

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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Publisher's Announcements

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT: Established November, 1930. Published monthly by Theosophy Company (India) Private Ltd., 40 New Marine Lines, Bombay 400 020, India.

This Magazine is an Independent Journal, unconnected with any theosophical society or other organization. The publishers assume full responsibility for all unsigned articles herein.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: No subscriptions are accepted for less than one year of 12 numbers, each beginning with the November issue. All subscriptions should be accompanied by the necessary remittance. Price, Rs. 30.00 £4.00, \$12.00 per annum, post free.

COMMUNICATIONS: Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with wide margins, and addressed to the Editors. Copies should in all cases be retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letters from subscribers and readers are welcomed, with criticisms, comments or questions on any subject treated in the Magazine. Questions on Theosophical philosophy and history will be replied to direct, or if of sufficient general interest, in the pages of the Magazine.

BEQUESTS AND DONATIONS: Gifts and legacies will be gladly received from those in sympathy with the objects of this Magazine, when such benefactions are unencumbered and unrestricted. Donors should make their gifts direct to THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA) PRIVATE LTD., which is an incorporated association legally empowered to receive such donations and bequests in furtherance of its objects. These objects are:

- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

Vol. 60, No. 3

January 1990

THE LEDGER OF LIFE

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, May 1969.]

KNOWLEDGE is not a commodity which can be poured from one container into another. In fact, unless the conditions of receptivity are all there in the pupil, the efforts of the teacher can bear no fruit. The dullard of the classroom, the man thrust against his inclination into a profession, the prisoner who after years of imbibing reform-education goes back to his warped ways of thought, are but a few examples which show that each human mind is an entity distinct from any other and defies all efforts at regimentation. Our great academies of knowledge have yet to find out how best they can ascertain the right type of knowledge to be presented to any particular human intelligence, as also the right time when it would have the chance of acceptance with the least possible reluctance. The parable of pouring new wine in old bottles is as true today as it was in the days of Jesus.

When from a consideration of educating people in mundane things we pass on to that of imparting ethics and metaphysics to the common run of men, the problem becomes all the more complex. Habits and inclinations manifesting in the present life may have been the result of indulgence over a series of incarnations. Lust, anger and greed may have gone unchecked in previous lives—may even have been allowed to run riot. These tendencies from the past may show themselves in larger or smaller measure in the form of avarice, selfishness, sex-indulgence, drug addiction, a fierce desire to retain a place and position, outbursts of unrestrained anger, laziness, debauchery and a complete disregard of the good of others. With all these as a heritage from a spoliated past, can such an one be assured of a rapid transformation into a higher and richer spiritual life which demands the development

of a will strong enough to enforce the treading of the toilsome paths of virtue, sacrifice and austerity?

With the overwhelming handicaps imposed by a 20th-century existence, the gulf to be bridged is too wide to promise an early success. But, because there is the desire for quick results, the aspirant opens himself up for exploitation by self-styled gurus. In the last century, Madame Blavatsky had to warn against schools established to make money out of persons who were gullible enough to think that spirituality could be acquired at the cost price of a book. The last century saw others still who borrowed their teachings from old books on mysticism, without themselves understanding the hidden meaning, and who veiled their ignorance under a jargon of kabalistic words and phrases. There were still others who undertook to give personal tuitions and promised salvation by what they termed an accelerated course in mysticism, yoga, spirituality, etc. Our 20th century is experiencing a new outgrowth of the same type of pseudo-teachers. Revolting against the absence of contentment even after the accomplishment of their desires, there are many who yearn for liberation from the round of craving and surfeit. It is these who fall easy prey to charlatans and frauds. Coming in contact with one of these, the deluded student seems at first to make some progress; his own urge for improvement assures that much advance. But the memories of past misdeeds, the force of a mortal craving too deeply sunk for easy eradication, drive him away from a life of austerity. The spurious teaching cannot give him the corrective for his condition, and this leaves him lone and forlorn amid the wreck and debris of his dreams. When he sees the hollowness of the promises for redemption by which he was lured, he may turn his face away from the light, and, abandoning the strenuous paths of virtue, seek his solace on the road which is high and wide but which leads to destruction. The karma of him who by premature revelation and hasty promises brings about the degradation of a soul is very heavy indeed!

If there exists no royal highway to spirituality, what can a soul which is caught up in the mire of sins and failings expect? For those who really desire to reform themselves and who are prepared to take the iron bit in their own mouths, Theosophy has a definite system to offer. Only, instead of the mock-up of a Guru, it presents rules and practices which at the beginner's level replace the Guru till such time as progress justifies a direct contact with the Teacher to whose bidding he will ultimately have to dedicate his life. Sitting for meditation is a practice very dangerous

indeed for the average person who is a mixture of virtue and vice, tolerance and bigotry, philanthropy and avarice. Theosophy does not say that a person who has these conflicting qualities is barred for life. In sober fact, Theosophy exists for such as he, so that he may read and learn, practise and reform. Theosophy is for the artist and the trader, the poet and the politician. The farmer, the priest, the renegade and the one deficient in morals, the judge and the prisoner, the butcher and the soldier—all without exception can quench their thirst at this fountain, and in the measure of their aspirations will be the measure of their opportunity. The sacrifice by means of knowledge must serve all, and the sweat and the toil stand rewarded a hundredfold if even one erring soul turns his steps homewards. The return of the prodigal soul to the bosom of his Father is always a moment of rejoicing.

It is a truism that vice fattens by what it feeds upon. Therefore, in all ages, the Teachers have advocated the eschewing of vice and the adopting of virtue. He who is in the toils of vice knows this, but the knowledge brings him no freedom. Seemingly against his will and with a catch in his throat he succumbs to the foul and now the nauseating embrace. Even to such who resolve and fail and move from the crest of success to the dark gloom of failure and depression the philosophy offers a remedy. The medicine offered is potent, but like all medicines has to be administered, while the intervals between doses have to be scrupulously observed lest a setback supervene. The rules on the observance of which a transformation can be achieved are not the handiwork of any one person or school. They have come to us from a remote past and have been tried out and proved among civilizations which no longer exist. The dust of centuries has buried their cities and treasures and some lie beneath the silt of ages. Yet, the essence of their experience has never been lost and is now a part of the tradition which has come to be called the Wisdom-Religion or the perennial Philosophy. The rules which are there for anyone to follow are found scattered over Theosophical literature. Some of these are treated of in this article.

The modern athlete confines his practice to things physical. He is in fact trying to bring the animal-man to a pitch of perfection along a particular line of effort. He is doing to himself what the circus trainer does to his performing lions when he trains them to jump through hoops of fire. The lion does not have faith in the efficacy of the training. The faith lies in the trainer. So, too, the faith of the neophyte is not to be placed on any other thing save his rules, which for him take the position of a trainer. One desir-

ing to shine in athletics enters upon a rigid course of discipline which embraces set hours, wholesome food, a deliberate avoiding of all worries, and practice, practice, and still more practice. The aspirant to the higher life has to undertake all this and in addition has to observe strictly the principles of ethics for the purification of his mind. He has to be a fanatic (if such a word can have any application to him) and engage in practice, practice, practice.

Now, although in general any soul-practice must sooner or later be continuous for the waking hours of the individual (something different from physical exercises which, through excess of effort, may build up stresses and strains), he has to set apart two periods of time which must remain sacrosanct and which no circumstance should be allowed to alter, modify, postpone or abandon. One such period should be set aside so that the student can review at the closing of his day all that he has done, thought, spoken, felt or reacted to, during his waking hours. The other period should precede the hours of waking activity and be spent in planning the actions and the control, the taking and the letting go of the offerings of the day. This second exercise is really the projection of the soul-vision upon the person's immediate futurity.

