gives it out to persons who, if they themselves do not defile it, think nothing of displaying it to satisfy their own little vanities!

Before rushing into Occultism, the student has to learn to erect safeguards against his own indiscretions. He has to be sure that if he ventures into the pure white precincts of the Soul, he takes there no soiling substances that defile the precincts and destroy their chaste whiteness. Therefore, if he finds that he has blemishes that make him unfit for the company of the truly wise, he may for the time being put aside his desires for the occult and prepare himself, however slowly, to climb from the personal to the impersonal. To him of the humble heart Karma is generous in help and encouragement. If at his low level of unfoldment he cannot engage in sacrificial action, he can still serve, and serving, hope. It is no small favour to lend a hand to a stumbling soul. It is no trivial service to propagate the philosophy and thus perchance help a

soul less tainted than oneself on to the path where the Masters are. One of the Great Ones has said: "If you want to know us, study our philosophy. If you want to serve us, serve our humanity." This should imply to the student that the greatest service he can render to humanity (in its impersonal vastness) is to make it study Masters' philosophy. By so doing, he helps units from that humanity to know Masters through that philosophy. This is impersonal service. It is service *in excelsis*.

Maintaining a constant fight against the lower self and thus loosening the bonds of personality may take lives and ages for some. Yet, their devotion to the Cause may make them render such service as will help souls who are less burdened to pass onwards. This is the hope and promise that Theosophy offers. *Light on the Path* has very valuable advice for the student-aspirant. Says the text:

Not until the bonds of personality are loosed can that profound mystery of the self begin to be seen. Not till you stand aside from it will it in any way reveal itself to your understanding.

It is this ability to stand aside from the personality, and thus detached, to assess its walk in life, that makes the man. It is a spiritual exercise this — that each day the lower is reviewed and controlled by the higher. The true artist and the poet, the great surgeon and the high mathematician stand aside from themselves when devotedly engrossed in their work. The rest of the world goes by leaving them indifferent. The student has to achieve this dissociation to such a marked degree that no friend can enter his citadel, nor yet an enemy. The concentration that permits entry into occultism is, however, of a kind different from that known and practised by the man of one-pointed ambition. The particular concentration that the aspirant has to cultivate has for its object things that do not concern the personal life; nor is it an abstruse theorizing that borders on mental gymnastics and fails altogether to blend the mind with the soul. The act of standing aside from the personality requires an anchoring of the consciousness on stable and not on shaky ground.

The stepping away from likes and dislikes that makes possible the entry into the realms of the impersonal is not that easily achieved as some so-called modern "gurus" would have us believe. The conquering of the lower self is a work of ages and is not achieved without an inner transformation. The road is thorny and full of pitfalls. But then each one knows that victories go to the daring and to none others.

ROBERT CROSBIE SPEAKS

III.—ABOUT CONDITIONS

ALL *being* is conditioned, but in it there is an infinite variation. If we rise out of one set of CONDITIONS we are in another. The secret would seem to be non-identification with CONDITIONS of any kind, while working in and with those which on any plane surround us, improving our judgment and discrimination in regard to them all the time. . . . It is good to have that "touch of heart" which transcends time, space and CONDITIONS.

Do not let CONDITIONS which surround you, contrasted with what you can see, weigh upon you. Of course you know that whatever CONDITIONS exist were produced by you — so far as they affect you — and whatever CONDITIONS are to be will be in accordance with your own determination. All that is necessary is for each to do his duty by every duty. None is small or unimportant.

Patience and fortitude are necessary under every CONDITION. The ripening of one's Karma presents the opportunity to gain these qualities, and it is well that we should learn the lesson.

In the great economy of Law and Nature, each being is exactly where he needs to be to eradicate defects; all necessary CONDITIONS are present for his growth. The only question lies with him: will he take them as "pain" or as opportunities? If the latter, all is well; he is bound to conquer whether the way be long or short.

Are you thinking too much of yourself, your present CONDITIONS and your prospects? This is not a firm reliance on the Law of your own being which brings to you the very opportunities that your soul progress needs. What if the future presents no clear view; what if your desires are not fulfilled; what if your progress is not at all apparent — why worry about it? You cannot change it. All you can do is the best you can under existing circumstances, and *that is the very thing you should do*, dismissing from your mind all thought of those things which are not as you would have them.

The various CONDITIONS that confront us are opportunities and means afforded us to increase our discrimination, strength and knowledge. Having created these CONDITIONS, and seeing what is undesirable in them, we go to work to change our direction of creative thought and our relation to the undesirable.

In our course we have to take advantage of CONDITIONS as we may,

and always of such as tend to the end in view. Is it not so that mountains are climbed?

All down the ages men have been endeavouring to correct existing CONDITIONS by simply re-arranging them. A re-arrangement of errors does not make for knowledge; the errors arise because of ignorance; knowledge must be sought as to the causes that produce existing CONDITIONS. This, Theosophy teaches by showing what man is, his origin, nature, history, and development so far, as well as his grand destiny. Without this knowledge, all attempts to obtain true and better CONDITIONS but plunge mankind deeper in the mire of ignorance and error.

“Doubt nothing, fear nothing, chafe at nothing” — we often have to say to ourselves, when CONDITIONS seem to hedge us in and prevent the carrying out of some good work. These CONDITIONS are not only our Karma but that of those we have in mind to help. Yet we must strive for them, the best we can, to lift their Karma and ours.

We have to meet CONDITIONS *as they arise*, and need not worry about those that do not confront us. . . . Anxiety should be absent from any act done to the best of our ability.

