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THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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सत्यात नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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MAN, THE THINKER, OR A HUMAN ELEMENTAL?

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ONE GOOD SIGN of the present cycle is the genuine aspiration on the part of an increasing number of people to cleanse their own hearts and to enlighten their own minds. This desire for self-improvement is not rooted merely in a crassly selfish motive. It arises from the conviction that one's fellow men cannot be truly helped unless one is clear minded, and to be clear minded one must have a pure, *i.e.*, enlightened heart.

The truths that “the pure in heart shall see God” and that “the kingdom of heaven is within you” are no longer mere words; the belief has grown into conviction for an increasing number, and for many among them mental laziness is being overcome and the windows of the mind are being used. The feeling for Soul-living and Soul-service is genuine and throbs many a heart. This zest for right living and soul-service is widespread and many feel deeply the urge for it. This condition is being taken advantage of : the charlatan, the fake, and the go-getter are exploiting this holy urge of modern humanity; many such have taken the place of the salaried priest. There is also another class of exploiter—not the mere objectionable money-maker but the professional: the psychoanalyst, the psychiatrist and the psychologist—not the well-trained genuine researchers but pseudo-practitioners who turn spiritual advisers to those who are eagerly seeking.

The simple truths of Theosophy and of the genuine Oriental Psychology have been turned into confusing complexes by the

advisers of conflicting schools. What men and women of ordinary intelligence need to know for the living of the Higher Life is, primarily, the truth about each one being a Divinity. Man is not born in iniquity and sin. He is innately a being of light. Born and bred in modern times, he learns to look upon himself as a carnal being—as a miserable worm, or a horrid reptile. Barred by this world from the knowledge of the true, man still feels the urge that the good and the beautiful, the right and the righteous, somehow, somewhere, exist—most of all within himself. The first great truth modern man needs to learn is that he is divine—a luminous being full of warmth, virility, radiating peace and joy. This urge must receive the light of study deliberately prosecuted. Again, this learning necessitates some practice at realization of the divine within, of his being Embodied Spirit. Reflection on his own nature and constitution must form the centre of this practice.

Man is not demoniacal and devilish though he has the brood of the blood which forms his own carnal or lower nature. He is learning through it while he serves the kingdom of matter by imparting to it some of the radiance of spirit—himself.

Esoteric Philosophy recognizes those Indwellers which the Christians call "the seven deadly sins." The Nazarene Gnostics named them "the seven badly disposed Stellars." Who does not know that devils of sorts dwell in the body? They make such a noise that the still, small voice of the divine in man is not heard. They put on such a show that the real light is dimmed and obscured by the glittering tinsel which glammers. These dwellers are numerous and are variously named and described. The very effort to feel the power of the inner divinity lashes the lower demoniacal forces into activity. The fight is wrongly waged when, with the aid of his mind, a man tries to kill his ambitions, prides and selfishnesses. To establish the centre of the inner divinity in our personal consciousness, and to follow out in action and realization the higher desires or aspirations, leads one to see that the lower or personal man is but a human elemental. It is said that man carries within himself a ghost, and this ghost is that human elemental; it can become a human elementary. Unless the man of ideation, man, the thinker, perceives the existence of the human elemental as an outside entity with its own intelligence and learns the art of transmuting it

to a form of and for his own light, there can be no rest or response, no real power to rise or to help others to rise.

The vague feeling, however true, that a life of inner strength and peace is necessary for one's own well-being as also for the helping of others, ebbs away or takes to wrong canals, and most times ends in frustration and sometimes in worse than that. That feeling needs to be correctly canalized. The knowledge of ancient psychology and of the real Raja-Yoga school is available in the writings of Robert Crosbie and of W. Q. Judge, who learnt it from the life and teachings of H. P. Blavatsky. Her books provide the source-material and without them the writings of Mr. Crosbie and of Mr. Judge cannot be fully appreciated. On the other hand those writings enable us to comprehend the profound lore which is a gift to our cycle from the Master Occultist of the 19th-20th century, the maligned instructor and alas! the much misunderstood and misinterpreted teacher of many who called themselves her pupils, followers and successors. Furthermore, H.P.B.'s writings reveal to us the real meaning of old-world religious lore, of ancient myths, and point surely to the future evolution of the human race on the planes of body, mind and soul.

The work of the United Lodge of Theosophists is to encourage its Associates to study, to apply and to promulgate. The words of the Adepts quoted in *The Secret Doctrine* advise us to "lead the life necessary for the acquisition of such knowledge and powers, and Wisdom will come to you naturally." With the labour of such practising devotees, the United Lodge of Theosophists endeavours to spread broadcast the truths about the life of the soul and how it can be lived. In doing so the advice of the same sage letter may be quoted—"Be prudent, we say, prudent and wise, and above all take care what those who learn from you believe in." To study the Esoteric Philosophy in the spirit of modern science, to apply its instructions in the spirit of great art, to promulgate the grand ideas in the spirit of philanthropy—this is our task; the task of each one who has learnt to look upon himself as a brick in the temple of Service.

THE ONLY WAY

If you want to serve us, serve our Humanity.

—A MASTER OF WISDOM

It is always wise to pause once in a while and take a review of one's walk in life—its successes, its stumblings and its failures. Looking back over the years and the decades, what is one's self-assessment of the efforts made and of the surmounting or succumbing to obstacles? How and at what time did one come in contact with Theosophy? Why did one embrace it? What position does Theosophy occupy in the daily living of the life? If the questioning is sincere and the answering honest, the true student would come to the conclusion that through the numerous ups and downs of life, Theosophy remained for him a persistent if not an altogether dominant force, and further that if Theosophy had not been there to uplift and support, the soul might not have remained buoyant through it all.

Realization of this great indebtedness gets strengthened through the years and then a time comes when the student asks himself the question: What have I done and what am I doing to repay the great debt I owe to Theosophy? The honest student will try to measure his repayment-cum-offering in terms of the amount of time, money and work which he has utilized in service of the Cause. Such an exercise at self-assessment is good and rewarding at all times, but for the practitioner who is already on the path of service, there is one more question which must be answered: What have I done to further the Theosophical effort by promulgation and by the living of the Theosophical life? He cannot discharge his debt of gratitude unless he becomes an active worker in spreading the benefits of Theosophy in all quarters where human souls exist. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

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

And again:

Know that the stream of superhuman knowledge and the Deva-Wisdom thou hast won, must, from thyself, the channel of Alaya, be poured forth into another bed.

The injunction is mandatory; one can hardly read it as optional. The Cause of Theosophy expects from the earnest worker a surrender, as near to the total as he can make it, to the ideal of preaching, popularizing and practising the concept of Brotherhood. By such service can gratitude be expressed and by such service can the attention of men be drawn to Theosophy—the most serious movement of the age. A little reflection will show that Theosophy would have made hardly any impact on humanity if in those early days there had not been self-sacrificing missionaries ready to hold the eternal flame to the candles of others who awaited that great brotherly service.

The missionary of Theosophy is one who volunteers for the oftentimes unrewarding effort of taking Theosophy to the masses—to those who await the flow of its nourishing waters as well as to those who suffer and know not where to turn for solace and comfort and cure for their ills. This path of service—there are of course others—is not without its risks. Helping lame dogs over styles has always had its hazards. For instance, the dog may get frightened and bite the very hand that is stretched towards it for help; it may turn round and attack the good Samaritan; or again it may refuse to co-operate and reject the proffered aid. These are frustrating experiences, but then they are the usual setbacks to be faced by him who becomes a server of the Cause. The higher knowledge and the deeper insight cannot be acquired without going unflinchingly through the ups and downs that are the adjuncts to any service. The will to do, the soul to dare, are not the fruits of an easy life amid pleasant surroundings. The path of the true mystic, the dedicated philosopher and the devoted disciple was never a smooth one and consequently there is no great rush at any time of volunteers desiring to join the ranks of those who have to leave all earthly hopes behind. The need for unselfish and self-effacing volunteers exists at all times, and yet none can be pressed into service or even be invited to join the ranks. Unaided and unsolicited, the Soul has to offer itself as a willing sacrifice for the good of the many. On the earthly plane, the teaching profession was such an avenue of loving service until it too got commercialized.

It is a truism that you cannot propagate Theosophy effectively unless at the same time you exude the spirit of tolerance and brotherhood. The words may be eloquent, the philosophy

correct, and yet if the great Oneness has not made its impact upon the life, the effort will fritter itself out on the personal and emotional planes and no lasting benefit will ensue. The force that cements man to man and soul to soul comes through a genuine love for all, irrespective of the various units that constitute that ALL.

Anyone who has gone through the experience will admit that it is not easy to call another a brother when he delights in maligning you and bares his teeth at any attempt at forging a harmonizing relationship. But, since Theosophy does not have any exceptions to the law of Universal Brotherhood, no feelings of animosity or retaliation can be allowed to restrict and shrink the Theosophical effort. However, any attempt at forcing brotherhood becomes counterproductive and may in some cases lead to disastrous results; but then biding one's time is not the same as abandoning all effort and acknowledging defeat. "Hasten slowly" is an axiom that proves its wisdom in time.