It is difficult to sit in judgment on an event in which one has a stake of one's own; for, to do justice, the scales have to be held by a steady hand. It becomes doubly difficult when one has become personally involved. Our prejudices are not easily removed and often misguide us by assuming pleasant and harmless appearances. To be able to judge his own daily walk in life, the aspirant has to shed his own personal inclinations at least for the time during which he mounts the judgment seat. He has to maintain a condition of equanimity which, for the time at least, can remain unaffected by the panorama of earthly oscillations. In short, he has to be above himself—in all senses of that term. Before he can call upon the pageant of the day which is now past to appear before him for a critical review, he has to free his consciousness from all attachments and ally himself, for however short a time, with the highest that he is capable of reaching. It is only from this vantage point that a dispassionate survey becomes possible.

It is true that to reach this stage is not easy—that, in fact, it requires a sustained effort over the months and years. But the effort has to be made. There are no short cuts for attaining this stage of human equilibrium. The encouraging fact is that, if persisted in, the longed-for result is sure to manifest. This exercise has to be undergone tenaciously at the beginning and the close of each day. Its regularity cannot be broken lest considerable time

be wasted in regaining lost ground. Even in the early stages of effort, there does come a moment when the self stands detached and views its own struggles in the coils of desire with the calmness which comes from detachment. Once this stage is reached, the aspirant has added fact to faith and pushes on more diligently to expand that moment into minutes and hours.

But, during the time that this consummation is awaited, how should he plan his review if he finds that, despite his best endeavours, even for the hour or half-hour chosen, he remains imprisoned in a sheathing of desires? In such case—and this phase may last a long, long time during which the voices of flesh may suddenly intrude on the effort and drown all other sounds—the trainee has to fall back, both in his review and his planning periods, on the *Paramitas* given in *The Voice of the Silence*. If to understand the *Paramitas* it takes a long time, then the toiling student can still fall back upon the norms provided in the ten Virtues which the divine Manu makes incumbent as a duty. These are: "Resignation; the act of rendering good for evil; temperance; probity; purity; repression of the physical senses; knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; that of the Superior Soul (Spirit); worship of truth; abstinence from anger." The student must so familiarize himself with these that their practice becomes automatic and almost instantaneous. When this is achieved, the review which closes the day and the progress chart which opens it can be planned, not mechanistically, but with enthusiasm.

At the end of each day, the one who has toiled to make or mar that day has to seclude himself from all contacts. He has to try to withdraw within himself by the adoration of That within him which is the highest. In its presence he stands exalted. In this state, desires touch him not. Emotions run not through his system. He stands aloof. He is for the moment higher than his own puny self. He is the arbiter of his own actions, and therefore in the act of judging brings joy or punishment to himself. He stands as a king, unshaken, just, honourable, who calls for the report of deeds done by his ambassador (his lesser self) during the last waking period. And so he sits sifting the chaff from the corn. He becomes the judge, the admonisher, the friend. In his company the lower self is not frightened by lapses, is not alarmed at failures. After the review, the little self is serene; it basks in the sublimity of its Higher Self. And so, removed from earthly taints, it enters the sleep that enriches and rewards the just.

Till the close proximity with the highest can, however, be achieved at will by the questing soul, the lesser exercise, the

putting of the act in juxtaposition with the virtue applicable to the event, has to be practised. It is at this initial stage of endeavour that the greatest caution has to be exercised. If during the review the aspirant gets lost in his memories and allows his desires, emotions and passions to be rekindled at their smouldering embers, then the exercise has failed for the time being and must be stopped on the instant. It is, however, well to remember that just as a craving spreads over a person, takes possession of his citadel and forces him to obey its bidding, so too can calmness be invited to enter and take over possession, thus driving out the money-changers and the brooders of vice from inside the tabernacle. Once the equanimity is established, each word, deed and thought must be invited to make its obeisance to the dispassionate soul, must be picked up, scrutinized and laid aside. The pageant of the day thus passes in review—the debasement and the glory, the stumblings and the steadfastness—and the reviewer, calm, compassionate, and with all understanding, casts up credits and debits on the ledger pages for the day. When this exercise has been kept up over the months and years, the aspirant begins to have some idea of his own strength and weakness. He begins to know himself. This review is, however, only half of the work done. The more important work follows upon it immediately. Suppose he were given the privilege to live the day over again—how would he act with the knowledge now his? Can he import into the day a more benign and therefore a more potent force for good? None but he can answer the question.

The retrospective review at the close of the day is followed by the prospective review on waking up. Here, the person projects his vision upon the future and uses to some considerable extent the plastic potency of his imagination. Unconsciously, he is using one or the other of the great *shaktis*, but the realization of this will come much later when he sees that he is in fact moulding events according as his Highest has shaped them during the prospective vision. Here, too, he has to ally himself to the Highest within him, and if he cannot do this within a certain length of time, he has to fall back upon the *Paramitas* or Virtues, making them for the time being energies which can replace the guidance of his own true Self. The beginner has to understand that sentient nature is moving ever consciously to its predetermined goal, while Karma works increasingly to restore broken harmony. Both nature in its variegated aspects and Karma act in a manner which violates no *Paramita* nor any virtue. The one presiding over the review has to know this and be alert enough to seize the lesson

which the visitations of Karma provide for him. Thus, when, because of Karma, painful effects have supervened, the review will show how the message of that pain proclaims the deficiency of a virtue either in the past or in the present. Since Karma is the agent which restores equilibrium, the review and the preview must be deep enough to devise ways by which the restoration can be quickened. The individual has to learn to take his own medicine. It is especially through the prospective vision which opens the day that the ideas of morality, virtue and philanthropy can be woven into the fabric of coming events. There has to be a willed deliberation, a planned flowing of the selective energy which would come into operation automatically and smoothly at the time already foreseen and in the circumstances which were fashioned and created in the benign mind of the aspirant. It is a pre-selection of powers and forces; it is a transmutation of energy into spiritual dynamics effected under the best conditions possible. It is also a training of these powers on definite objectives. The force thus generated and kept in reserve comes into operation on the arising of the eventuality which has already been envisaged, and since the force was generated in a laboratory higher than the physical brain, it is by that fact increased a hundredfold.

No aspirant to the Higher Wisdom, no neophyte in the struggle between the living and the dead, can escape these steps. Without these rungs, the ladder cannot be climbed. Have our seekers after spiritual exaltation the strength to adopt these exercises and make them an inalienable part of their lives? If they have, then more will be given to them. When the pupil is ready, the teacher is ready also. To him that has, more shall be given.

As I got older I became aware of the folly of this perpetual reaching after the future, and of drawing from tomorrow, and from tomorrow only, a reason for the joyfulness of today. I learned, when alas! it was almost too late, to live each moment as it passed over my head.

—WILLIAM HALE WHITE

THE NEW AGE

OF all known facts about our present-day world, the most obvious is that we are living in a period of change. No one will deny this. The word "crisis" is sometimes used to describe the condition in which we find ourselves.

Theosophy, the ancient Wisdom-Religion, teaches that there is knowledge to be had regarding all matters and that man is not without friends who can guide him in periods of transition and bewilderment. The Theosophical conception of how humanity is constituted differs very greatly from that current in non-Theosophical circles. It is ordinarily supposed that our race developed from savagery, gradually groping its way to knowledge and civilization, and that it will have to continue its toilsome journey in the same hit-or-miss fashion without the aid of map or compass. Occult history tells quite another story. According to the archaic records and the view of "those who know," humanity is an organic whole built on the same pattern as what we call "the family," consisting of parents, elder brothers and sisters and younger ones, all being of various degrees of development.