Had we transcended physical CONDITIONS, we should not be trammelled by them, would not be in them, except by choice. Even then we could not do other than put ourselves under their operations and limitations, in order to gain a full comprehension of them in all their bearings upon those in that condition by necessity.

If we could just take CONDITIONS as they come and make the best of them, other “bests” would follow, and all worry, fear, doubt, and anxiety would depart. . . . It is by working with present CONDITIONS that the nature of the future is changed, and in no other way. This is reliance upon the Law, and a working under it.

Sometimes it may seem as if everything conspired to laugh at us and deride our best efforts; but we know all that is but the dead weight of the world’s CONDITIONS which the Masters, and those who have volunteered, are working continuously to lift; and we feel the assurance which comes from understanding that none of this struggle is in vain. Masters do all that is possible for Them to do; we strive to follow Their example in doing Their work in this world of conditioned existence, each in his place; the knowledge that it is Their work, and what should be done, sustains us.

SOUL-EDUCATION

IT IS WELL KNOWN that the future of a nation is moulded not by political legislation but by the self-discipline of her own sons and daughters. By self-discipline an individual shines forth; so does a nation. The power of the vote confers on the citizen a right from without, but the culture of the individual who lives and labours by the performance of duty develops from within, and that alone is dependable. Not by sense-education but by soul-education a nation's regeneration must take place.

The influence of modern scientific knowledge, and especially of Western psychology rooted in materialism, cannot but produce faulty systems of education. Modern methods are not conducive to the development of the *whole* man, and the ideal of education today is very lop-sided. How can it be otherwise? How can there be education of the inner man, of the *psyche* and the *nous*, of the soul and the spirit, when men of modern knowledge misunderstand these principles and even deny their very existence? Modern men are looking for the soul in the wrong place; they are speculating wrongly about soul-evolution, and are utterly ignorant of soul-faculties and the method of their development. There is an aspect of modern knowledge that is useful, and that aspect we cannot reject; but supplement it we must with ancient knowledge if we are to make our lives meaningful. Let us then see what is meant by soul-education.

Soul-education is not only a matter of schools and colleges; all human souls are learners and Life itself is the School. Any plan of soul-education for the young will meet with frustration unless a beginning is made with the adults. Therefore in defining soul-education we must bear in mind the adult population.

How then shall we define soul-education? Soul-education is the training of the whole man into wholeness.

What are the various implications enshrined in that definition?

First, we need to note that man as a complex being is potentially the whole, the all; but all his powers and faculties have not yet become patent. Man is whole in latency, but not whole in patency.

Secondly, when we say man is whole we are but translating the root idea of Indian philosophy that *Atma* and *Paramatma*, *Purusha* and *Uttama-Purusha*, are identical — not two beings, but two aspects of one and the same Principle.

Thirdly, man's evolution proceeds from within without; man, like a

lotus bud, grows from within; that which is latent is becoming manifested. Therefore true education should not be the pouring in of outside information, but the bringing out from within of all that lies latent. That which is latent is becoming manifested. The human soul is unfolding, *Atma* is becoming *Maha-Atma*, *Purusha* is becoming *Purushottama*.

These three principles are fundamental: man and God are not separate entities; man is the unfolding God; within him all the powers of divinity are locked up and the process of evolution brings more and more of that hidden divinity into expression and manifestation. Soul-education is the deliberate training by which the powers and potencies locked up *within* man are developed or unfolded.

Keeping this in mind, look at man as he is at present. What is man? Man is a complex being, but let us see if we cannot analyse him in some simple way.

There is first the aspect of his living body. The senses and organs, *jnana-* and *karma-indriyas*, actively functioning, give man his body aspect. A moment's thought on the two states of the body, living and dead, reveals the second factor. What makes a body living? What is the difference between a living body and a corpse? In the living body feelings and thoughts, sensations and emotions, are experienced; in the corpse pathological and physiological processes continue and decay and disintegration are the effects of such processes which are highly complex; but, in the corpse, psychological processes do not take place, that is, there is no sensation and emotion. So we come to the second factor: in the living human being there is an assemblage of sensations and emotions; there is not only the physical feeling of heat and cold, but also the psychological feeling of attraction and love, of aversion and hate, of shame and remorse, of pride and ambition, and many more. Thirdly, there is the aspect of knowledge represented by our mind. We not only feel; there is also the thinking process going on. We acquire knowledge, we change our mind, and we use it to respond to or to wrestle with our emotions. Fourthly, there is the aspect of choice and determination; we possess the power to choose one thing in preference to another, and this we name will-power. Fifthly, there is the aspect of being itself — he who wills and chooses, he who thinks and cogitates, he who feels and desires, he whose presence keeps the body alive and whose departure from it causes death.

Now this is a very simple classification, which is self-evident and complete enough, and a fivefold education would fulfil the condition of

our definition — the training of the whole man into wholeness. Each aspect of man must be trained, and for each we need one department of education, but all aspects belong to the Soul, and so the whole of education must be under the jurisdiction of Soul principles.

This fivefold education of the fivefold man is based on ancient psychological and philosophical concepts. But it has also the advantage of satisfying the modern man. To show this double advantage let us classify the fivefold man in a triple group. Man, the Soul, is group number one; his three powers of thought, will and feeling form group number two; his body is group number three. Man, the Soul, *Atma* or *Purusha*, functions through three powers: *Ichchha-Shakti*, desire-power, *Jnana-Shakti*, thought-power, and *Kriya-Shakti*, will-power. The well-known triad of Thought, Will and Feeling corresponds to the *Jnana*, *Kriya* and *Ichchha* aspects of the ancient Indian psycho-philosophical system.