All this, and many things besides, apply mainly to the personal experience of the would-be missionary in dealing with individual cases. Universal Brotherhood extends to an infinitely wider field. To universalize his effort, the disciple is expected to spread the philosophy far and wide, regardless and even ignorant of the individuals who are thus approached. By speech, by the written word, by correct attitude, by right living, by being readily available to minister to the soul-needs of others is the sowing done for future harvests. This sowing, being for others, the itinerant farmer may not tarry to see its benefits reaped by unknown households, because by the very nature of his service it may not be his destiny to linger at any one place. The true worker is a cosmopolitan and feels at home in any country where the work requires his presence. If his destiny requires that he live in a country which is less hospitable and attractive than the country of his liking, then he is expected to remain loyal to his assignment and no complaint or remorse shall escape his lips or show in his behaviour. He who does complain makes the tacit admission that his own missionary zeal has not aroused in himself any great feeling of brotherhood. In consequence, his work cannot but shrink within the narrowing boundaries of a coterie of those who owe him personal allegiance, and because of his failing he distributes among the few

the treasures that were meant for all mankind. In cases such as these, the willingness to enter upon the act of service was unquestionably there, but not the detachment which alone could have turned any effort into a full success.

It is important to the missionary to get his efforts organized. He has to chart his passage mindful of the rough seas and the tempestuous gales that he will encounter on the way. Has he acquired the faith that will make him weather any storm? Has he gathered the equipment required to face unruffled any opposition that may suddenly arise from outside or from the members of his own adopted household? Has he fortified himself with the conviction that his propagation will not deviate from the true? It is here that his renouncing of all cumbersome luggage (such as those aspects of worldly knowledge that will never be useful to further the great Cause; the not letting go of material things under the false notion that at some time these may come handy; the clinging to things of sense; the playing at favourites) becomes well-nigh imperative. Any clinging to the non-essentials will in the long run frustrate effort and poison life. This must be so because Nature which is itself universal can have no working collaboration with one who imposes his own limits on space, time and effort. The principal equipment in the missionary's armour is faith. It has to be strong enough to ward off the attacks of misfortune, adversity and seeming failures when every circumstance seems to mock at his efforts and when personal injustice dogs his steps over the years. Doubts about his own ability to be a missionary creep in when co-workers become critics and those from whom he expected support turn their backs on him, rub salt into his wounds and do everything to stultify his efforts. It is when the original enthusiasm reaches a low ebb, when all seems lost and a nagging doubt creeps in about his own ability to carry on, that temptations to shift to other paths assail the worker. His mind gets befogged and that is where the danger lies. If there are dense fogs on the physical plane, there are more disquieting ones on the planes of mind and soul. The patience to sit it out is a valuable quality which has to be assiduously cultivated. Is it not true that they also serve who only stand and wait?

To add to the missionary's difficulties there are quite a few harrowing experiences that keep looming on his horizon. In

bygone centuries there was the distinct possibility of the missionary being thrown to the lions or burnt at the stake. In this age, his trials have shifted from the physical to the mental plane. Abject terror can burn a man up as effectively as any stake-fire, and grave doubts may paralyse and freeze his efforts to the same extent as prison bars and tortures on the rack. The martyrs of yesteryears preferred death to a relinquishment of their faith. They had the conviction that the undying flame of the deathless Soul never perished with the dying embers of the faggot and the stake, and this should hold good for their modern successors also. The storm-tossed Soul can always take heart in the knowledge that, in spite of all the dangers inherent in the role of a missionary (the standard-bearer in the army of the elect), there have always been recruits who have volunteered to pass through the ordeals because they have seen the need and the urgency to pick up the banner from the hands of a fallen brother and hold it proudly aloft, unvanquished, unvanquishable.

Yet one more consideration concerning the preparation that should precede one's joining the ranks of the indomitable ones. When putting out to sea one does not entrust the helm to a novice, nor does one set out on a long voyage without having an expert navigator on board. The same caution applies to ventures on the immaterial planes of life. The skilful pilot guides his ship across desolate watery wastes with full faith in chart and compass to take him to the other shore. The unshakable faith of the pilot that the crawling lines on his chart are faultless leaves no room for hesitancy or doubt. He knows that if these are meticulously followed they will lead him to his ultimate haven of refuge where he can safely leave ship and chart and compass because it is journey's end. So too with the Soul. Embarked on its voyage homewards, its sole chance of reaching the shore lies in its unshaken faith that the ancient teachings provide all the help and guidance necessary. Happy he who has that faith.

ALL the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

ON THE HIGHER ASPECT OF THEOSOPHIC STUDIES

[The following paper by Mohini M. Chatterji was read before the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society and was published in *The Theosophist* for March 1885.—Eds.]

THE STUDY of Theosophy, in which we are engaged, is in its character unique. The Esoteric Science, which is but another name for Theosophy, is at once a complete system of Physics, Ethics, and Metaphysics, demanding the devotion of all the faculties of man for its proper comprehension. Unlike those departments of knowledge which usually occupy attention, it directly deals with the great problem of happiness, a happiness which is complete and eternal. The ultimate value of all effort is the production of happiness, and objects excite our interest in so far as we believe them to be conducive to that great and ultimate consummation of existence—happiness. Thus it will be seen that Theosophy, claiming, as it does, to be the science of happiness, must embrace within itself all objects of human interest. In fact it must be omniscience itself. The definition here attempted is, no doubt, infinite in extension, rendering every claimant to a complete knowledge of it worthy of supreme contempt and ridicule, or, perhaps, even unworthy of that. One thing, however, is certain: the Great Science of Supreme Knowledge, as it is called in the East, is the science of supreme bliss and the art of acquiring it. As a science it recognizes the direction in which our highest faculties perceive the unfoldment of existence to be the direction of happiness, and looks upon all divergence from that direction as productive of unhappiness. As an art it naturally concerns itself most with the objects of our highest interest—ourselves (it is necessary to adopt this form for the plural in defiance of grammar), and attacks the problem of happiness from their standpoint. These selves, or as they are technically called, personal egos or personalities, are candidates for happiness, and therefore entitled to special consideration. It is needless to discuss here the contention which is sometimes heard that action, life, or existence is possible without a tendency towards happiness. Even a superficial examination will show that while pursuing apparently an unpleasant object, the man's real motive is still a desire for happiness. The author of the Upanishads shows great wisdom when he asks:

"Who would have moved or who would have lived if happiness did not pervade all space?"

The universally admitted relations of the personal ego to objects, usually regarded as external by reason of their non-identity with the self, must be recognized before any scheme can be formulated or means devised for the acquirement of happiness. This part of the inquiry is confined to the domain of what is commonly, though empirically, called positive knowledge, and is physical; it is conducted by means of physical senses.

Having found the object to be made happy in the self, it becomes necessary to examine its nature, so as to discover how to make it happy. This branch of the inquiry, which is metaphysical, must be pursued with the aid of what may be called super-physical senses or higher intellection. Ordinarily we find that all actions in life, proceeding upon a system of trial and error, seek to attain that happiness in which hope promises unchanging enjoyment and rest. But as the investigation into the true elements of happiness advances, a very important fact becomes apparent from our conception of time. We see that the personality, the aspirant for happiness, has itself such a characteristic as to be unable to exist without change in consciousness, and that exist it must. That which is can never absolutely cease to be; no relationship can be legitimately postulated between a thing and its utter negation. Therefore the scheme of happiness, which the personality sets up in ignorance of its own nature, must be given up for its true happiness. In order to be truly happy the personality has to realize its own perpetual changefulness, and the result of such realization will be the surrender of the desire for the permanence of any particular state of its existence, a desire springing from ignorance of its own nature. When this ignorance is dispelled and the personality conforms itself to its own natural law of change, the character of the ego is so completely altered as to render the personality, to all intents and purposes, extinct; to mark the difference of state the entity is then called an individuality. It is not within the scope of this paper to discuss the nature of the existence of the individuality during the time the personality lasts, or, strictly speaking, engages attention. Suffice it to say that if one could survey the universe from the standpoint of eternity there would be no change, but everything would appear present, changeless, and everlasting. But such a state can never

be realized. The only eternity that exists is an eternity of change. Change alone is permanent. Forgetful of this, our personalities build up schemes of happiness in which the desire for the permanence of some particular state occupies a prominent position. As a consequence we bring pain upon ourselves when that desire meets with inevitable disappointment. A thorough realization, therefore, of the perpetual mutability of existence is essential for that happiness which is most perfect. To be supremely happy we must renounce all desire for happiness as the result of our work, but find it in the work itself.