Fathers and mothers possess knowledge which their children can only gradually obtain. They learned what they know in previous periods in their lives, before their boys and girls were born or perhaps even thought of. They teach the younger generation and provide for their lives a setting based on the experiences they themselves have garnered. After a time the older and more capable children share the work of educating the younger ones, and so the chain by which the accumulated wisdom is passed on from one generation to another gradually lengthens. And, just as the individual develops according to a certain pattern, going through regular, known stages of growth and decay, so humanity experiences childhood, youth, maturity and old age, acquiring meanwhile faculties appropriate to each condition. In what order, and approximately when, the signs of unfoldment will become apparent in an individual can be foretold, because the process is a universal one; so also can the successive steps that humanity will take on the road to perfection be foretold by those who know its nature—by those elder brothers, who are far ahead of the average man on that road, and who have undertaken to keep constantly available to their younger brothers the fundamental laws of life and progress. Among these elder brothers must be reckoned the nameless writers of some of the ancient Scriptures and such world-honoured teachers as Krishna, Buddha, Jesus

and many others.

It is known by them, for instance, that the time has come for the beginning of the development in man of a new aspect of his being. He spent millions of years developing his emotional nature and again millions training his human intelligence; now the time has come to unfold a so-far-latent faculty that it may gradually become an active potency available for conscious use. What is this faculty? Theosophy calls it Buddhi.

An equivalent for this word in English, or in fact in any modern language, is hard to find. Intuition, discrimination, heart-understanding, direct knowledge—all these are suggestive terms, but no one of them alone suffices to explain Buddhi, nor do even all of them together explain it fully. No doubt, as this principle or faculty becomes more active in the race, modern people will think out expressions to cover the new experiences through which they go. Or they may adopt the terms introduced by the Theosophical Movement and give them such wide currency that they will no longer seem strange and foreign. Meanwhile we can look out for indications of the new quality, remembering that its fundamental characteristic is the recognition of the oneness of the world and the spiritual brotherhood of all human beings.

This recognition is based on knowledge. Referring to the kind of knowledge needed—for it is not a matter of ordinary “learning”—Mr. Judge wrote:

The power to know does not come from book-study nor from mere philosophy, but mostly from the actual practice of altruism in deed, word, and thought; for that practice purifies the covers of the soul and permits that light to shine down into the brain-mind. As the brain-mind is the receiver in the waking state, it has to be purified from sense-perception, and the truest way to do this is by combining philosophy with the highest outward and inward virtue. . . . We should add the study of the works of those who in the past have trodden this path and found out what is the real and what is not. They say the Self is the only reality. The brain must be given larger views of life, as by the study of the doctrine of re-incarnation, since that gives a limitless field to the possibilities in store. We must not only be unselfish, but must do all the duties that Karma has given us, and thus intuition will point out the road of duty and the true path of life. (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 172-3)

It may be thought strange that the time has come for Buddhi to unfold when all around us in the world we find unbrotherliness, selfishness, greed, deception, war and planning for war; yet such

is the teaching. Further, we must remember that it is ever the darkest hour that comes just before dawn; that when peril is greatest, help is nearest. In the Fourth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna says:

I produce myself among creatures, O son of Bharata, whenever there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world; and thus I incarnate from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked, and the establishment of righteousness.

This is corroborated by the common experience that improvement is often preceded by conditions which are apparently of the worst. Evil must come to the surface before it can be dealt with; the crisis heralds the turn in the right direction. Humanity has arrived at a point in its evolution where, as H.P.B. states (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 110), it is so selfish and vicious that civilized nations have succeeded in making of selfishness an ethical characteristic, and of vice an art. But, though the animal or physical impedes the higher nature from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution, still "Spirituality is on its ascending arc" and the spiritual aspect of man's nature is due to gain in power over the fiercely self-seeking lower man. In view of this it would be bringing unnecessary suffering on ourselves to be discouraged by outer appearances. Let us rather pin our faith on the wisdom of the ages and work for the realization of the better times that Nature has in store for us.

Besides, even a slight acquaintance with what is going on in the world proves that there are rifts in the clouds. A united world, human solidarity, international cultural exchanges, the abolition of war—the urgency of these questions is much more talked about both in private and in public than it was some decades ago. "Mind-painted pictures" must precede action. The mind must first fashion the article to be made before the hands can deal successfully with the material. Hence evolution is from within outwards. Born on the plane of thought, ideas finally incarnate in the visible, tangible world. So the "talk," if accompanied by an earnest effort to build an ideal, is not wasted and the struggles of those who try to define to themselves and to others what is needed to save the world from that which is felt to be its impending doom, are indeed the harbingers of the New Age which some few have been expecting vaguely for a long time.

Another significant point in this connection: public interest is distinctly veering away from organizations to individuals as

instruments of world improvement, and looking to the personal responsibility of adult souls as the effective means of reform. The age of Humanity's immaturity is giving place gradually to the cyclic forces that will enable men and women to put away childish things and play an adult's part in human affairs. As Mr. Judge said years ago:

We have, each one of us, to make ourselves a centre of light; a picture gallery from which shall be projected on the astral light such scenes, such influences, such thoughts, as may influence many for good. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Vol. II, No. 2)

In *The Path* for March 1887, Vol. I, p. 355, that great Theosophist wrote words the cogency of which becomes more and more evident as years go by:

A new age is not far away. The huge, unwieldy flower of the 19th-century civilization has almost fully bloomed, and preparation must be made for the wonderful new flower which is to rise from the old. . . . All our devotion to Aryan literature and philosophy arises from a belief that the millions of minds who have trodden weary steps before ours, left a path which might be followed with profit, yet with discrimination. For we implicitly believe that in this curve of the cycle, the final authority is *the man himself*. In former times the disclosed Vedas, and later, the teachings of the great Buddha, were the right authority, in whose authoritative teachings and enjoined practices were found the necessary steps to raise Man to an upright position. But the grand clock of the Universe points to another hour, and now Man must seize the key in his hands and himself—as a whole—open the gate. Hitherto he has depended upon the great souls whose hands have stayed impending doom. Let us then together enter upon another year, fearing nothing, assured of strength in the Union of Brotherhood. . . . (THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, November 1965)

HE who knows not the common things of life is a beast among men. He who knows only the common things of life is a man among beasts. He who knows all that can be learned by diligent enquiry is a god among men.

—PLATO

OUR CONVICTIONS

SHALL WE ASSERT THEM?

[The following article, reprinted from *The Path* for September 1893, contains an important pronouncement about what students should do to sustain the unsectarian position of Theosophical organizations. Mr. Judge wrote in his *Letters That Have Helped Me*: "I care everything for the unsectarianism that H.P.B. died to start." The greatest contribution to freedom of thought in the 19th century came through the efforts of the Theosophical Movement inaugurated by H.P.B. in the city of New York in 1875. Because she always insisted on freedom of opinion, people have often thought that students of Theosophy have no definite views on philosophical or ethical subjects. From time to time this particular problem has been faced by the members of different Theosophical organizations.

In the establishment of the United Lodge of Theosophists by Robert Crosbie in 1909, an important step was taken to clarify the position. An Associate of the United Lodge of Theosophists is free to hold his own views and to perform his duties as an Associate unhampered and unmolested. But this implies that he must also allow complete freedom of opinion and expression to every other Associate. The long step taken in advance by Robert Crosbie, to whom we owe the document called the U.L.T. Declaration, is embodied in the words of that Declaration:

"The work it [U.L.T.] has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood."