Thus the education of the fivefold man falls into three compartments: (1) education of the body; (2) education of the three aspects or three powers of *Ichchha*, desires or feelings, *Jnana*, knowledge or thoughts, and *Kriya*, will or creativeness; (3) education of the Soul itself. Let us look at them one by one.

Body-education nowadays means mostly athletics, and though this plays an important part in the building of a strong and robust body, it is not enough. Body-education should imply much more than physical training. The body is the dwelling-place of Krishna: he who tortures and disfigures the body tortures and disfigures Krishna; he who pollutes the body makes it unfit for divine habitation. Then there is the other ancient concept ignored entirely by the West — there are the presiding deities (the *devatas*) of every organ, sub-human intelligences who themselves evolve aided by men. Not to degrade them, ever to elevate them, is part of body-education. To remove the dullness of *tamas*, to control the movements of *rajas*, to stream forth the radiance of *sattva*, which are all three inherent in these *devatas*, is part of body education. To add magnetic purity to physical cleanliness is very necessary, and in these days when exaggerated sense life and complete identification with the body prevail, we must emphasize the real constitution of the body and inculcate the true ideal of self-control and purity of life.

Next, we come to *Ichchha-Jnana-Kriya*; the culture of emotions, the culture of concentration, the culture of the creative will, is an important department of education. Each of these cultures has a destructive and a constructive aspect — the destruction of foul desires, of false thoughts,

of selfish choices, and the development of radiant purity, of spiritual knowledge, of enlightened creativeness. The correct development of the three *shaktis* or powers of Will, Thought and Feeling has to be undertaken with the full recognition that these powers belong to the human Soul. That human Soul is three-faced, and these faces of the Soul are covered over by the smoke of *kama*, passion, as Sri Krishna points out to Arjuna in the Third Discourse of the *Gita*. *Kama* is the enemy of man and its destruction means the birth of *karuna* or divine love and compassion. Let our choices be ever in terms of soul-knowledge, let our thoughts be ever pure and noble, let our everyday actions express the divinity latent within ourselves.

And that brings us to the last aspect of education, the education of the man himself, *Manushya*, the Soul. The Soul has two aspects, the transcendent and the immanent. The Soul in the body is called *dehi*, the dweller and labourer in the field, and that is the immanent aspect. The other, the transcendent aspect of the Soul, is our Paramatmic aspect. The culture of the Soul implies *yoga*, which is union between the incarnate Soul and the overbrooding Spirit; but *yoga* is also the yoke of the Soul, the higher divinity living and labouring in the body in the service of humanity.

Education is a misnomer if it does not take into account the Soul. All men, all women, are essentially Souls, albeit all know it not. As Souls we have gone to sleep. We must follow the injunction of one of the Upanishads to arise, awake, seek the Great Ones and learn. The Great Ones have recorded Their knowledge, and we possess those records of the ancient Rishis and Sages. We must arise, awake, and seek the knowledge and the Knowers of the essence of things. Prajapati, the Creator, is not some distant God; he is the Soul who has come to abide in his own shrine of the body because pure desires, wise thoughts, true spiritual will have been developed. The bodies of today are like the temples wherein is found enshrined an idol of matter, lifeless and dead; the God within is disregarded and the body is looked upon as God! The task before us is to purify our temples, to dethrone the idol of mud and metal, to enthrone the Living Image of the One Deity, the Universal Self, *Paramatma*. Each man, each woman, by discipline and education, must come out from the kingdom of the dead into the land of the living, from the world of darkness into the world of Light, and that Life and Light are within each one of us. The door of the temple is the heart, *Hardwar*, and to it we must go on our first pilgrimage.

ADVICE FROM DAMODAR

[This letter from Damodar K. Mavalankar to Pandit Gopi Nath is reprinted from the book *Damodar and the Pioneers of the Theosophical Movement*, compiled and annotated by Sven Eek. The original of the letter is in the Archives of the Theosophical Society at Adyar. As editor of the journal *Mittra Vilasa*, Pandit Gopi Nath was in a good position to help organize a Theosophical Lodge at Lahore. Damodar urged him to go ahead without waiting for the arrival of the Founders.—Eds.]

SECRETARY'S OFFICE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,
Breach Candy, Bombay, India
27th July, 1882

Pandit Gopi Nath,
Editor, *Mittra Vilasa*, Lahore.

My dear Sir,

It was with great pleasure that I read your favour of the 17th. If, as you say, we have succeeded in completely vindicating ourselves and our Society from the foolish and malicious charges and insinuations of Swami Dayanand and his blind followers, it is because we have ever held unflinchingly to one straight course of Truth at all risks and hazards. That Idol of Truth we worship and adore. Truth we have always accepted and will ever accept from whatsoever quarter it may come. And we care to enlist the sympathies of those only in our cause, who are animated with the same love of Truth as ourselves. We want such recruits as will fight by our side the fierce battle of Truth, and will either perish or conquer on the field rather than turn away like cowards when the fight is raging hot. Such a spirit of Fair-play and love for what you consider and believe to be the Truth seems to possess your heart. We do not care for a man's riches or his worldly position, for these are but the passing freaks of chance. How many instances do we see with our own eyes of a man, turning his plough today, turned the next day into a reigning monarch and *vice versa!* It is to the man of intellect and of noble feelings that we turn our eyes of respect and admiration. Mere idle talkers and *sentimental* lovers of Truth we can find by scores; what we want is men who will do what they say. They must ever have before their mind's eye the motto "Speak little and do much." Every such man who is animated by such noble feelings and who has a true

feeling of patriotism lurking within his heart ought to take an interest not only theoretically but practically in a movement which has for its chief object the moral and spiritual regeneration of India, and through India, that of the world. Just as, if the fountain of a river were cleared of all the rubbish in its way, every place through which the current may pass will be clean swept of all dirt, so also when India — the fountain-head of all moral and spiritual greatness — is thoroughly purified of all the rubbish thrown into it by the ignorant and selfish persons, it will, through its lucid stream, carry purity all over the world. It is to your patriotic and noble feelings that an appeal is made by this movement, not for our sakes, but for your own and for that of your country.