This being concluded, the next step is to know our work. A proper examination of the nature of change, the law embodied in the personality aspiring to happiness, furnishes this knowledge as the highest faculties of each project their searching light upon the massive darkness of what is to be as involved in what was and what is. Examining the true nature of our consciousness, we find that the great cause of pain and suffering is the personality itself, or, in other words, the great interest we feel in ourselves under the conviction of their separateness and opposition to other selves. But the changefulness of the personality necessitates the existence of a permanent basis; and its separateness implies an underlying unity. This permanent basis must not, however, be considered a distinct entity. It is merely a state which has no more existence without change than change has without it. The more the personality realizes this permanence, this state of unity of all personalities, with which, in its present state, it feels such an opposition, the greater does its happiness become. For at each step of this realization the limitations imposed by the personality upon itself diminish in number and generate happiness. The effort to realize the ideal of Universal Brotherhood—the emotional counterpart of the consciousness of unity which underlies the diverse forms of manifestation—is usually known as the practice of morality. As the work of ethical evolution proceeds, the personality, which produces the consciousness of opposition of self and selves, slackens its bonds and expands until it loses itself. The presence of opposition produces pain, which disappears in proportion as its true cause, the feeling of separateness, disappears; happiness grows with the growth of more permanent interests, and reaches its consummation when the "dewdrop slips into the shining sea," and the personality destroying its limitations merges in the all and loses

its name. The peaks of perfection that the glorified individuality then begins to scale are far beyond the ken of mortal eyes. It never indeed loses "the glory of going on and still to be."

The path, however, by which this truth—this happiness—is realized, is not the same for all. The very fact that one personality is not another shows that each has a peculiar path of its own. No man is a superfluity in the universe. The existence of the humblest human creature is not without a reason. A contrary supposition involves the assumption of omniscience, and is tantamount to a denial of the existence of reason itself. Each man, therefore, has a right to a perfect liberty of conscience and no man is entitled to judge his fellow man. One's opinions are one's own, but one is not justified in imposing them on others. A neglect of this rule has a tendency to transform the whole of the human race into multiple images of a single individual, which must necessarily produce pain by its opposition to the natural law which underlies the diversity of manifestation. Nothing in Nature can be annihilated, and all attempts to achieve the impossible must produce unhappiness. Leave the meanest individual to enjoy his birthright—liberty of conscience. When another's acts cross our path of duty and offend our sense of fitness and propriety we have a right to condemn the deed and endeavour to neutralize its evil effects, but it is wrong to shut our hearts against the doer; he is entitled to all the pity that is in our nature. For, by the Law of Karma

The false tongue dooms its lie; the creeping thief
And spoiler rob, to render.

The law of Karma is the true order of our personal experience, as seen in the light of that mode of Nature's manifestation, commonly called Causation. That which is cannot cease to be. But it cannot remain in a state of permanence, for that would destroy the idea of succession, which is inseparably connected with existence. Our acts, therefore, live in their effects or subsequent forms. Until we can remove all material desires from our acts they will always necessitate material effects and produce reincarnations. It will be out of place in the present paper, which deals but with the practical aspect of our studies, to elucidate the Law of Karma and Reincarnation, or to meet even the principal objections raised against it. But attention is to be drawn to the fact that this Law offers a satisfactory ex-

planation of the apparent injustices of life. We find around us not only pain and suffering but also moral excellence and depravity, forced upon individuals by circumstances over which they seem to have no control. No amount of speculation or dogmatism will furnish a clue to this anomaly so long as the above-mentioned Law remains unrecognized. Exception is taken to this Law on the ground that it is repugnant to justice that a man should experience the consequences of a prior act without preserving the memory of that act. It is hardly necessary to point out that this line of argument is based upon the assumption that the word justice, as applied to the working of natural laws, has the same meaning as the justice demanded by us in intercourse between man and man with their limited knowledge and selfish motives. Is a man, who is struck down by a disease, ever told the precise moment and circumstances when he received the germs of his malady? The justice of Nature is vindicated by the undisturbed sway of the law of Causation. If you suffer there must be a reason for it, and that reason must have some connection with you, otherwise it would not have produced your suffering. It should not, however, be supposed that the cause of suffering is here sought to be connected with the present form of you, your personality, the aggregate unity of a certain bundle of experiences, that personality being in fact but the form which your old self has assumed under the operation of self-generated causes, which are the progenitors of your present suffering and enjoyment. "Ye suffer from yourselves"; "that which ye sow, ye reap."

From the considerations so briefly urged above, it will be obvious how wrong it is to entertain resentful feelings for evil done to ourselves. We must be indifferent to it and pursue our path of duty; the evil experienced is the outcome of our own previous deeds. No power in heaven or on earth can, by a moment's duration, prolong or shorten the term of our suffering or enjoyment. The sum-total of human happiness will receive considerable addition if unswerving allegiance is given to this law, which alone can furnish a true and scientific basis of Ethics. Our ethical notions, however, cannot be fixed and permanent, because the personality in which they inhere is itself changeable. The morality of a Polynesian savage will be converted into its opposite when he is changed into a civilized man. The same law also obtains in the domains of Physics and Metaphysics. What is

Metaphysics today will be Physics tomorrow as the right of now will be wrong of then. This truth, nevertheless, remains constant, that there will be always something unknown with which Metaphysics will concern itself, and which Ethics will demand to have brought within the grasp of Physics—the science of objectivity. There dominates throughout the whole range of existence the eternal struggle to convert Metaphysics into Physics, and Ethics is the power that fights. Any scheme of life or happiness that neglects one and enthrones the other of these will always defeat its own end. Physics without Metaphysics is empiricism; Metaphysics without Physics is dogmatism; and Ethics by itself is superstition. The harmonious combination of these three elements forms what is called Theosophy, Wisdom-Religion, or Esoteric Science. The study of this Great Science leads to a proper development of all the different faculties, the synthetic unity of which is the man. Physics requires the cultivation of the intellect, Metaphysics can be comprehended only by the development of the intuitive, or purely rational, faculties, while the emotional nature is expanded by Ethics. The feeling of reverential awe which we have for what we call spiritual is produced by the combination of the metaphysical and ethical faculties. Metaphysics recognizes the true nature of consciousness, which Ethics, acting through the emotions, forces us to realize. This impelling conviction produces the feeling of awe for the subjective side of nature, and makes it sacred.

Objection is sometimes taken to Theosophy because it is not new. The logical connection between novelty and truth is, however, not easy to discover. If Theosophy is the Divine Wisdom which is the Science of Divine Bliss, and if happiness is the tendency of all existence, there must be Theosophy whenever there is the metaphysical faculty in man to contemplate problems that lie deep in his nature. Novelty is an attribute which has never been claimed for our doctrines. But at the same time it must be recognized that a truth is the richer for having passed through a larger number of minds. It is the realization of the truth that we seek, and in this great task we accept help from each other's experience; no statement is authoritative but has to be accepted or rejected according to the dictates of the individual judgement. Abstract truths are the mathematical formulae; the underlying principles must first be understood and afterward facility acquired in their application, and

it is no detraction from the value of mathematics that some of its results can be accomplished by empiric rules.

The Great Science is the Science of Eternal Life, the contemplation of which causes the present life to assume its true proportions. Misconception of the true value of the existence we now lead shrouds from view the permanent basis which underlies all changes of form, and has on the one hand led some to sink into the condition of Tennyson's St. Simon Stylites, and on the other produced Epicurean Corporealism. A right understanding of the subject shows, however, the worth as well as the worthlessness of this existence, which at once imprisons us and gives us liberty. It is but a small link in an unending catena of changes—it is but a drop in the ocean; but still it is a link and a drop. Our happiness entirely depends upon a correct estimate of the value of life. Ignorance is painful, and it is immaterial whether that ignorance begets an over-estimate of the importance of life or the opposite. The great delusion of belief in an absolute existence outside the Cosmos produces a perfect paralysis of the present life and all the misery consequent thereupon, while the over-estimate of life ends in sensuality and bigotry. This over-estimate proceeds from two distinct causes, both equally dangerous: Corporealism, which cannot conceive of any existence dissociated from the present body; and certain forms of dogmatic religion which supplement this erring, miserable life of humanity by an eternity of existence, the nature of which depends on causes generated in finite time. The pleasures of this life appear in gigantic proportions to a votary of the former system, and dogmatic morality becomes the omnipotent ruler of the so-called religious man.

But the only eternity we recognize is an eternity of change. This life is only one out of the numberless patterns which the ceaseless motion of the kaleidoscope of existence produces. The contemplation of this great fact of our nature broadens our view of life, and helps us to realize present existence in its true light. As we penetrate further into details, the realization of the harmony of being grows upon us in strength, and the darkening medium of ignorance loses its density.