This naturally calls on the student to confine his task as a U.L.T. Associate to the promulgation of genuine Theosophy, as recorded in the teachings of two of the original founders, H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge. U.L.T. is concerned more with the spread of the teachings than with mundane matters of Theosophical significance. While U.L.T. gives complete freedom of thought and opinion to all, including its Associates, it confines its own task to the spreading of the genuine teachings of pure Theosophy. In reading Mr. Judge's article, "Our Convictions," reprinted below, this particular

position of U.L.T. should be taken into account.—EDS.]

TO THE PATH:—Please resolve a doubt. Are members of the T.S. required to become flabby in character upon entering the Society, and to give up their convictions for fear of a vague future dogmatism? I ask this because in some of our magazines I have seen objections raised to a free promulgation of one's ideas on such subjects, for instance, as the Adepts or Masters, Reincarnation, Karma, and so on. If we are so required, then I would ask why we have a free platform in the T.S., and when were the statements made in the President's inaugural address of 1875 withdrawn?

Fraternally,

S. F. HECHT

Admitted to the T.S. May 5, 1892

This question seems easy to answer. It is presumed that the correspondent refers to an objection to my plainly stating either in our journals or in any other way my own personal beliefs. It is evident that S.F.H. is thinking of the objection made in the *Theosophist* by N.D.K. to my plainly saying I believe in the existence of the Masters of whom so often H.P.B. spoke. N.D.K., taking up a letter of mine, quoted this sentence: "And when we come to examine the work and the foundation of the T.S. and its policy, I find it perfectly proper for me to assert, as I do in accordance with my own knowledge and belief, that our true progress lies in our fidelity to Masters as ideals and facts." S.F.H. is perplexed because N.D.K. seemed to object to that, but the perplexity need not exist nor need we become flabby in our convictions.

For, as will be seen by reading, and not straining, the sentence quoted, the "policy" of the T.S. referred to by me therein is that of leaving everyone quite free to express his views on all these points. Although N.D.K. would appear to think I meant that the T.S. policy was for it to make these declarations, it is easy to see by consulting the constitution that its policy is the opposite. The policy is freedom to members and perfect neutrality on the part of the T.S. To have any other, or to say that merely because one is in a society such as ours, or is an officer, he cannot give his own opinions so long as he accords the same privilege to another, would be a monstrous thing, contrary to our constitution and quite against a long history in which, from H.P.B. and Col. Olcott down, all members have had perfect freedom of expression. So S.F.H. need have no fear; our policy of freedom is not altered; all have a right to their convictions; and it is certain that if anyone

is becoming flabby the oldest members of the T.S. will at once adjure him to strengthen his sincere convictions and not hesitate to give them expression, always allowing to everyone else the same liberty of thought and speech. And to aid our correspondent we will give some further light if possible.

Let us take first H. P. Blavatsky. She began in the T.S., with its free platform, immediately to preach and promulgate her own personal view that the Masters were facts, and facts of very great magnitude, and this she did and continued against the most violent opposition and the fiercest ridicule. She also proclaimed unequivocally, as Cagliostro did many years before in Paris, a belief in the occult machinery of the Cosmos with all that that implies. Moreover, in the name of the Master she did very wonderful phenomena, which one of the same Masters has said, as published by Mr. Sinnett, have puzzled men for a good part of a century. And while thus freely expressing her own views she allowed the same freedom to all others, and was herself the agent for the taking into the T.S. of many who did not believe as she did but who often scouted at her convictions. Then, further, she proclaimed a system of philosophy with all her ardour just as she had a right to do, and merely laid it before the world within the pale of a free Society, which is not compelled to accept but whose members fortunately do in great part. And in saying they are thus fortunate I am now giving expression to my own views.

Next consider the career of Col. H. S. Olcott since he began the work of the T.S., President then as he now is, and as we hope he will remain. He is our highest officer. Yet he has not failed to assert his undying belief in the Adepts and Masters universal and particular. It is a good example for those who have the same belief. It was done in the T.S., not as officer but as man, as individual member, and it would be a poor sort of constitution that would have prevented him. Long ago he said they existed and tried to prove it. He worked with the Psychical Research Society of London to prove to them the existence of the Masters and the truth of the doctrines given out by them as to occult phenomena. That may have appeared to be disastrous, but it was done with good intent and still under the constitution, for if against the constitution why was he not charged and put out? Because it was within his right. And in various places since then he has made the same assertions. At the Convention of the European Section in 1891 he publicly said on the platform that the Masters existed and that he had seen them himself, and spoke also of more than the two most spoken of in the T.S. and its

literature. Then last, and now, he repeats it all with greater detail and particularity in his own series of Diary Leaves in his own magazine which has always been called the only organ the T.S. has. For, mark you, the *Path* and *Lucifer* have never been made the organs of the T.S.; nor, indeed, should they be.

Mr. Sinnett stands out in high relief as one who has in public and private, within the T.S., asserted with all his strength his belief in the Masters' existence and tried his very best to prove his assertion. His books, his pamphlets, his speeches in public and private, all show this. Was he wrong, was he not fully justified under the constitution? And has he not gone even further and taken up the cudgels in battle for his views?

It very clearly appears, then, that under the Constitution we all have the fullest right to proclaim our views, not once but as often as we see fit, so long as we give others the same right and do not say that the T.S. as a body is responsible, for it is not. This is the beauty of our law. We are free just as the United States constitution is free and proclaims for no creed and no sort of god but leaves all men to say what they please, if they do not interfere with the liberty of others.

Entry into our ranks in no way infers a becoming flabby, by which it is supposed the querent means a fear of saying what each individual believes, because this is a brotherhood free from dogmatism. Earnestness and sincerity are not dogmatism at all, and it is undeniable that a reform in philosophy and thought such as ours could never prosper if our members were to grow flabby in this or in any other particular. Then again, if some of us have found that for us the Masters exist, it is our human universal duty to tell others, so that they may find out also or be able to show by good substantial proof that we are wrong. When they shall have proved this to our satisfaction it will be time for us to disband, for then will have fallen the theory of the possible spiritual evolution of man, and we can then leave the field to the scientific materialists who not long ago declared the possibility of that high evolution. But as this is a *reductio ad absurdum* we may all continue our preachments of views, some for and some against man's great inheritance. The *Path* will continue to say its editor believes in humanity and in the great Masters of Wisdom.

—WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

HOW SHOULD WE TREAT OTHERS?

EARNEST students of Theosophy no doubt all wish to lend a helping hand in the great task of building the glorious future of which Mr. Judge has spoken. All the work of spreading broadcast the teachings of Theosophy is done with this in view, consciously or unconsciously. But there is an even more difficult and more effective aspect of the work needed, namely, self-reform, the application of the teachings in the student's own life.

All propaganda is mere words, words, words, unless those who disseminate the ideas and ideals are not only speaking but to some extent applying the ethical aspect of the wisdom they wish to impart. We cannot understand the philosophy unless we "live the life." Soul-solidarity must be developed by each with his fellow workers and, finally, "his thoughts must be fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being. It [the heart] must be full of a feeling of its non-separateness from the rest of beings as from all Nature," otherwise no success can follow.

If it is indispensable for success in our work to develop this Light of the Heart, this appreciation of all that lives, it would be an act of wisdom to take seriously the advice to perpetuate the good and not the evil and, by way of making a beginning, to get over the almost universal habit of faultfinding—particularly finding fault with the people with whom we come in contact.

That faultfinding is a form of perpetuating evil is very clear from our teachings. To quote one striking passage from the writings of W.Q.J.:

Each human being has his own elementals that partake of his nature and his thoughts. If you fix your thoughts upon a person in anger, or in critical, uncharitable judgment, you attract to yourself a number of those elementals that belong to, generate, and are generated by this particular fault or failing, and they precipitate themselves upon you. Hence, through the injustice of your merely human condemnation, which cannot know the source and causes of the action of another, you at once become a sharer of his fault or failing by your own act, and the spirit expelled returns "with seven devils worse than himself." This is the origin of the popular saying that "curses, like chickens, come home to roost."