Why should you then wait until the Founders visit Lahore? It is a spirit of indolence, apathy and indifference that is at the root of all our degeneration. It is that we have to cut off and those who take an active interest in the movement have to set a practical example. Apathy and indifference you seem to have shirked off. It is this indolence which you must conquer. Please excuse me for my plain speech, but what else can it be when you say that "if at any time any of the Founders of the T.S. happen to visit Lahore you (I) will find a most powerful Branch"? My dear friend, why should you wait until either of the Founders visits Lahore? You have to set a noble example to your colleagues by taking the initiative yourself. You must show to them practically that your enthusiasm for our movement is not a mere flash of the moment but a settled conviction that that alone, on account of its love of Truth and Fair-play, is the one destined to bring back to India the days of our ancient and holy Rishis when they mingled with the simple people they led on, who had not only developed their moral and spiritual powers but had progressed as well in arts and civilization, distorted and half-ruined relics of which we still see but can neither understand nor appreciate.

Do you not feel as a Hindu that the advent of that long-looked-for day should be hastened, when we, dreamy enthusiasts, shall see the seeds of a revival of our ancient glory and splendour fairly taken care of and speedily take root and germinate? Why, then, for goodness' sake, there should be any delay until this one or that one does this thing or that? Have you not yet thoroughly realized the importance of this movement and the necessity of its being pushed on at rapid strides? From your writings, it can hardly be thought that you have not. Take then time by the forelock, and *begin* work, my dear friend. As soon as you take

the initiative, the rest of your colleagues are sure to follow. As soon as an application is received, I shall see that steps are taken to procure and send you a Charter authorizing the formation of a Branch composed *exclusively* of orthodox Pandits. This section of the orthodox Pandits must be an *independent* Branch, as one Buddhist section is in Ceylon. Sub-Branches of this Branch may be formed almost everywhere—wherever it may be practicable. The organization of such a Section is, as you will admit, a necessity to *counteract* the evil influences of false and invented rumours which might be spread about us by a Society the alliance between which and ourselves is just broken.¹ If you like you may act in concert with “Lalla Brij Lall, Hd. Clerk, Govt. Advocate’s Office, Lahore.” Or, if you prefer, you may proceed alone. Lalla Brij Lall, has, you are probably aware, been a Theosophist for some time.

I have read the *Mittra Vilasa* you were kind enough to mark. As far as I understand, it is well-written. But I mean to send it to our Bareilly Branch to send us a correct translation of the same.

Expecting, in the mean time, an *early reply*, and with best wishes and kind regards,

I remain,
Sincerely and fraternally yours,
DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR

¹ Pandit Gopi Nath was an orthodox Hindu and apparently disagreed with the views held by Swami Dayanand Sarasvati whose organization, the Arya Samaj, had been affiliated with the Theosophical Society even before H.P.B. and Colonel Olcott landed at Bombay in 1879. The alliance was, however, later broken.—EDS.

THE GROWING GOOD of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs.

—GEORGE ELIOT

THE RIGHT SELF-CENTREDNESS

SELF-CENTREDNESS is a condition which produces the opposite of what is expected from it. It seldom brings happiness to the self-centred person. If it does, it is a counterfeit happiness, like that of the miser gloating over his treasure, in (to speak figuratively) a locked room, behind barred and shuttered windows.

Occasionally we meet old folk who complain of loneliness and neglect, and though we may pity them and sympathize with them, are they not, perhaps, themselves to blame? Have they ever done anything positive to win the friends they now lack? Or have they led self-centred lives, pursuing only their own interests, showing indifference to others? In later life, when the activities and ambitions which at the time they found soul-satisfying are waning, they discover that the self in which all these centred has by no means gained the happiness it looked for.

Yet the self *is* our centre. And no less a teacher than Mr. Judge bids us tend it, if, as in the plant world, it is to be the core of eventual fruit not only in our present life but in lives yet to come. Speaking of membership of the Theosophical Society in the first place, "each," he says, "must study for himself" (p. 3)¹ — a necessary and valuable form of self-centredness for the time being, and one conducive to the general good of the Movement.

In another letter he puts the question, "What of the defined object, if any, for our work?" and goes on to say, "That can be answered in many ways." The one he puts foremost is the rightful practice of a particular kind of self-centredness. "There is, first, our own work, in and on ourselves, each one. That has for its object the enlightenment of oneself for the good of others. . . . We have to watch ourselves so as to make of each a centre from which, in our measure, may flow out the potentialities for good that from the adept come in large and affluent streams" (p. 75). Note — "the enlightenment of oneself *for the good of others.*" That is the justification for introspection and private study. There is another reason also, but we shall leave that till later. Meanwhile, we have Mr. Judge's approval for the sort of self-centredness we are considering.

"You are, I think, quite right," he tells another correspondent, "to attempt to get all members to work for their individual advance, by work-

¹ Except where otherwise stated, all quotes are from W. Q. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Indian ed.

ing for their Branches. By doing things in this way, they provide an additional safeguard for themselves, while forming a centre from which Theosophical thought can radiate out to help and encourage others who are only beginning their upward way" (p. 116).

Here again our concern with self has the same condition attaching to it. Individual advance is to be sought by working for the Branches from which Theosophical thought can radiate out for the good of others.