(To be concluded)

SRUTI—REVELATION

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY has rendered numerous disservices to organized Christianity. Two major beliefs which it has imposed on the "faithful" are : (a) an anthropomorphized Personal God, and (b) His only begotten Son, the only Saviour. These two are philosophically absurd and ethically immoral propositions, and from them other false notions have sprung. Among these is the concept of Revelation, which has further estranged Christendom from the rest of the world. These impositions have produced their own reaction. With the spread of knowledge the concept that the Holy Bible is the word of God went overboard first; though the indirect influence of this view of the Bible persists, narrowing the lives of large numbers, still the claim that the Bible contains all truth and all wisdom would be made nowadays only by a hallucinated fanatic.

But the reaction against these absurdities has been extreme. Atheism and crass materialism would never have arisen with the birth and growth of modern science but for the behaviour and teachings of the churches—especially of the Roman Catholic. The swing from blind belief in religion to questioning and doubting materialism was only natural. But in the process unfortunately disappeared the truth underlying the words God, Saviour, Revelation. Not only was the bogey of a Personal God dethroned but with it went the concept of Deity itself; not only was the scapegoat Saviour rejected but the very idea of salvation : not only was the stupid interpretation of Revelation brushed aside, but the very examination of what revelation might imply.

Nowadays it is recognized that the Christianity of Jesus is different from that of the churches; but it is not so fully recognized that the Christianity of the churches is not even according to the correct understanding of the scientific, philosophical and ethical propositions to be found in the Bible and cognate literature. These propositions, though corrupted, are themselves evolutions of earlier ones. The "higher criticism" of the Bible has done immense service to the cause of Truth, but it, like modern science, has thrown away the grain with the chaff, and in rejecting the Bible as the revealed word of God, it also rejected a careful examination of what revelation means and implies.

In the Hindu conception, *sruti* or revelation, as commonly explained, is immemorial tradition whose origin cannot be traced to any mortal being. The Vedas are such a tradition. Whether or not it is now possible to ascribe the truths for which the Vedas stand to specific seers, a condition which is sometimes laid down as essential to all "revealed" teaching is that it should have proved acceptable to the best minds of the community (*mahajanaparigraha*). That is, the truths which the Vedas record have been not merely intuited by great seers but also acknowledged by the standard mind of the community. Really, then, *sruti* reduces itself to what may be characterized as "race intuition," and its deliverances, by virtue of the objective value they thus possess, acquire an authority which cannot belong to those of anybody's private intuition.

The truths of the Vedas thus form a record, consistent in itself, which is made up of the visions of many sages whose reports do not conflict like those of the mediums and the psychics. These seers were scientists. Modern science applies the method of checking and rechecking its own theories before they are accepted as final truths. Thus also did the ancient Seers. The difference between them and modern observers is that the universe of the former was vaster and grander, and their aids to observation were not only mechanical apparatus but unfolded vision—sight so clear that it penetrated to the soul of things and hearing so keen that it heard the chants of the shining gods. It is for this reason that these ancient scientists were called the "Seers of the Mantras"—holy words, aphorisms and hymns.

Nevertheless the method of *sruti* is operating among the scientists, who have already a *sruti* or revelation of their own; no student of science questions that the earth is round or that it revolves round the sun; that water is H₂O or that CO₂ is what man breathes out. But by no means is that *sruti* an elaborate one. The record of thoroughly established scientific facts is available in manuals and encyclopaedias; the story of how they came to be so established is also available.

But what about the record of religious experiences and of the facts of the religious science of the soul? Religion long ago passed out of the realm of science into that of belief and it is most difficult for the keen and impartial thinker of today even to consider the possibility that Religion may of yore have been science, the facts of which were verified once and are verifiable

now. If we do not restrict the above indicated interpretation of revelation to the Vedas alone, but apply it to other similar records, we shall serve the cause of religious culture constructively while we deal a blow to religious exclusiveness. Let students of comparative religion look for the consistent record of facts and truths taught by the Sages and Seers of ancient civilizations—such as those of China, Egypt and India. If the modern scholar weighs such evidence, he will be able to present to the Western world the true view of Revelation.

A VOICE FROM THE DARKNESS

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IN AN HOUR of darkness and discouragement, when the struggle of the outer life and the anguish of the inner life seemed more than the trembling soul could bear, I heard a voice. From afar off it sounded, and yet clear, distinct—not a syllable lost.

“Hearken to these my words, O soul, and evermore remember. Abides in the heart of every man an inner power, a life. There no sorrow dwells, nor death, nor fear of these. Peace broods above and joy ineffable fills all the atmosphere. Know this inner place to be your home, exiled from which the soul drinks deep of sorrow—is defiled by sin. That home is *yours*. Find it, and living there, a peace will come; peace for you and all you love. The gateway of pain bars the entrance, but courage!—and pass on. This is a reminder of things you know, but the dark hours need such.

“Remember also, the sunshine streams on all, but he gains most who has most power of appreciation. I charge you therefore, having known the peace, to fear no pain. I charge you seek the spiritual sunshine and expand there, as the flowers in the sunlight of the earth. Desolation belongs to a lower plane of consciousness; rise you to higher ones that you know well, where the smirch of materiality is not, nor the discords with which you often echo back our divine harmonies.”

BREAKING MENTAL SHACKLES

THERE HAS BEEN a great hue and cry over the restrictions on freedom of thought in lands under dictatorships today. In fact, however, nowhere in our modern world are the thinking classes free in the true sense. Intellectual conformity has most of them as helpless in its coils as the serpents had Laocoon and his hapless sons. Our intelligentsia flatter themselves on their liberal outlook, their emancipation from superstition, their cosmopolitanism. As a matter of fact, with very few exceptions, they are absurdly provincial mental robots. They look back with pitying contempt at the circumscribed vision of a few centuries ago, when men believed at the dictates of the church. Nevertheless, truly free-thinking men and women are as rare in our great centres of civilization and culture as in the Dark Ages or in remote small towns today.

Mediocrities with one or several university degrees have dominated our culture these many years. The universities turn them out by the thousand, stamped ineffaceably, like coins from the mint, with the pattern of orthodox mental attitude. The university's proper function is to broaden all the minds it trains. In practice, like Procrustes, it tries to make all comers fit its bed, amputating as ruthlessly as it stretches, according to the mental stature of each comer. The university imparts information, but it clips the wings of thought. The very ideal of culture it presents is a fixed pattern, the mental attitudes it imposes as stereotyped as the formal gestures of some dances.

In some countries, the various fraternal organizations and women's clubs take up the task of moulding thought where the university leaves off. The price of intellectual leadership of one's group today is willingness to browse in the plains with the flock, satisfied with the herbage they munch, perhaps a few feet in advance of the rest—not more. The gregarious instinct is strong and the heights, whither the flock would not or could not follow, beckon to but few. The blight of orthodoxy affects not sciolists alone and such small fry. Some of the greatest names in science today belong to men who have indulged in bold free thought within their own domain, but who, outside it, are not ashamed to wear the drab habit of conformity.

The extent to which mental discipline is imposed by modern culture is obscured by the existence of a limited outlying area

in which the mind may lay aside its uniform and move about in mufti. Absolute conformity with orthodox doctrines was never demanded. A certain laxity around the edges always has given the illusion of intellectual freedom and saved self-esteem. Even in mediaeval Europe one was free to hold what views he liked on non-essentials, such as the seriously debated question how many angels simultaneously could occupy a needle's point. In our day there has been a great relaxation in standards of conduct, a scouting of long-established social sanctions, a weakening of moral fibre, perhaps most marked among many of the intellectuals themselves, the natural leaders of the throng. This liberty, run into licence, glammers its votaries with the illusion of freedom absolute, and such have but added the chains of sense and lust to those of intellect.

Let none imagine that the dominance of intellectual orthodoxy is less tyrannical today because more tenuous! Poison gas which he cannot see can choke a man quite as effectively as can a visible rope. True, modern learning has formulated no definite creed, but certain of its assumptions have all the weight of dogma. Perhaps there has never been less real tolerance. The iron hand wears a velvet glove today, but let a man defy the force of the views of his group and he soon feels its weight. The heretic courts martyrdom. The rack and thumbscrew of the modern Inquisition are the epithets applied to dissenters—reactionary! visionary! fanatic! Its stake is the amused tolerance or undisguised contempt of friends and kin.

"Scientific freedom," for instance, is a shibboleth which even the humane feel they must echo or lose caste, and so most resolutely turn their thoughts away from the barbarities and tortures practised in its name. Let a man raise his voice to condemn vivisection and champion its helpless victims—straightway he is dubbed "a hysterical sentimentalist." If he dares challenge the current medical superstition of serums and vaccines, he is "a dangerous crank." And let him oppose birth control by artificial means as an abomination; let him affirm his faith that education and practice in self-control offer the only legitimate cure for the overpopulation evil, and he is denounced as an enemy to society. A man may be guilty of one of these heresies and, if he keeps reasonably quiet about it, his friends may indulgently call him "unpractical," and let it go at that. But let him entertain heterodox views on several of these points—he is

"quite mad, poor chap!" If his convictions go so deep that he feels constrained to urge his views on others to effect reform, he finds the utmost difficulty in gaining a hearing. The orthodox press is closed to his "vapourings"; his letters are not published, his articles, whatever their literary merit, are refused.