This statement is well known to students, and yet so strong is the force of habit and the strange illusion that by picking holes we shall mend matters, that we continue in our evil ways.

Evil they are and the process described by Mr. Judge is only

the beginning of a chain of misery. The critic now becomes a centre of infection to other critically disposed persons and, furthermore, having allowed himself to develop the very weaknesses he condemned in a fellow being, he has increased the irritation, scorn, dislike, self-complacency and whatnot with which that person's fault inspired him. Result? The relationship between the two grows less and less akin to that soul-solidarity which is essential in our work. Those of us who feel that we must take the above facts seriously and make a stand, will take to heart the quaintly worded Buddhist injunction:

Just as, Bhikkhus, when one's turban is burning, for the extinguishing thereof one must act quickly and with intelligence, even so for the abandoning of those wicked, unprofitable states, which cause turmoil in the mind, one must act quickly and with intelligence.

How shall we set about ridding ourselves of this habit of fault-finding? Not merely by ignoring what we dislike, as this will probably lead to indifference; not by denying our honest opinion—if it is really honest and as fair as we can make it—for this would be apt to lead to hypocrisy. No, we must follow the rule to think deliberately about the opposite of that which we do not choose to perpetuate. So, instead of gazing with the mind's eye at the weaknesses, failures and faults of people, we should look for and energize by our attention the fine qualities, strengths and attractive aspects of those same people, however few these may be in our opinion. This clears the air for ourselves and is one form of that *being* harmonious which Mr. Judge recommends as against the *trying to force* harmony which he rejects as useless.

This is the way of the Masters too. We are told:

...when mortal eyes pick out only the weaknesses and limitations of what has been done, the Masters' vision brightens up what has been actually achieved and the resulting radiation from the achievement covers up the spots which look dark and empty to mortal sight.

BE ever soft and pliable like a reed, not hard and unbending like a cedar.

—Talmud

THOUGHTS ON THE DIVINE SONG

THE *Bhagavad-Gita* (Divine Song) is one of those rare books of Esoteric Wisdom, the reading of which entails the deciphering of a profound cipher. This cipher-language is said to have been "used systematically by the adepts in life and knowledge, who, seemingly giving out their deepest wisdom, hide in the very words which frame it its actual mystery." This is obviously the reason why the message of the *Gita* has been differently interpreted by different minds. Modern thinkers and writers on the *Gita* have looked upon it as containing the highest code of conduct and duty, the loftiest teaching of devotion and faith, and the grandest text of Esoteric Wisdom for peace of mind and salvation of soul. Its philosophy is the quintessence of that of the Upanishads. The idea is contained in the beautiful metaphor used in the Meditation on the Divine Song:

The Upanishads are the Cows; Sri Krishna is the Milkman; Partha [Arjuna] is the Calf; the righteous drink the Milk; the Milk yielded is the *Gita* which is verily nectar.

Therefore it is recognized and used as a universal Theosophical book.

What has the *Mahabharata*, of which the *Gita* is an integral part, to say about its origin? The *Adi Parva*, which gives a summary of the incidents, makes this reference: "The great sage imparted a heavenly vision to Sanjaya." This is but an echo of Sanjaya's own words at the end of the *Gita*: "I learnt this supreme esoteric wisdom by the favour of Vyasa."

These passages refer to the Gift of Vision that Sanjaya received from Vyasa, which enabled him to narrate the story of the Great War to the blind King. It is recorded that Vyasa offered Divine Sight to the blind Dhritarashtra, but the monarch refused, shrinking from beholding the slaughter of his own kith and kin. Then the gift was made to Sanjaya who, using the Divine Eye, passed on what he saw and heard for the benefit of humanity, as blind and as fearful as Dhritarashtra; thus the *Gita* came to be recited. Of all the characters, gloriously good or wilfully wicked, this receiver of Divine Sight has the appellation which means—Completely Victorious: *Sanjaya*.

What does this giving of Divine Sight to Sanjaya signify? If Sanjaya had not narrated what he heard or saw, we would not have had the Song of Life, and so we are indebted to the Mediator who was initiated into the Mystery of Kurukshetra. Without a

recorder and a narrator who faithfully and accurately *repeats* the truths of the Life Celestial, mortals would have little chance of finding the esoteric truths about that life.

Turning to Arjuna: The same phenomenon is performed by Krishna for the devoted disciple, Arjuna, which enables the latter to see the Universal Form (*Vishwa Rupa*) of the Supreme Spirit. But for him, Krishna would not have discoursed and Sanjaya could not have repeated the life-giving words. The *Adi Parva* sums up the telling:

Vasudeva, the Supreme Intelligence, dispelled the delusive doubt of Partha by arguments which revealed the Way of Deliverance.

The position of Arjuna must be noted: He has seen, however gropingly, the Path of Righteousness and has chosen Krishna as his Guide and Guru. The points which are stressed in this citation are the *Kasmala*, the delusive doubt that clouded the mind of Arjuna, seized by sorrow and suffering, though seated in his war-chariot; the Revelation of the entire Cosmos by the Lord in his own Frame to Arjuna; the dispelling of the pupil's doubts thereby as through the Holy Highway of Deliverance and Peace of which the Master spoke.

Traditionally there are said to be four fundamentals of the *Gita* without a proper comprehension of which its whole philosophy cannot really be grasped. Assimilation of the *Gita* teachings is not only through reading and study but also through meditation. It is taught that such meditation is in reality a preparation for the true *reciting* of the *Gita*; the subjects prescribed for that meditation are to be found in the following four citations:

Thou grievest for those that may not be lamented. (II, 11)

Forsake every other religion and take refuge alone with me; grieve not, for I shall deliver thee from all transgressions. (XVIII, 66)

The weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth it not, the water corrupteth it not, the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible, and is not to be dried away; it is eternal, universal, permanent, immovable; it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable. (II, 23-25)

Behold, O son of Pritha, my forms by hundreds and by thousands, of diverse kinds divine, of many shapes and fashions. (XI, 5)

The first of these verses refers to the befogged condition of Arjuna which is caused by his sorrow and results in his false philosophy of conduct. The second verse points to the promise by the Lord of the final Emancipation for those devotees who seek

the Right Refuge. The next verses deal with the Great Reality, imperishable, eternal, omnipresent. In the last verse, there is reference to Arjuna's Vision of the Universe of a thousand divine forms.

The interpretations of the message of the *Gita* should be considered incomplete, if not irrelevant, when they are not based, and do not lay sufficient emphasis, on these fundamentals. These express the contemporary view, and should be taken as showing the most intimate acquaintance with the circumstances that necessitated the teaching, the course taken by it and the effect it produced on the thinking minds of the age. In fact, it is said that the real meaning of the truths contained in this Sacred Song will remain unrevealed and their significance will be missed, unless its proper setting is recognized.

WE fear not that what is accumulated in this world, should, by the malice of some wandering spirit, or by the wrath of some evil genius, be shook and scattered, as it were, into smoke or dust, out of this cupola of the sky, and beyond the starry mantle of the firmament; nor that the nature of things can otherwise come to be annihilated in substance, than, as it seems to our eyes, that the air contained in the concavity of a bubble is become nothing when that bubble is burst; because we know that in the world one thing ever succeeds another, *there being no utmost bottom*, whence, as by the hand of some artificer, things are irreparably struck into nothing. There are no ends, limits, margins, or walls, that keep back or subtract any parcel of the infinite abundance of things. Thence it is that the earth and sea are ever equally fertile, and thence the perpetual brightness of the sun, eternal fuel circulating to those devouring fires, and a supply of waters being eternally furnished to the evaporated seas, from the infinite and ever renewing magazine of matter: so that Democritus and Epicurus, who asserted the infinity of things with their perpetual variableness and restoration were so far more in the right than he who endeavoured to account for the eternally same appearance of the Universe, by making homogeneous particles of matter ever and numerically to succeed one another.