Then there is the matter of doing our duty. Necessarily that calls for some self-centred consideration. "It is one's duty to try and find one's own duty and not to get into the duty of another," says Mr. Judge (p. 130). Not so easy, perhaps, as it sounds, for pure kindness can move us to lend a helping hand, yet Mr. Judge's views on this could not be plainer. "Your own duty is hard enough to find out. . . . The duty of another is full of danger" (p.132). "It is better to die in one's own duty than to do that of another, no matter how well you do it" (p. 138). Strong words, are they not? But to Mr. Judge "it is of the highest importance that we should detach our *minds* . . . from the duties and acts of others whenever those are outside of our own" (p. 130). Well does he know, often does he tell us, what harm can be done by a wandering mind. "We have a duty," he writes, "to see that we do all we can *in our own place* as we see best, undisturbed and undismayed by aught" (p. 14), and if anyone takes that as sanctioning the wrong sort of self-centredness, well, their view is not in harmony with Mr. Judge's.

The above shows the need for discrimination. "Use your discrimination, always," he writes, and states bluntly: "No one was ever converted into Theosophy. Each one who *really* comes into it does so because it is only 'an extension of previous beliefs.'" It is with reference to this that he urges the need for discrimination. "Do not adopt any conclusions merely because they are uttered by one in whom you have confidence, but adopt them when they coincide with your intuition" (p. 23).

Wise counsel — to let intuition be our guide. But intuition will function only if we have periods of withdrawal into stillness. So here again is an act of self-centring which is for our good, and which no one can decry, which Mr. Judge in fact urges upon us when he says, "Let all talk and other people's concerns slip by. . . . Retire into your own silence," and "Hold fast in silence to all that is your own" (p. 133).

Mr. Judge had great knowledge and clear vision. It is from these that his guidance comes forth to us. So in this particular matter of seeking to develop our innate gift of intuition he reminds us of "the Great

Workers who are behind us,” and goes on: “I know their desire is that each should listen to the voice of his inner self. . . . By a dependence of that kind you become at last thoroughly independent, and then the unseen helpers are able to help all the more” (p. 121).

Here again we see the need for a specific sort of self-centredness. Without it we could not listen, could not acquire that independence, could not be open to receive that help from the unseen. But consider first what “self” we are thinking of. Mr. Judge defines it on page 6 of his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*: “We very well know that within the material, apparent — or disclosed — man, exists the *real* one who is undisclosed.” It is for the sake of this real self, only for it, that we are adjured to be, from time to time, self-centred, or rather “to live as much as possible in the higher nature” (p. 115).

In a letter addressed to fellow-workers in England, he tells them that even the oldest member of the Theosophical Society has failed in his relationship with the Masters if he “has never done anything . . . toward the development of the soul in his possession” (p. 71). That soul is the true Self in us.

Speaking of the emanation of the universe, he tells us how “the presiding spirit . . . differentiates itself continually in various directions, becoming the immortal part of each man,” and concludes with the solemn reminder: “This *Self* must be recognized as being within, pondered over, and as much as possible understood, if we are to gain any true knowledge.”

Such would be Self-centring indeed, of the sort that is our *dharma* while in the body. Mr. Judge evaluates it aright when he tells a correspondent who is evidently interested primarily in the attainment of occult powers that his “only true greatness” lies in his inner true Self, advising him to turn instead to “concentration upon the Higher Self, and aspiration toward the Higher Self” (p. 124).

In words all this is plain enough. Perhaps in words we now know what right self-centredness can mean. But how to practise it is another matter. Does the “true knowledge” Mr. Judge would have us gain seem beyond us? It may *seem* so, but in him we have a teacher who can always be relied upon to point out the first step. “What I recommend you to do is to study the elementary principles of Theosophy and gain some idea of your own nature as a human being and as an individual,” is the final injunction he leaves for us to act upon.

“LIVING MESSENGERS CALLED WORDS”

“FOR the love of heaven do not take any tales or information from any person to any other,” advises Mr. Judge. We are apt to forget the precept. We like to be in the know, to give the first news, to keep the company lively. We have a horror of being regarded as lacking in etiquette; and so we must always be talking — chatter, chatter, chatter like magpies. Such talk soon degenerates; we begin to talk of other people’s affairs and thus cruel gossip results. “Whispering tongues can poison truth” (Coleridge); and Emerson says, “The hearing ear is always found close to the speaking tongue.” Why do we indulge in mischief either of tongue or ear? Not because we are wicked, but because we are thoughtless.

The physician looks at the tongue of his patient on which internal disturbance makes its mark; a philosopher also observes the movement of the tongue to discern the disease of the mind.

There is an occult basis to the story of the Three Sieves — the Golden Sieve of Truth, the Silver Sieve of Kindness, the Iron Sieve of Necessity. Let us make sure that our talk passes through these three Sieves. Is the tale true? Is it kind? Is there any need to tell it? Let us have the courage to check the talebearer, reminding ourselves that between our ears and our desiring mind there is a connection. What we hear stirs our feelings and desires; and penetrating inwards, colours our thoughts and even becomes the basis for new lines of Kama-Manasic activities. Theosophy regards the power of speech as very sacred and looks upon words as living entities endowed with a mighty potency; they act as living messengers. Writes H.P.B. (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 411):

There are words which have a destructive quality in their very syllables, as though objective things; for every sound awakens a corresponding one in the invisible world of spirit, and the repercussion produces either a good or bad effect.