There are more basic concepts which self-respect, as a modern intellectual, demands that each accepts—such, for example, as the inferiority of ancient views and cultures to our own, the evolution of religious from worship of natural powers and fetiches to monotheism. Some in the West find implied tacitly in the last the ultimate superiority of Christianity over other faiths: others, in East and West alike, interpret it that there is nothing sacrosanct in any faith.

The provincialism of the educated Western man is nowhere more apparent than in his bland and quite complacent ignorance about the great religions and philosophies of the East. Men who consider themselves broadly cultured feel no embarrassment in admitting that they have never heard of the *Bhagavad-Gita* or the *Zend-Avesta*. Sometimes their tendency is to belittle them, as if to imply that what they do not know is not worth knowing. Sometimes the study of comparative religions is under sectarian or agnostic auspices and because it is undertaken from a great height of fancied superiority, perspective is quite lost and only the fantastic and irrelevant stand out. The ashes of dogma and superstition have hidden the fire that smoulders underneath, and those who stir contemptuously the cooling embers most often miss the gleam of living truth, common to all faiths, that once gave them life.

On the moot point of soul-survival it might seem at first blush that a wide latitude is tolerated. Some of the intelligentsia hold it probable that consciousness survives the death of the body; some, a smaller number perhaps, hold that it probably does not; a few find reincarnation an interesting hypothesis. All can exchange their views with relatively little heat. The possibility of knowledge on the point would be proclaimed absurd by one and all. If one allows a shade too much conviction to creep into his tone, someone is sure to remark, comfortably, "After all, no one knows!" And all the group are amicably upon common ground, pleased with their detachment and contemptuous of the host of simple folk outside of their agnostic circle who have the bad taste to believe or to deny. To deny

without a basis of knowledge is equally illogical, but this is less apparent to the modern mind, which never heard the words of Narada:

Never utter these words: "I do not know this--therefore it is false." One must study to know, know to understand, understand to judge.

Though there is a growing number in the world today who do not reject reincarnation outright, yet how many, without pretence of investigation or thought on what reincarnation means, snatch at the distorted idea of transmigration into animal forms and dismiss with a witticism the possibility of many lives on earth! It is surprising, too, how many, bored and disillusioned with their lives, deny the possibility because, forsooth, they do not want to live again on earth. "But I don't want to come back!" If reincarnation be a law of nature, as many hold, do these poor modern Canutes think that the tide will heed their interdicts?

Part of the unwritten credo of Western thought is that belief in superphysical powers and forces is unworthy of serious minds. The average educated man would as soon confess to a belief in Santa Claus, the Christmas sprite, prancing reindeer, chimney descent and all, as to belief that there might be anything in Magic but fraud or jugglery. He would think himself fit subject for a lunacy commission if he admitted any power in man not properly accredited by modern science. One step in that direction and he might find, oh, horror! that he had opened wide the door to belief in so-called superstitions he had thought were safely bottled up like the jinn of old and sunk to the bottom of the sea.

They have been so sure of their strength, these modern minds, that they have let themselves be lulled to sleep by the blandishments of pride, as Samson yielded to Delilah's wiles. Like him, they lie securely bound; the Philistines of narrowness and of delusions manifold are upon them. Individuals can arise in their strength and strike the shackles from their minds, but they must recognize first that they are bound. All honour to the few who brave the crowd! Thrice fortunate they who can break through the vicious circle of modern influence and come up above the vapours!

REPRESSION—ELIMINATION—COUNTERACTION

REGRET AND REPENTANCE are very common phenomena in our era. They are a natural concomitant of the Epimethean character of the people. To be wise after the event, however, is better than not to incline to wisdom at all.

Errare humanum est. Mistakes, blunders and crimes are the order of the day for mere mortals. For the most part unconsciously to themselves, but sometimes deliberately, people sin. Sin is a terrifying concept, especially with the church-theological connotation. Sin may be simply defined as the breaking of the rhythm which is the basis of the manifested universe. *Sattva*, the true harmony of *Prakriti* or Nature, can only be disturbed by Man, because he is the only being with free will in the universe. The lower kingdoms automatically co-operate with that Rhythm; at the top of the scale, the Rishis and Buddhas co-operate deliberately, with full knowledge. Sin, then, is a phenomenon peculiar to the human kingdom.

Every breaking of the Rhythm of Life is a sin, whether it be consciously or unconsciously done. It is a mistake, therefore, to make a division and label only certain breaches as sins. It is true that deliberate disturbance of the harmony of Nature produces dire and calamitous results compared with those of the unconscious errors generally committed. But it is very important to learn, and to impress our minds with, this fact—Nature is impersonal on every plane, and her operating force, called Law, is infallibly just, because it is impersonal. A child burns its fingers in numerous fires and Nature takes no account of its ignorance or even its innocence.

Every sailor has to get his sea-legs, and the law working in moving waters does not stop its action for the sake of the earnest, determined and persevering innocent seaman. Why should we expect the Law which moves the waters of Life to act differently for the innocent soul? So between deliberate and unconscious errors there must subsist some kinship. What is it? Every unconscious mistake, unless noted and overcome, tends to become a conscious blunder. A blunder unconsciously committed several times leads to crime—white lies lead to black lies; neglect of small duties of life makes us fail when we are face to face with big ones; carelessness in little things produces insensibility in large ones; irritation about petty events builds a

permanent impatience in our character; and so on. This process of going from bad to worse does not stop because a churchman resignedly lifts eyes and hands heavenwards and mutters, "Thy will be done," any more than when an unenlightened Hindu or Buddhist taps his forehead and says, "Karman," or a Muslim utters, "Kismet." Suffering overtakes every mistake, and priest and purohit, mobed and moulyi take advantage of the phenomenon. "Confess and get absolution for your sin," "Burn a candle for your mistake," "Offer to the temple-god some sacrifice"—devious are the ways and numerous the methods of expiating sins (conscious or unconscious) which organized religions offer.

What is the true method of expiating our sins? Aphorism on Karma, No. 27 (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*) says:

Measures taken by an Ego to repress tendency, eliminate defects, and to counteract by setting up different causes, will alter the sway of Karmic tendency and shorten its influence in accordance with the strength or weakness of the efforts expended in carrying out the measures adopted.

We must learn to adopt measures of (1) repression, (2) elimination, and (3) counteraction.

Now, a little consideration will show that it is easier, more practical and better to repress, to eliminate and to counteract a small error than a big blunder; if blunders gathering momentum become crimes, the force required to expiate a sin must be greater in volume than that necessary for reparation of an error.

What then shall we do? Theosophy says—Pay attention to the daily routine of life, to its small incidents, which are seeds that may become giant trees. Self-examination of our daily round of existence will reveal to us these small seeds. Without it, they sink into the soil where alone they can take root and grow. The *modus operandi* is to watch our little trivial words and actions, which are the starting points of lies and hypocrisy and doubt. The mind requires purification whenever anger is felt or a falsehood is told, whenever anything is said or done for the purpose of flattery, or anyone is deceived by the insincerity of a speech or an act. Says *The Voice of the Silence*:

Mind is like a mirror; it gathers dust while it reflects. It needs the gentle breezes of Soul-Wisdom to brush away the dust of our illusions. Seek, O Beginner, to blend thy Mind and Soul

OUR TRUE ENVIRONMENT

THE ENVIRONMENT of a town or city is a term which in past years meant an area unbuilt upon, thinly wooded, perhaps, inviting to pleasant walks, or endowed with smooth green turf for sports. Restful to the eye and the spirit both, such an oasis was rightly prized by city dwellers, assuring them as it did that there at least they were safe from the monsters of commercial traffic, as also from the harassing sounds of demolition and rebuilding, the latter usually for commercial purposes and gain.

From all these aspects the environment was an adjunct to be prized and carefully guarded. Now, alas, in how many cases has it vanished, taken over for purposes of "development." Up to a point that may be necessary, though it does not make it less regrettable, but a great deal of such "development" is solely for gain, no matter what disfigurement and pollution accompany it. The environment, at any rate, vanishes, and in that respect the town or city is the poorer. More, the lack of an outlet for activity and sport can breed vandalism. Day-long indoor work is stultifying, especially when it entails mechanism and noise.