—GIORDANO BRUNO

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

STUDENTS of Theosophy recognize that they are only "following a line," and that originality, in its commonly understood meaning of something new and strange and even unique, is unwelcome. But originality, in the true sense of the word, is as vital to the Theosophical Movement as for any creative work. It simply means going back to the *origin* for inspiration, seeing truth, drawing vitality direct, instead of depending on a series of personal interpretations through which the once clear stream has flowed. The artist, the scientist, the writer, who turns to Nature for himself is able to reach an "original" viewpoint. This is true also of the Theosophical student. If he would pass on a living message, be a steady power for good, he must recognize that there is indeed "nothing new under the sun," but that, as each one finds his way to the unchanging truths of life, each direct contact that is made produces something "original."

The recognition of this fact may help students, who sometimes find it difficult to steer between Scylla and Charybdis in their endeavours at platform work, lectures and so forth. For, on the one hand, one can gather quotations, extracts, phrases and ideas from the Theosophical writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, collate and piece them together to form a consecutive whole, and reproduce it more or less. One can be fairly sure of a correct presentation, and indeed such collating is excellent and necessary work. But, if the student goes no further than this, the talk remains theoretical and becomes a purely intellectual repetition, and the vitality gradually drains away. On the other hand, the student may seek to put the ideas in terms of his own understanding, his own experience of life, building up his own analogies and examples, in order to avoid the mere dead-letter repetition of the teachings. Again, this is good and necessary. But, if he too goes no further, the talk will mainly bear the imprint of his own personality, with Theosophy fading out of the picture. It will not be "original." And such a talk will then have to compete for attention with innumerable other talks, by non-Theosophical speakers, often with far better mental equipment and experience.

"Follow not me, nor my path; follow the Path I show," wrote H.P.B. We need to go beyond the form in which the Message of Theosophy is given, beyond even the hieroglyphs which, as occult symbols, contain the equivalent of countless books. On the other side, we must look beyond the reflected world of the personal to the Inner Divine Ruler, the steady origin of the flickering reflec-

tion. Only then can an original viewpoint begin to emerge in the midst of the old.

Sincerity is not in itself enough. Its better half is discrimination. From them wisdom grows, and Theosophical study-group work is an excellent field for its cultivation. Sometimes at study classes students mistake the function of assignments such as the giving of the Three Fundamentals of Theosophy, the U.L.T. Declaration and the other items. The task is to give them, not to speak *about* them. A student who talks about the Declaration, for example, or who turns it into a moral discourse of "We ought . . . and must . . .," is like an actor commissioned to play Hamlet, who presents the startled audience with a disquisition on how much the part means to him, what the reaction of the audience should be, how difficult it is to play the part, the different ways in which it can be played, and so on. What the audience wants is the play. What is needed at a Theosophical meeting are the ideas in the Declaration, or whatever the assignment. In the case of the actor, it is through the repetition of the exact words of the part that the character comes to life. In the case of the student, it is the true ideas contained in the assignments which he should distil through the alembic of his mind and nature, and bring to life for the hearers.

It is certain that the attitude which the Theosophical student has to adopt is: "Thus have I heard," not "I know." But unless what he hears is passed on *through* him, not held away in separation, the presentation becomes, paradoxically, more personal—that is, is given with less power. When assignment and speaker are blended, then the message takes meaning, just as Hamlet's effectiveness depends on the degree to which the actor merges himself in Hamlet. Perhaps here we have a clue to the right attitude to platform work. It is not ourselves, Mr. So-and-so or Miss So-and-so, giving the assignment. "The play's the thing," and we are but the actors.

Again, it is said, "The duty of another is full of danger." One of the ways in which platform workers learn the meaning of holding to their own duty is by trying to see the nature and purpose of the specific task assigned to them. Let us take, for example, the announcement before the main lecture. It is not the function of the announcer to give a brief survey of the subject of the talk. That is taking over another's duty, and furthermore the time used thus is needed, every minute of it, for the announcer's own subject—the policy, purpose and methods of U.L.T., as well as the programme of activities and the literature available.

The function of the announcer has another, most important, aspect. He, or she, should set the tone for the whole meeting, warm up the atmosphere and awaken the attention of the audience, so that the main speaker finds the soil all ready for the seed. A dull, heavy, treatment by the announcer, a speaking by rote or in a dogmatic manner may so deaden and antagonize the audience that even an experienced speaker may find it difficult to make headway against the barrier thus raised.

If the duty of the announcer is to announce, that of the lecturer is to speak on the subject announced. This may seem obvious counsel, but it is worth considering. The audience has come to hear what Theosophy states on a particular subject. To give too much time to building up an introduction, or to wander off on some aspect interesting to the speaker, with a hurried return at the very end—to forget the audience, in fact—is to mistake the purpose of the lecture. It may possibly have been interesting, but has it fulfilled its purpose?

Many are the other ways in which the personality asserts itself. The general tone and character of the speaker and the notions held by him peep out in the way a thing is said more than in what is said. One damns with faint or grudging praise more effectively than by a direct attack that arouses the sympathy of the onlooker for its object.

Thus it may happen that a speaker, while admitting that vegetarianism is not *essential* to the Theosophic life and that there have been and are good Theosophists who eat meat, still somehow makes the non-vegetarian listeners feel "outside the pale." The same with any of the other current practices that are not fundamental. In the early days of the Movement, married life was surrounded in aspirants' eyes with such an atmosphere of contempt that both H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge had to protest against the false ideas of retirement from the world and of celibacy.

To *speak* of freedom, for example, is not enough. If the speaker himself is inclined towards a dictatorship, the hearers will not *feel* themselves free, even though unconscious of a sense of constraint. One may point out to others the value of self-discipline and self-sacrifice, but if one's own hidden desires are giving only a grudging acceptance to the idea, the hearers will almost certainly absorb, half-consciously, a sense of despondency and feel that the Path is a forbidding prospect. The way is difficult indeed, but we need not make it appear even more so!

Impersonal self-examination must include the underlying tone

as well as the words. The wise advice that has been given to parents is to concern themselves first with the right attitude to their children, and then any mistake or ignorance in dealing with them is less likely to do psychological harm because children respond far more to the inner feeling than to mere outward actions and are forgiving little creatures as regards the latter. The same thing is true of the relationship of teacher-pupils, or speaker-hearers. The audience will forgive much, if the inner attitude is right. Two people can say the same thing, even in the same words, and yet produce opposite effects—encouragement or discouragement. We have the power to choose which we shall produce.

THEOSOPHY, as repeatedly declared in print and *viva voce* by its members and officers, proceeds on diametrically opposite lines to those which are trodden by the Church; and Theosophy rejects the methods of Science, since her inductive methods can only lead to crass materialism. Yet, *de facto*, Theosophy claims to be both “RELIGION” and “SCIENCE,” for Theosophy is the essence of both. It is for the sake and love of the two divine abstractions, *i.e.*, Theosophical religion and science, that its Society has become the volunteer *scavenger* of both orthodox religion and modern science; as also the relentless Nemesis of those who have degraded the two noble truths to their own ends and purposes, and then divorced each violently from the other, though the two are and *must be one*

The modern Materialist insists on an impassable chasm between the two, pointing out that the “Conflict between Religion and Science” has ended in the triumph of the latter and the defeat of the first. The modern Theosophist refuses to see, on the contrary, any such chasm at all. If it is claimed by both Church and Science that each of them pursues the truth and *nothing but the truth*, then either one of them is mistaken, and accepts falsehood for truth, or both. Any other impediment to their reconciliation must be set down as purely *fictitious*. Truth is one, even if sought for or pursued at two different ends. Therefore, Theosophy claims to reconcile the two foes.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

A SEVENFOLD APPROACH TO STUDY

[Reprinted from THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, April 1948.]