Speech is the daughter of Mind and inherits from her father his power to create. When she follows her father she is radiant with truth, bedecked in virtue, and spreads bliss, delight and inspiration by her beauty. This is so in the spiritual world. But in the human kingdom mind enslaved by desires has lost its purity and one result is that speech has assumed priority, and so generally man thinks, if at all, after speaking.

The spirit-being creates by mind pure forms of speech which are

expressions of ideation. The Guru uses this pure speech to instruct His chela and therefore such instruction can begin only when the chela has freed his thinking from lower emotions. This is achieved, to a considerable extent, by purification of speech.

WHAT is idolatry after all? Is it not merely a figure of speech, a personification, intended only to help a ready conception, and a vivid realization of the thing to be meditated upon? . . .

Idolatry is merely a *kalpana* or an imagination. Let me ask, who was ever without it? To put a name is nothing more or less than a *kalpana*; so, to say that God is like fire, air, light, etc., is a *kalpana*. For instance, who told us that God's name is God? This is simply a *kalpana* in itself. Then the difference is that the idolaters create a *moorti*, or *booth*, or a body-*kalpana*, and the so-called non-idolaters make a word- or name-*kalpana*; none can do without it. Cannot this little difference be tolerated? Cannot the so-called idolaters be freed from the unjust charge of blasphemy? Let our educated brethren (our Mohammedan brethren especially) think about it, and let them teach these broad and catholic principles to their public preachers, so that they may again preach these tolerant doctrines to masses, telling them that it is sinful to hate each other for distinctions without a difference. What wonder, then, that within a short time the universal brotherhood may be established! Thus a highly desirable object will be acquired. I beg to press this point chiefly on the attention of our Moslem brethren. I believe the great Mogul Emperor, Akbar Shah, understood this truth, and, therefore, respected equally the Moulvies and the Pandits.

—RAJA SYAMA SANKAR ROY BAHADOOR
(*The Theosophist*, September 1880)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Dr. Lewis Thomas, who has a string of medical professorships, from pathology to pediatrics, is better known as the author of *The Lives of a Cell*, a series of essays celebrating the world of nature. (See "In the Light of Theosophy" for May 1975.) The main theme of the book, which proved to be an instant hit, is to show what the author has come to believe, that nature is a united whole as intact as a cell — in which everything is in close symbiotic or friendly linkage with everything else.

An interview with him by Lee Edson, a veteran freelance writer on medical and other scientific subjects, is reproduced in the December *Span* from the *New York Times Magazine*. Dr. Thomas surveys the achievements of recent years and answers the question: "Where Is Medical Science Today?" He admits that not enough is known yet about what disease is, saying:

Disease is still largely a mystery. We don't know how a bacterium causes disease. We know, for instance, that epidemic meningitis is caused by a microorganism called a meningococcus, but we have no clear idea as to how it works, nor do we know why some people develop meningitis while others have nothing more than a mild respiratory infection. As for the noninfectious diseases, we're equally at a loss to understand the mechanism.

Answering the question, "If we don't know what disease is, how can doctors go about it?" Dr. Thomas says:

That's part of the mystique of medicine. . . . It's the great secret of doctors, known only to their wives, but still hidden from the public. And this is that most things get better by themselves; most things, in fact, are better in the morning. . . .

Doctors are needed, of course, to cope with a number of specific problems for which medicine has something to offer, but I think the doctor's role in disease is essentially to guide us to the balance of nature, to the fact that so much of human illness tends to be self-limiting and spontaneously reversible.

In his book, too, he has made a point about the defence mechanism in the human body, writing:

We are paying too little attention and response to the built-in durability and sheer power of the human organism. Its greatest tendency is toward stability and balance. It is a distortion . . . to picture the human being as a teetering, fallible contraption, always

needing watching and patching and always on the verge of flapping to pieces.

Dr. Thomas believes, in other words, that we ourselves cause disease, not the bacteria, for, he says:

I believe that microbes are mostly amiable and useful. I have a friendly view of living things. We've only come to believe they are implacable enemies since Pasteur's time. And of course, the original Darwinian view of nature, red in tooth and claw, ties in with the notion that we're at war with invaders around us — and that we can survive as individuals and preserve our individuality only by overcoming evil forces. . . . Actually I am of the opinion that all living things are interdependent and that we suffer only for our own mistakes and our overreactions. Only a small part of the microbial world is really interested in us when we're alive; most microbes would like to keep things in balance and in a sense would like to see us dead so that they can play their role in the recycling of organic matter that follows death. . . .

In recent years we've become obsessed with health to such an extent that we are almost a hypochondriacal society. . . . The tendency of the human body is toward health and self-repair, and we could all do a lot as individuals to avoid ill health.

Dr. Thomas's views need to be compared with the occult teachings on the subject of disease. Says *The Secret Doctrine*:

Science, dimly perceiving the truth, may find Bacteria and other infinitesimals in the human body, and see in them but occasional and abnormal visitors to which diseases are attributed. Occultism — which discerns a life in every atom and molecule, whether in a mineral or human body, in air, fire or water — affirms that our whole body is built of such lives, the smallest bacteria under the microscope being to them in comparative size like an elephant to the tiniest infusoria. (I. 225 fn.)