Mr. Judge's travels, on account of the commitments of his legal profession, and, largely, his devoted service of the Theosophical Movement, took him to such notably built-up areas as New York, Chicago, and London. The environment of the last was certainly all wrong for him. Writing to a friend, he reports, "The magnetic atmosphere of London is horrible."¹ And of various New York offices in which, during several years, his magazine *The Path* was produced, he has this to say in one of his Editorials: "We began without an office or capital; it might be said that the business was carried on in a hat at first. Then it moved into a cell or den where no man could enter by the door if the occupant within did not rise to make room for the portal to swing!"² Another he calls "more commodious, as the quarters of a bee might seem so, by comparison, to an ant." Yet such trying environments never affected his editorship or hindered the production of that invaluable magazine, of which "the end," he wrote, "is truth and brotherhood; the watchwords, faith, courage, and constancy."³

¹ *Letters That Have Helped Me* (Am. ed.), p. 192.

² THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, November 1965, p. 18.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

The explanation is not far to seek. Mr. Judge lived and thought and wrote in quite another environment, a very different one. The environment that mattered to him was at all times that of the inner plane, for there his life was centred, and we who have been blessed adown the years with his teaching and guidance should ask ourselves if that can in any degree, however small, be said of *us*.

Let us pose the question forthwith. Have we any choice regarding our environment, not merely as regards our physical location but in the special sense that Mr. Judge can lead us to consider? Well, we cannot get away from it, that is certain, cannot exchange our present embodiment for another, but we do have choice regarding our use of it, and of the environment, *i.e.*, the circumstances it entails. Are we using these as we should, for our own and for others' benefit? Any natural environment is invariably made good use of by energetic walkers, artists, botanists and bird-watchers. We can follow their example—in a different way. For the word "environment" offers wide scope. It can apply to the times we live in, and, more intimately, to the mental "environment" in which we choose to dwell, an environment consisting of our interests and scale of values, our objects, purposes, and relationships. Or we can ignore the potential offered us, as do those who are indifferent to all that lies beyond the precincts of their own home, so that whatever developments the powers-that-be decide to embark upon are allowed to proceed unhindered.

Even thus, but with consequences much more serious, can it be with the Self in us and its own environment on the inner plane. That Self is active in "the field of earth-life," which Mr. Judge also calls "the field of operation," two metaphors which evoke thought of a spiritual environment conducive to growth and fruition. He carries it further with his reference to "the field assigned to us by Karma." Here, surely, is more than a hint that if some particular life-task seems to claim us and we accept it and do our best by it, not seeking to escape into a different environment, we do rightly.

Is our earthly environment, then, simply our Karma? Not Karma itself, says Mr. Judge. "Karma is the subtle power which works in that environment." And he proffers another small but

* *Vernal Blooms*, p. 256.

vital piece of advice if, unfortunately, our situation still displeases us—"Retreat within your own heart"⁵—which is equivalent to saying, "Make *that* your environment," an answer which he does in fact give to a troubled inquirer in one of his *Letters That Have Helped Me*.

There is much that is enlightening with regard to environment in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*, the point which Mr. Judge there makes particularly clear being that our environment and our Karma are as one. The former is the field of growth, the latter the seed already sown in it, but whether the crop we raise will be sound and healthy or meagre and imperfect depends on our attitude to the field, our care of it or our neglect. For, says Mr. Judge (and this is a statement to note carefully), "it is plain that that part of the environment which consists in the circumstances of life and personal surroundings is only an incident, and that the real environment to be understood and cared about is that in which Karma itself inheres in us."⁶

Has the word environment gained in meaning for us now? It is still a term of location, meaning quite simply our surroundings, but the fact that these include the intangible as well as the tangible is the point to note. Neglect of the latter or, worse, misuse of it is deplorable, but how far more serious our indifference to what may be occurring on the inner plane, which throughout our life-course is our true environment, is it not? Mr. Judge assuredly found it so. In his cramped little office in New York his environment was boundless. That it included India we know, but how much farther did it stretch in time and space? May not we learn from W.Q.J. that to be within the environment of the Theosophical Movement is to be assured not only of peace and security but of boundless opportunity for the development of our true self? As in the old unspoilt natural environment there was many a fair and health-giving path to tread, so in this other shall we find one even more certain to refresh and strengthen us, a path which, Mr. Judge assures us, "still stretches on and ever upward!"

⁵ *Letters*, p. 133.

⁶ *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21*, p. 3.

THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE

III

CONTENT AND SATISFACTION

[Reprinted from *The Path*, April 1887.—EDS.]

THE IDEAS these words represent lie at opposite poles of the circle. The former should stand for the philosophic calm, the minor peace, the comparative equability of Soul which the disciple has attained, while the latter implies the stagnation of Will, the death of aspiration and of all true progress.

When the first impetuous burst of feeling is over and time with her slowly disenchanting hand has begun to blur the outlines of the first vivid creation of thought, the knowledge gained seems to be the only possession left—the knowledge that there is a Path to tread and that no thought is worth thinking, and no word worth uttering that has not for its aim the one supreme object—the finding and the treading of this path that leads to deliverance from conditioned existence. But it is one thing to be possessed of this merely intellectual knowledge, and another to have the Will, the Courage and the Strength to find and to tread the path.

After much uncertain questioning and many anxious thoughts about the path, remembering always that it is "not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life," that "none alone can take the disciple more than one step onwards," and that "all steps are necessary to make up the ladder," a clue may yet be obtained from the lines in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, so beautifully rendered by Mr. Edwin Arnold:

Some few there be
By meditation find the Soul in Self
Self-schooled; and some by long philosophy
And holy life reach thither; some by works:
Some, never so attaining, hear of light
From other lips, and seize, and cleave to it
Worshipping; yea! and those—to teaching true —
Overpass Death!

Aye! "The aids to noble life are all within"—the path in-

deed lies there; in other words there are as many pathways to perfection as there are individual Souls.

There is no doubt a saturation point for Energy as there is for Truth in the individual—it may come in the form of lethargic weariness, or it may come in the form of satisfaction. To the old man, weary of life, the rest of death is sweet, but even though he may seem to have earned repose, such feeling still appertains to the quality of "Tamas," and should be resisted at any cost. The feeling of satisfaction is far more insidious—indeed it is the limit to any further possible advance placed by the man's own deepest sub-conscious self. Around us are to be seen men in all stages of moral growth who have attained to this satisfaction. Though the mere gratification of the senses and the social amenities of civilized countries may become to the majority of the votaries of pleasure a dull, meaningless treadmill, we yet see some to whom such life affords true satisfaction. They have reached their goal. And if we turn to the religious world, who does not know one or two of the many happy Souls who have attained the complete rest of satisfaction? Burning questions do not exist for them—they deem that they have solved the insolvable—they too have reached their goal. Nor does this sphere of objective life in which we dwell alone exemplify the working of this law of nature. The realm of the Devalokas, could we penetrate to those serene heights of being, would show us Souls who had attained to their saintly rest, who had reached their supreme satisfaction—rest and satisfaction, however, that must along with all conditioned existence come to an end some time. But to the god in the Devaloka as to the worldly epicure, the satisfaction he has reached is the evidence of the limit of advance—the advance made in the different cases being merely one of degree. Each has shown an incapacity for further endurance, whether of suffering or of joy, though in most cases it must be suffering, and their progress has therefore come to an end. But man has within him the potentiality of Godhead, not the Deva (god) in his realms of bliss, but the absolute unity with the divine Spirit of Life of which nature is a manifestation—the Being where all individuality is merged in one—the one ever-permanent state of Nirvana—the Peace of God that passeth all understanding.

When after long years of incessant goading, the goad within ceases to act, a minor peace is attained. It is a matter of wonder

to the disciple, who cannot understand why it should be so—he has had no hand in the slackening of the torture cords—he only knows that the strain is withdrawn, and that in the quietude his thought can range undisturbed. But with the removal of the pain, he seems to feel as if his search were less intense, and then follows the inexplicable paradox of the actual invocation of pain by one part of his nature, while the other part of him regards with fear and dismay any recurrence of it. Nevertheless this tranquillity of content continues. It goes without saying that this state includes the perfect content in all outward conditions. It may not have reached the transcendent light, where fear of any earthly catastrophe as well as desire for any earthly gain are alike non-existent. The disciple still remains a creature of habit, and imagination can easily conjure up situations where the equanimity would be entirely overthrown. But at least fresh desire for earthly objects has as a rule ceased to operate. All earthly life indeed stands before his mind in its true colour, as possessing value only so far as giving opportunity of recognizing its utter valuelessness, and of stretching forward to those things which have permanence and value, and the one all-absorbing desire that remains is that when the burden of earthly existence has again to be taken up, the progress gained in the last life may not be lost; that in the words of Plato we may so pass through the waters of Lethe as not to defile our souls with absolute oblivion.