THERE are seven aspects under which life may be viewed, seven ways of approach to the Path, but, though to each temperament one way seems the best, the Path itself is not any one of them. As *Light on the Path* states, "...the way is not found by devotion alone, by religious contemplation alone, by ardent progress, by self-sacrificing labour, by studious observation of life." Neither the pursuit of knowledge nor the development of power alone will bring us to the goal, but all aspects must be used, and those that have been neglected need the most attention.

In the same way work in a study class can be approached from different angles. To each temperament one or another approach has the most attraction, but unbalanced development results from emphasizing any one at the expense of the others. All methods must be tried and the weakest powers strengthened. We need to have, therefore:

(a) The ability to remember, *i.e.*, to reproduce with absolute accuracy the words and form of the idea that is studied.

(b) The capacity to translate the idea into one's own form of expression.

(c) The power to grasp the essentials of the idea.

(d) The ability to expand and explain the idea.

(e) The power to see the same idea under other forms of expression.

(f) The power to correlate the different presentations of the idea into an organic whole.

(g) The ability to make practical application of the idea to all things.

The following examples, taking the "Three Fundamentals" as the subject of study, may make the point clearer.

(1) They may be learnt by heart, word for word, sentence for sentence. This cultivates accuracy, and makes for precision in the image-making faculty. It makes one independent of the printed book (a memorized sentence can be thought over at any odd moment), and affords a check as to what the teaching really is. If overemphasized, however, the method leads inevitably to meaningless repetition and boredom, and blocks the way to original thought.

(2) The presentation may still be based on the particular passages in *The Secret Doctrine*, defining the Three Fundamentals, but giving them in one's own words. It can adhere fairly closely

to the actual sequence of ideas in the original, or it can use those ideas more freely.

The method is of value in giving life and vitality, and the power of one's thinking to it. It energizes the mind and not merely the faculty of memory. If overemphasized, however, the presentation becomes gradually more and more personalized, until the final "translation" may be hardly recognizable, because of distortions.

(3) The essence of the Three Fundamentals can be given in half a dozen brief sentences, almost of the nature of aphorisms. This helps to discipline the spontaneous rambling of the mind, and develops the discrimination needed to prune away ruthlessly unnecessary, secondary ideas and repetitions. It is the beginning of the power to sense the idea in itself. If overemphasized, this method results in a mere formula, so compressed that it ceases to convey any meaning to the hearer.

(4) The Fundamentals can be taken point by point, each one being developed and explained more fully. This can be done by asking oneself a series of questions about the point taken up. This exercises the creative faculty and helps to overcome the "black-outs" of the mind whose study has been too superficial. A similar method, where appropriate quotations are also used to expand the ideas, is employed in three articles on the Fundamental Propositions, published in *The Theosophical Movement* for August, September and October 1944 (Vol. XIV, pp. 159, 165 and 171). If, however, this method is overemphasized, it leads to wearisome prolixity and repetition that swamp the understanding of the listener and end by becoming mere boring sounds.

(5) Books, articles, passages, etc., can be taken up and analysed to find how the truths presented in them still have as their basis the Three Fundamentals. The articles mentioned below, chosen at random, can be taken as examples. In excess, the method may lead to an overdevelopment of the analytical faculty, which is purely head-learning.

"Self-Knowledge" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 7*, p. 12).

(a) Reality is at the root of all, behind the deceptions of what we think to be knowledge or ignorance.

(b) The knowledge of that Reality can be obtained by effort. (*N.B.* All effort is cyclic.)

(c) The most important necessity is the determination to obtain it, not merely by a material, natural process or function, but by self-effort and the awakening to consciousness of the divine nature of man.

"Meditation, Concentration, Will" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*).

(a) At the background of man's activity is: (1) The continuous all-pervasive thread of the life's meditation. (2) The natural constant practice of whatever degree of concentration he possesses. (3) Will, existing for ever, fully developed, being universal.

(b) There is a periodic aspect to his activity: (1) The meditation practised at a set time, or an occasional one. (2) The willed use of concentration on a fixed occasion. (3) The strengthening of these powers by will, through practice (*i.e.*, by cyclic repetitions).

(c) Will is part of the make-up of all kingdoms, but only in self-conscious man does it gain a moral quality. Man's object is to centre meditation, concentration and will upon a single object, the Self, when the Supreme is lighted up in him and becomes visible.

(6) The correlation of different presentations of the Fundamentals into an organic whole can be attempted. Useful examples for the practice of this will be found below:

First, on these Three Fundamental Principles rests the universal foundation of every religious creed: God, and individual immortality for every man—if he could but win it.

(a) Everything existing, exists from natural causes.

(b) Virtue brings its own reward, and vice and sin their own punishment.

(c) The state of man in this world is probationary. (*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, p. 124)

Secondly, there are three truths which are absolute and which cannot be lost, yet may remain silent for lack of speech.

(a) The soul of man is immortal, and its future is the future of a thing whose growth and splendour have no limit.

(b) The principle which gives life dwells in us, and without us, is undying and eternally beneficent, is not heard or seen, or smelt, but is perceived by the man who desires perception.

(c) Each man is his own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to himself; the decreer of his life, his reward, his punishment.

These truths, which are as great as is life itself, are as simple as the simplest mind of man. Feed the hungry with them. (*Idyll of the White Lotus*)

Thirdly, not speech, but thought, really rules the world; so, if these three ideas are good, let them be rescued again and again from oblivion.

(a) There is a great Cause—in the sense of an enterprise—called the Cause of Sublime Perfection and Human Brotherhood. This rests upon the essential unity of the whole human family,

and is a possibility because sublimity in perfectness and actual realization of brotherhood on every plane of being are one and the same thing. . . .

(b) Man is a being who may be raised up to perfection, to the stature of the Godhead, because he himself is God incarnate. This is the idea of human perfectibility. It will destroy the awful theory of inherent original sin. . . .

(c) The illustration, the proof, the high result of the others is that the Masters—those who have reached up to what perfection this period of evolution and this solar system will allow—are living, veritable facts, and not abstractions cold and distant. They are, as our old H.P.B. so often said, *living men*. And she said, too, that a shadow of woe would come to those who should say they were not living facts, who should assert that “the Masters descend not to this plane of ours.” The Masters as living facts and high ideals will fill the soul with hope, will themselves help all who wish to raise the human race. (W.Q.J., *The Irish Theosophist*, February 1895; *The Heart Doctrine*, pp. 59-60)

In this method the attempt to fuse the separate fragments into an integrated whole, and not merely to patch them together, brings out the synthesizing power, but in excess it may colour the result with personal ideas and notions, and unwarranted conclusions may be drawn.

(7) The Three Fundamentals can be used to find the basic points of all things, great and small. See, for example, “Three Basic Truths” in *The Theosophical Movement* for July 1944 (Vol. XIV, p. 129). In the creative arts—music, for example—let us take, say, a sonata. The sonata exists as an enduring reality, whether it is being played or not, whether it is played 1,000 times or only once, whether it is played badly or well. The sonata itself is not affected. To make it manifest demands an instrument and an intelligence to play it—the two poles, Matter and Spirit-Mind, the power of the musician to make his instrument respond being like the power of Fohat.