So far, as regards the purely animal and material portion of man, Science is on its way to discoveries that will go far towards corroborating this theory. Chemistry and physiology are the two great magicians of the future, who are destined to open the eyes of mankind to the great physical truths. With every day, the identity between the animal and physical man, between the plant and man, and even between the reptile and its nest, the rock, and man — is more and more clearly shown. . . . But the Occult doctrine is far more explicit. It says: — Not only the chemical compounds are the same, but the same infinitesimal *invisible lives* compose the atoms

of the bodies of the mountain and the daisy, of man and the ant, of the elephant, and of the tree which shelters him from the sun. Each particle — whether you call it organic or inorganic — *is a life*. Every atom and molecule in the Universe is both *life-giving* and *death-giving* to that form, inasmuch as it builds by aggregation universes and the ephemeral vehicles ready to receive the transmigrating soul, and as eternally destroys and changes the *forms* and expels those souls from their temporary abodes. It creates and kills; it is self-generating and self-destroying; it brings into being, and annihilates, that mystery of mysteries — the *living body* of man, animal, or plant, every second in time and space; and it generates equally life and death, beauty and ugliness, good and bad, and even the agreeable and disagreeable, the beneficent and maleficent sensations. . . . We are taught that every physiological change, in addition to pathological phenomena; diseases — nay, life itself — or rather the objective phenomena of life, produced by certain conditions and changes in the tissues of the body which allow and force life to act in that body; that all this is due to those unseen **CREATORS** and **DESTROYERS** that are called in such a loose and general way, microbes. Such experimenters as Pasteur are the best friends and helpers of the Destroyers and the worst enemies of the Creators — if the latter were not at the same time destroyers too. However it may be, one thing is sure in this: The knowledge of these primary causes and of the ultimate essence of every element, of its lives, their functions, properties, and conditions of change — constitutes the basis of **MAGIC**. Paracelsus was, perhaps, the only Occultist in Europe, during the last centuries since the Christian era, who was versed in this mystery. (I. 261-63)

A special section on our luminary, the sun, viewed from different angles — astronomical, mythological, as provider of life, energy, health and vigour — appears in *Saturday Review* for October 30, 1976. The sun is not only light, it is really the fount of life. It is warmth and well-being, harbinger and healer. As Horace Sutton states in his introductory essay:

Little wonder, in primitive times, that it was the focus of pious, deeply rooted religiosity that attended mythological deities. Ancient Egypt worshipped Re as god of gods. Babylon's deity was Shamash, who, as source of light, also served as maintainer of justice and its corollary, the punisher of those who commit evil. From the earliest day justice was personified by light, evil by dark.

The heroes of India's mythology were the sun kings, peaceful

characters quite unlike the belligerent moon kings, who reigned at night. And there are distinct parallels in Persia. Caesar made note, a century before Christ, that the Teutons prayed to the sun as a god and staged sun festivals in the seasons when the sun was expected to beam most beneficently. To this day Scandinavians celebrate midsummer night's eve, on the longest day, with roaring bonfires that are intended to dispatch the witches of evil who have accumulated during the darkness of winter... the appearance of the sun in full seasonal bounty will always remain a reason for celebration, especially in lands that endure long winters...

A far more pragmatic approach to the sun has evolved as we have grown away from superstition and turned towards a technological age. We are but beginning to comprehend — goaded by the realization that the supply of fossil fuels is not infinite — that the sun's munificent flow of energy can be harnessed to turn wheels, warm houses, provide power to move interplanetary vehicles, like Apollo's chariot, across the sky.

Modern science has now come to understand what the ancients asserted, that our sun is a star, and a rather "second-rate star," as described by Alfred Rosenfeld, *Saturday Review's* science editor. The infinite pinpoint-sized twinkles of light that we see all over the night sky are now admitted to be distant suns (except for those few that are nearby planets), many of them mightier than our own. Our sun is one of the ordinary stars of the family that astronomers call the "main sequence." It is about average in size and luminosity — a so-called fifth-magnitude star. Brilliant to us — and of course indispensable — it is, within the firmament, both faint and small and will eventually burn out. But, as theoreticians theorize, that is not due for several billion years.

Ancient symbologists held the sun as the "visible symbol of the impersonal deity" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 38). Little as is known to our scientists about even the visible sun, this much is admitted that, just as the earth and the other planets of our system revolve around it, so does the sun itself revolve around an unknown centre towards which it is attracted, and as it revolves it draws the earth with it. The ancients had investigated this and had declared long ago, by deduction from the known to the unknown, that it takes the sun 25,000 years to go round that centre somewhere in the firmament; and that centre itself revolves around a still more distant and powerful centre.

There is then a true Sun of which the visible one is a reflection, a focus, a symbol. Just as our solar orb contains the spring of our physi-

cal life and sustenance, so also from the Real Sun, the Light- and Life-giver of the spiritual and psychic realms, the Real Man that each of us is, can and does derive spiritual energy and help. It shines down within us through its medium within our nature, for it is the Universal Presence. This "Central Sun of Truth," as it has been called, illuminates the invisible world of Spirit, and in its turn derives its light from the Absolute.

The ancients, seeing how important were the functions of the sun, deified it. They held it to be the visible image of the highest deity. It was believed that, far from being merely an orb of light moving in accordance with physical law, our sun is, like milliards of other suns, the dwelling or vehicle of a god or a host of gods. Nearly all nations of antiquity believed in and worshipped the sun-god and looked upon him as a "saviour." The sun-god is a symbolic representation with a deeper meaning than is ordinarily understood. He is the Divine Man in each of us, the informing God within the form of clay.

Isaac Asimov, the well-known science writer, in his essay "The Flaming God" in the same *Saturday Review* portfolio on the sun, says that every ancient civilization had its sun-god among the great powers of the pantheon, and he names especially the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Indians, the Persians, the Japanese, the Norse, the Irish, the Britons, the Slavs, the Polynesians, the Maya and the Aztecs. In the West, the best-known sun-god is the Greek Helios, who was later identified with Apollo.

In those days, when the workings of the universe were attributed to myriad gods, surely among the chief of them would have to be a sun-god, powerful and beneficent, for how could human beings live without the sun? . . .