In one of the early numbers of *The Theosophist* the aspirants for chelaship are warned against too soon undertaking a life for which they are not yet fitted, and all are advised to master first their most apparent weakness—their most besetting sins. The mastering of such, and the continuing to be the master, until relapse is constitutionally impossible (though this may imply a period which one life may not cover) would indeed seem to be for most the necessary entrance to the Path. While by this exercise of self-restraint the aspirant is acquiring the necessary Will, Strength and Courage for the treading of the Path when found, "new hands and new feet are being born within him" with which to scale the heights that lie beyond. The search for perfection may well find its simile in the scaling of some seemingly inaccessible peak. After journeying for long years through the dim forest on the plain, and falling into many a slough of despond, with torn garments and with bleeding feet

the climber has at last emerged. The forest lies below him and he sees the dim plain stretching to the horizon, but it is only the first plateau of the mountain he has scaled, and straight in front of him rises a seemingly perpendicular face of rock. Yet up this face of rock he has to go, for there can be no turning back when it is realized that what he has undertaken is the one thing worth doing.

But while insisting on the necessity of the gradual strengthening of the character by victory over all the faults of which the disciple is conscious, the common mistake of the religious must not here be made, and the conquering of any one sin or of all sins be mistaken for the goal, instead of a mere preparation for the treading of the path. Indeed—given a sufficiently ardent desire for the ultimate goal—all sins and weaknesses that stand between the disciple and the object of his desire will by that very fire of desire be annihilated in a flash of thought. One of the most important means of keeping alive and intensifying this desire is by keeping the goal constantly in view. And as it must have been by the failure of all earthly things to satisfy the heaven-born longings of the aspirant that first set his face towards the path, so the bringing back before the mind's eye the past experience of futile longings and disillusionings will best serve as impetus for the next transport of Heavenward flight.

What a man sets his whole heart on, that he will undoubtedly attain sooner or later. The man whose desires do not rise above the gratification of his physical senses gets what he desires, and that, as a rule, quickly. He whose life is concentrated in the emotional nature will in time achieve his *summum bonum* in the union of love he has dreamt of with another soul. He to whom the acquirement of knowledge is the one thing needful, must attain what he desires, and that in exact ratio with his energetic search for it, while the philanthropist whose aim is to do good to others—whether on the material or the moral plane, and who feels impelled to the so-called sacrifice of self in some definite course of action—though this lies far apart from the "killing out of all sense of separateness" which constitutes the true "self-sacrifice"—will doubtless also achieve his reward though in some less obvious way. But

Narrow

The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates

The life that wears, the spirit that creates

One object and *one* form and builds thereby
A sepulchre for its eternity.

We who recognize the finger of Maya in all these things, and whose search is for that intuitive Wisdom in which they are all embraced, but which transcends them all, does it not behoove us to lift our minds more and more continuously to the Supreme? And to free our thoughts more and more from all limitations? For, as it was the inability to fix the soul in worship on the attributeless Deity (though he had freed himself from *all* personal desires) that prevented the devotee from straightway attaining Nirvana, and instead landed him in the heavens of the Devaloka, where the conditions of bliss he had pictured to his mind as the Supreme were his inevitable reward, so should we even now begin to free our minds from all limited conceptions, and strain more and more towards the infinite.

I cannot better conclude than by quoting the last few lines in Faridud-din Attar's description of the seven stages in the road leading to union with the Divine Essence.

Last stage of all is the Valley of Annihilation of Self: of complete Poverty¹ — the seventh and supreme degree which no human words can describe. There is the great ocean of Divine Love. The world present and the world to come are but as figures reflected in it. And as it rises and falls, how can they remain? He who plunges in that sea and is lost in it finds perfect peace.

—PILGRIM

MOST FOLKS are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

¹This is the common term among the Muslim Mystics for the highest degree of the contemplative life.

PATTERNS FOR THE NEW ORDER

WORLD CONDITIONS today are topsy-turvy: The State should exist for the well-being of the citizen, but it enchains him. Nationalism, which should provide a basis of education and broaden man's sympathies for and appreciation of his fellow-men abroad, erects boundaries, physical, economic and psychological, which produce greed, jealousy, hatred and war. The doctor who heals the body earns more than the teacher who educates the mind; and, while the nature and habit of the mind are at least considered, the very existence of the Soul is ignored.

It is taken for granted that politico-economic problems are fundamental and causal, and therefore it is believed that human difficulties can be overcome and social diseases can be cured by legislation. "Practical" people do not realize that food, clothes, houses, etc., are not fundamental but secondary; are not in themselves the cause of human happiness and progress, but really effects of the unfoldment of soul-peace and expression of culture. Who dares to preach today, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"? The developing nations, hypnotized and glamoured by the Occident, try to copy it, accepting their Westernization as if there were no way out.

Politics, economics and sociology are believed to represent the realities of life, and in modern times they have been valued at too high a premium. The monks of Christendom and the fakirs of Asia, however, undervalue these realities—often they think them to be unreal and therefore valueless. Great Souls like Buddha and Plato, or Tsong-kha-pa and Marcus Aurelius, were truly spiritual, for they possessed the primary yogic virtues of *Viveka*-discrimination and of *Vairagya*-detachment. Because they were *Vairagis*, souls who had freed their minds from the lure of desires and passions, they were able to evaluate correctly the things of this world. Events and objects of the material universe were to them concrete idols of ideal images. The material world, historical events, were neither soulless shadows nor mere objective manifestations. The physical cosmos was valued as a reflection of the spiritual. Material objects were projections of spiritual ideas. Nations and races, states and kingdoms, were verities because of the spiritual reality within and behind them.

This view formed the very basis of the great philosophies of China, India and Greece—themselves but systems of thought rooted in what must have been once the universal Wisdom-Religion of the civilized world of the ancients. The restoration of this view would produce a mental revolution of the first magnitude. Materialism in science has received its deathblow, but materialism in philosophy is not an uncommon manifestation. Spiritual idealism is not yet clearly defined for practical application. Desire for religion—some kind of rational religion—is gathering force, which means desire for an idealistic philosophy which must give a new value, since those given by organized religions have proved false or been found wanting. Who can produce this revolution save intellectuals who are also idealists?

We are not among those who see as imminent the collapse of our civilization, as some prophets of doom have been predicting. The decay and disintegration of civilizations take time, just as do their rise and growth. But the world is facing today a crisis because of persistence in effete policies and programmes. These are now being abandoned, their substitutes are in the melting pot. The still, small voice of Spirit has not ceased its immortal action. The future is with the Idealist. He who ideates, creates. Ratiocination picks out the flaws, a very necessary task, and there is a marked manifestation of that faculty in these days. In a variety of ways people are taught how their civilization of machine-made plenty is breaking down. But not many are the creators and constructors of patterns for the new order.

The true reformer of the masses must ensoul himself with the pure spirit of idealism. Unless a sufficient number do that, the future of civilization will continue to be in danger.

Because of the general belief that adjustment from outside is the remedy, the real task of changing oneself within is grossly neglected. People shirk their own individual responsibility to life, to the state, to humanity, looking to governmental and other agencies to do something.

This era needs a few practical philosophers who will courageously strike at the root-vice of competition in every department; for this they need to break their own fetters—personal ambition, class prejudice, nationalistic patriotism and racial pride: purifying their own lives, they must act as priests of the

Religion of Universal Brotherhood—instructors and friends of people the world over.

But they themselves will need models and patterns after which they may shape themselves. Archetypal Leaders, called in the East Dhyani Buddhas, are taken as models and patterns by Manushya or Human Buddhas; every Bodhisattva in endeavouring to become a Buddha, it is said, copies the example of a previous Buddha. Our leaders cannot but fail if by groping in the dark they hope to muddle through into the light. They have to assimilate and embody wisdom and virtue, and one necessary way to self-training is contemplation on Ideal Leaders, Archetypal Leaders, and their Ideal and Archetypal Knowledge. In the annals of humanity such Leaders shine like stars of the first magnitude in the firmament. Such leaders were Krishna, the Spiritual Director; Rama, the Ideal King; Gautama, the Supreme Teacher; Confucius, the Inspired Codifier; Jesus, the Virile Reformer. In the words and examples of such Men the leader of tomorrow must seek guidance and nourishment.

THE Gnostic records contained the epitome of the chief scenes enacted during the mysteries of Initiation, since the memory of man; though even that was given out invariably under the garb of semi-allegory, whenever entrusted to parchment or paper. But the ancient Tanaïm, the Initiates from whom the wisdom of the Kabala (*oral tradition*) was obtained by the later Talmudists, had in their possession the secrets of the mystery language, and it is in this language that the Gospels were written. Thus while the three Synoptics display a combination of the pagan Greek and Jewish symbologies, the Revelation is written in the mystery language of the Tanaïm—the relic of Egyptian and Chaldean wisdom—and St. John's Gospel is purely Gnostic. He alone who has mastered the esoteric cypher of antiquity—the secret meaning of the numerals, a common property at one time of all nations—has the full proof of the genius which was displayed in the blending of the purely Egypto-Jewish, Old Testament allegories and names, and those of the pagan-Greek Gnostics, the most refined of all the mystics of that day.