The sun's setting and rising is one inspiration for the many mythic tales involving the death and resurrection of a god. An even more impressive death and resurrection is the death of vegetation with the coming of winter and its restoration in the spring. . . .

The most familiar solstice celebration of ancient times was that of the Romans. The Romans believed that their agricultural god, Saturn, ruled Italy during an early golden age of rich crops and plentiful food. The winter solstice, then, with its promise of a return of summer and of the golden time of Saturnian agriculture, was celebrated with a week-long Saturnalia from December

17 to 24. It was a time of unrelieved merriment and joy....

The Mithraists celebrated the birth of Mithra at the winter solstice, a natural time, and fixed on the day December 25 so that the popular Roman Saturnalia could build up to the Mithraist "Day of the Sun" as a climax.

At that time, Christianity was locked in a great duel with the Mithraists for the hearts and minds of the people of the Roman Empire.... Sometime after A.D. 300, Christianity managed the final coup of absorbing the Saturnalia, and with that it scored its final victory over Mithraism. December 25 was established as the day of the birth of Jesus, and the great festival was made Christian. There is absolutely no biblical authority for December 25 as having been the day of the Nativity.

All the appurtenances of the Saturnalia were adopted anyway — the joy and merriment, the closing of businesses, the brotherhood, the gift giving. All was given meaning, but all was still there.

So that beneath the panoply of the celebration of the birth of the Son is the distant echo of that far older rite, the celebration of the birth of the sun.

Affluence may be hazardous to human health, both mental and physical, warns a leading American psychiatrist, Dr. Zbigniew J. Lipowski of Dartmouth Medical School, as reported in *Unesco Features*, No. 709-710. People living in affluent countries, he says, are experiencing profound environmental and psychological stresses unique in man's history. Affluent man's sensory apparatus — meaning the many ways his brain perceives the outside world — is under increasing bombardment by stimuli provided by urbanization, crowding, noise, the mass media of communication, the revolution in information technology, the explosive growth of printed data and changing conditions of work. Some cope well, many poorly, with these stresses. Meanwhile the whole problem of what Dr. Lipowski calls "sensory and information overload" is, in his words, a worsening "social and public health problem no less grave than overpopulation, pollution, and the growing scarcity of natural resources."

One aspect of Dr. Lipowski's concept is a "theory of attractive stimulus overload." This implies that people living in rich societies are constantly assaulted by information about desirable things to want and

acquire. They are presented with an unprecedented wealth of attractive choices. Mass media and advertising encourage people to consume ever better, ever bigger quantities of material goods. There is also a host of desirable symbolic goals in affluent societies: choices of life style, career and leisure time, employment, opportunities for varied social and other activities.

A person living in such a society, Dr. Lipowski says, is continually having his appetite aroused. He is urged overtly and covertly to satisfy his needs and desires, and is encouraged to develop more and more of them. He is challenged to make ceaseless consumption his life goal. He is exposed to more appetite-arousing stimuli than he is able to choose from or act upon. It is this kind of inner conflict, the anguish of having to choose from among equally desirable choices, that epitomizes the human condition in affluent societies.

“Wealth is not necessarily good for people,” said Herman Kahn, and “Affluence, like poverty, can constitute a cause of disease,” said René Dubos, both well known for their writing about the contemporary human condition. But economic prosperity by itself is not evil or undesirable, nor is adversity essential for the higher life. What counts is the inner attitude that wealth must be used with a righteous motive and by a correct method. The idea of trusteeship of wealth, as against that of ownership, needs to be encouraged among the affluent.

Dr. Sisirkumar Ghose, celebrated author and presently Head of the Department of English, Vishwabharati University, makes a plea for dialogue between religious faiths in his article “Comparing Religions” (*Bhavan's Journal*, October 24):

With knowledge explosion ours has perforce become an age of intellectual exchange and accommodation. From the tribe we have come to mankind, in the global village. Born into a culture, we have to acquire planetary culture. But knowledge is not understanding, not wisdom. The scholar is not a sage. . . .

Interfaith dialogue . . . is a recognition of the historic context in which we happen to be and to make sense of it. This means that no religion can claim the monopoly of Truth or to having exhausted the mystery of being and becoming. . . .

Even when differences are admitted, these need not cause undue division. In any case, the nineteenth-century hypothesis of a

universal or uniform religion offers but the illusion of a solution. As Swami Vivekananda knew: "No one form of religion will do for all. No man is born to any religion; he has his religion in his soul." The soul religion escapes the rigidity of a formal system, the literal religion. . . .

History demands that we begin not only an outer but an inner dialogue in which all world-hypotheses will be equally welcome. It is not necessary for religion to be similar or identical. So long as the religions of the world continue to hold themselves as the sole repositories of the Word and the Way, the quality of dialogue is bound to suffer. It will then be little more than Apologetics. Then Comparative Religion turns into Competitive Religion. But, revelation is a universal gift, not a parochial possession. In the life of the spirit there are always fresh chapters to add.

Comparative Religion of this kind, broad, understanding, looking before and after, is not easy to practise. Two factors point to the need to make it real: first, man is not an object, but a subject, as much an I am as an intersubjective We. The true person is the cosmic person. Secondly, only an awareness, if not knowledge, of the totality of religious experience can help us to a true understanding of its role in the human evolution. For all we know it may point Beyond Religion.

Unless "cult-egoism" can be got rid of, there will be no meeting of minds or faiths, only studies, surveys, statistics and theories, mostly by the unqualified (*anadhikaris*), that have their day and then are heard no more. Facts and their interpretation do not belong to the same level. Pettiness padded with pedantry is not the way out.