—Lucifer, I. 493

Physics & Hermeticism
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Hermes Trismegistus, the legendary "founder of science and all useful arts," is said to have formulated the occult law: "As above, so below." In recent times, some scientists appear to be abandoning their materialistic principles and proposing theories in line with this Hermetic axiom.

Edgar A. Tooke's article in the September 1982 *Prediction* deals with this very principle of "Cosmic Interaction."

The phrase "As above, so below" [writes the author] refers to that system of correspondence which is a mysterious principle of the universe. It links like and like together, regardless of their separation in space and time. Microcosm reflects macrocosm. Earthly forms and affairs echo heavenly ones—and may even influence them. "Any local agitation," said Prof. A. N. Whitehead, "shakes the whole universe."

Dr. Fritjof Capra, of the University of California, tells us that the physicist "has become aware of the essential unity of all things and events.... The ultimate reality without is identical to ... the reality within." Francis Thompson said the same thing more poetically: "All things by immortal power, Near or far, Hiddenly to each other linked are...."

Some years ago, three physicists, Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen, proposed a revolutionary theory which was subsequently expressed mathematically by Dr. J. S. Bell of CERN laboratory in Geneva. The theory, known as the "EPR Paradox," claims that subatomic particles which have once been in contact continue to influence each other, even when they have moved apart....

The EPR Paradox remained just a theory for some years. Recently, however, Prof. David Bohm of Birbeck College, London, tested its truth in an ingenious experiment, subsequently repeated in other laboratories. The theory was confirmed. Particles do interact after separation....

There must be, Bohm said, a hidden "enfolded" universe where everything is connected in some unobserved way: an "implicate order" where things are not manifest and from which the world of our senses is just a projection. Matter, in fact, is constantly manifesting and unmanifesting between the two universes. As space, time, matter and energy are linked in one single whole in this hidden universe, no information has any distance to travel. It is only our senses which create the illusion of time and separation....

Such a concept, though audacious, is not altogether new; in fact it has been proposed by poets and philosophers throughout human history. The authors of the Hindu Vedanta observed: "The Truth is one; it is our ignorance that divides it." What is new is that a distinguished scientist has thought of it too as the only way out of a dilemma

If all things, having thus been once in contact, still interact, as Bell suggests—then *psychic* phenomena such as telepathy and psychokinesis, rejected by the old science because they involved "action at a distance," come into the same category as *physical* phenomena and should not, then, be the butt of scientific scepticism

We have distinguished allies. Dr. Evan Harris Walker is a ballistics expert and a quantum theorist; certainly no impractical dreamer. Yet he "sees space as inhabited by an unlimited number of interconnected conscious entities responsible for the detailed workings of the universe Consciousness," he says, "is everywhere."

A parallel occult view is expressed by Israel Regardie in *The Tree of Life*. He refers to "a certain hierarchy of gods, each having a specific task in the evolution and governance of the universe."

It is by no means uncommon now for physicists to postulate a universal consciousness. A theory is gaining ground among biologists which strongly infers the activity of conscious entities controlling the evolutionary processes. Dr. Rupert Sheldrake, the eminent Cambridge biologist, discusses it in his book *A New Science of Life*

Scientists, then, eminent in their various fields, are proposing theories with which no student of the occult could disagree; theories which confirm ancient knowledge. Psychologist Carl Jung calls his Synchronicity "a modern differentiation of the concept of correspondence, sympathy and harmony."

Physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer regards discoveries in atomic physics as "a refinement of old wisdom." Michel Gauquelin talks of the way science in the 20th century has "brought us closer to the intuition of the far-away past."

It is now generally accepted that life in the body is more than a heartbeat. The elaborate resuscitation techniques in use since the past two decades for restarting a stopped heart and keeping it going have created the potential for a heart that can function in a body whose brain is dead. As a consequence.

there is now a change in the definition of death, a shift toward the belief that stoppage of brain function, not of the heart, is equivalent to death of the body. Patients who suffer brain death have no spontaneous movements and no independent breathing; they can continue to exist only where respirators, intravenous nutrients, and skilled nursing and medical care are available. They are bodies without *any* measurable brain functions—in effect, living corpses.

In an article in the December issue of *The Sciences* (published by the New York Academy of Sciences), Peter McLaren Black, a neurosurgeon at the Massachusetts General Hospital and an assistant professor of neurosurgery at Harvard Medical School, explains the trend of recent medical thinking on the subject of what constitutes death, and concludes with these words:

Redefining death to mean death of the brain has forced a re-consideration of what it means to be alive and human. Having a heart that beats because a machine is delivering oxygen to the blood is not living. It is merely dependency sustained by a technology that has overstepped its role. The new definitions of brain death reflect what has been implicit in our thinking for many decades: it is the brain that co-ordinates and integrates those functions of humanness that constitute life. In this view, death of the brain is truly death.

There is still misconception about the process of death, and this is but inevitable in a society which believes the physical body animated by the life-principle to be all that there is to the man. Real death occurs at the instant when both the astral body, or life-principle, and the spirit part for ever with the corporeal body. Until this moment is reached, "the astral body may be caused, without miracle, to re-enter its former tabernacle, either by an effort of its own will, or under the resistless impulse of the will of one who knows the potencies of nature and how to direct them" (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 483-84). But once the spark is extinguished and life has fled for ever, the tabernacle is tenantless and by no manner of means can it be resuscitated.

The idea that animals panic before earthquakes goes back at least as far as recorded history. The details of this phenomenon of animal behaviour have been well studied by Chinese scientists

in particular, and a booklet published by the Seismological Office of Tientsin, in China, states: "It is easy and simple to use animals to predict earthquakes. . . . In general certain organs of animals acutely detect various underground changes before earthquakes. Both historical and recent surveys of large earthquakes prove that animals have precursory reactions."

Chinese biophysicists, biologists, geophysicists, chemists, and meteorologists, visiting the ruins of Tangshan and surrounding areas shortly after the severe earthquake that struck on July 28, 1976, collected reports of more than 2,093 cases of unusual animal behaviour that had preceded the earthquake by a brief period. Some of the observations involved goats that did not want to enter their stables, cats and dogs that hauled their young into the open, pigs that squealed strangely, excited chickens that fled from their roosts in the middle of the night, rats that left their holes, and fish that flitted about in the water.

Helmut Tributsch, professor of physical chemistry at the Free University of Berlin, gives these and other instances in an article, "A Seismic Sense" (*The Sciences*, December 1982), adapted from his book, *When the Snakes Awake: Animals and Earthquake Prediction*, and comments:

If all this is true, the phenomenon could help save thousands of human lives. So it is astonishing that the Western world knows of it only by hearsay and that many scientific observers would rather view the Chinese efforts with amusement than take them seriously. Such animal behaviour does not fit comfortably in the rational world of science, since it smacks of "premonitions" and, being a rare phenomenon, cannot be explained at will. The hypothesis has become too hot to handle without ever really having been tested.

Modern researchers, knowing next to nothing of the unseen realms in nature, are ever in search of a physical explanation of strange happenings. Occult Science, nevertheless, knows that there is a mysterious sympathy between all things in nature, and animals being psychically more sensitive than humans can feel the pulse of the Earth more clearly. The Astral Light is a reflector not only of past events but also of events to come, the causes for which are sufficiently well marked and made, and it is not surprising that animals with their instinctive clairvoyance,

of which there is sufficient evidence in other respects as well, can sense a natural calamity hours before it actually takes place.

The following reflections on "Thought-Waves" are culled from the November 1982 issue of *World Union*:

When the Buddha asked his followers to desist from harbouring bad or evil thoughts, he was not following any moral code, he was not concerned with any sin that they might commit. He laid his finger on a profound occult phenomenon that we usually miss noticing. For in thinking unfavourably of anyone, we are not merely soiling our own psychological state. The negative thought goes round. We may forget about it the next moment, but it goes on its career. It moves relentlessly towards the person thought of, enters into his atmosphere and impacts on him. Of course this happens only if the thought is powerful and there is sufficient will behind it. Also it must be strong enough not to be neutralized by other thoughts moving in the universal atmosphere. Luckily for everyone, ninety percent of our thoughts are weak, unshaped, and peter away after a while. But the fact remains that under proper conditions thoughts can and do travel to reach their objective.

This is so because thoughts in the proper sense are not casual half-formed movements of the mental energies. A well-formed thought has a regular form. It is a concretized entity constituted of several vibrations thrown up by the mental consciousness. It has also a hue, colour, which depends upon the nature of the thought: a thought of anger or violence will have a different colour from a thought of love or sympathy. Repetition of the same thought sends thought-waves which are not easily countered. Indeed, these forms and hues in the thought-world are not visible to physical sight; but they are patent to the subtle or clairvoyant vision.

This throws a great responsibility on every one of us to think only positive and constructive thoughts, if we mean well by the world.... The responsibility with which we, as decent citizens, conduct ourselves on the physical plane in full view of others must be carried on our mental plane also where we are not observed.