All sound, all harmony, all musical form depend upon vibrations, that is, the playing of the music follows the law of cycles.

The increasing power of the musician to make himself one with the music and to gain technical control over the instrument comes from aspiration and continued practice (reincarnation of effort), checked by previous limitations.

Or take the question of reforms. All sound reforms are rooted in the idea of a common unity—the abolition of slavery, justice to women, equal rights of all classes, prevention of cruelty to

animals, even trade unions, friendly societies, community centres, and so on. A reform to be workable must have two aspects, the energizing spirit (the will to reform) and the efficient plan of action, carried into operation with all one's strength (Spirit-Matter, linked by Force). Benevolent intentions fail if the plan does not take working conditions into account, and is only an Utopia. An admirably schemed plan will fail, as the League of Nations did, if the good-will to work it is lacking.

Secondly, all reforms have to be introduced gradually and fought for, over and over again (cyclic law), until they are accepted as natural. They succeed best when introduced at the right time in the cycle.

Thirdly, people being at different stages of development, can only take the next step in any reform from the point where they are (checked by their karma). But they have to accept and apply the reform over and over again by self-conscious effort, otherwise it becomes mere lip service, and another dead, prisoning orthodoxy. So this basis of the three great ideas can be applied to every activity in life.

Finally, in attempting these seven methods, while each student can seek to strengthen the weak points, as a general practice it would seem wise to gain some mastery over the first four before dealing with the applications of the last three.

Nothing has been said of the "heart" quality, the true inner equipoise, one of the essentials for platform work. It cannot be "explained," but it has to pervade any method that is adopted.

LET us not be in too furious a haste to acquire even peace, purity and perfection. Peace must be ours, but not the peace of an empty or devastated nature or of slain or mutilated capacities incapable of unrest because we have made them incapable of intensity and fire and force. Purity must be our aim, but not the purity of a void or of a bleak and rigid coldness. Perfection is demanded of us, but not the perfection that can exist only by confining its scope within narrow limits or putting an arbitrary full stop to the ever self-extending scroll of the Infinite.

—SRI AUROBINDO

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The Egyptian city of Alexandria was for several centuries a great seat of learning and philosophy, and was famous among other things for its library founded c. 295 B.C. by Ptolemy I, who succeeded Alexander as King of Egypt. It was envisaged as a universal library containing the writings of all nations, and once boasted of 700,000 rolls or volumes. The library had a long and glorious life, serving its purpose effectively and efficiently. As books, containing the wisdom of the ancient world, poured into Alexandria, so did the best brains of the day. Scholarship and learning suffered a major blow when the library was burned down during Caesar's Alexandrian War.

The Egyptian authorities and Unesco have now joined forces in a major project to revive the city of Alexandria as an international centre of learning and cultural understanding. A new public research library has been planned, which can play a comparable or even a better role than the old one and give Alexandria back the glory it had in ancient times. The November 1989 issue of *Unesco Sources* is devoted to this project of international scope, envisaged by its planners as "one of the gems in the crown of tomorrow's culture."

Referring to the treasure trove of knowledge that the ancient library of Alexandria was, and the efforts initiated to recreate it, *Unesco Sources* states:

The fascination of the ancient Library lies in the fact that it was the basis of a remarkable scientific movement which managed, for the first time in history, to render the whole world and the entire human heritage subject to its investigations. The achievements of Callimachus and Theocritus in poetry, of Euclid in mathematics, of Herophilus and Galen in medicine, of Aristarchus, Eratosthenes and Ptolemy in geography and astronomy, of Plotinus in philosophy, and of many others, continue to be outstanding landmarks in the progress of human knowledge. These achievements could only be accomplished with the help of the exceptional library facilities available at Alexandria. It is perhaps legitimate to say that before Alexandria, knowledge was regional, but with the creation of the Alexandrina, as the first universal library, knowledge, too, became universal. . . .

"The recreation of the ancient library of Alexandria can remain a symbol of the transcendence of culture over politics, of knowledge over partisanship and of literature over polemics," says Dr. Daniel Boorstin, former librarian at the Library of Congress in Washing-

ton. "If we can recall the catholic collection of the old library we can be reminded and encouraged to continue the efforts of the learned men of those days to reach for the whole human spirit which brings us together across national and religious boundaries."

"Traditions current in various parts of the East," says H.P.B., assert that a vast number of choicest rolls and manuscripts believed to have perished for ever at Alexandria and other places, were in fact saved and are safely stored in secret subterranean crypts and cave libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity. How the most precious works were saved and preserved is hinted at in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 27-29). In *The Secret Doctrine* H.P.B. goes further and states:

However it may be, and whatsoever is in store for the writer through malevolent criticism, one fact is quite certain. The members of several esoteric schools—the seat of which is beyond the Himalayas, and whose ramifications may be found in China, Japan, India, Tibet, and even in Syria, besides South America—claim to have in their possession the *sum total* of sacred and philosophical works in MSS. and type: all the works, in fact, that have ever been written, in whatever language or characters, since the art of writing began; from the ideographic hieroglyphs down to the alphabet of Cadmus and the Devanagari. (I, xxiii)

A political science study at West Germany's Heidelberg University, published recently, has tried to analyse world conflicts. The research, which looked into 1345 conflicts of the recent past, found that most of these did not involve the "big powers" directly. In fact, the causes of modern conflict can sometimes be very trivial: the construction of a lighthouse on an embattled island caused the Beagle Island conflict between Argentina and Chile, while a football game resulted in conflicts between El Salvador and Honduras. (*Express Magazine*, December 10, 1989)

Other findings: Every year of this century saw at least one new conflict. Since 1945, there have been 460 conflicts all over the world, including 158 open wars. Africa and the Middle East are the world's hottest trouble spots, while Australia and North America have been the most peaceful continents. Less developed countries are the ones most involved in conflicts, most often among themselves and rarely with a western industrialized nation.

Generally, the quest for international power was the reason

for most conflicts before 1945. But, since then, the focus has shifted to civil wars and national quarrels. And today's civil wars tend to be more bloody than international conflicts.

Theosophy has long stressed that the roots of war and violence lie, in the ultimate analysis, in human nature. Wars in the world without are reflections of the war between the good and evil forces in each human being. Since the moral causes of war lie within ourselves, it is within ourselves that the foundation of peace must be sought. We must go back to fundamentals. The solution to the myriad problems that arise at the national and international levels lies in

demonstrating on logical, philosophical, metaphysical, and even scientific grounds that: (a) All men have spiritually and physically the same origin, which is the fundamental teaching of Theosophy. (b) As mankind is essentially of one and the same essence, and that essence is one—infinite, uncreate, and eternal, whether we call it God or Nature—nothing, therefore, can affect one nation or one man without affecting all other nations and all other men. (*The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 40-41)

World Union Day was held at Pondicherry on August 19. Speaking of world unity and our responsibility, the Chairman, M. P. Pandit, stated in his address:

World Unity is not something that we have to build, it is already a fact—on the subtler plane. Before things actualize themselves on the physical plane, they are first readied on the subtler planes. When they are ready, they await the proper conditions to manifest. The Unity of the world community is one such truth that is ready to express and organize itself on earth. All that we have to do is to create the right conditions under which alone the Unity can become actual. . . .

Each individual has to play his part in assuring the growth of the proper climate for World Unity to become a fact. He has first to build unity in himself. For, as is well said, man is a being who is at war with himself. He has so many elements in himself which are in conflict with each other, working at a tangent. The modern man, particularly, is a picture of chaos. In his superficial way of living he may not be aware of this seething conflict in himself. But if he were to look into himself, objectively, he is sure to find that he is far from being a whole person. He is not an integrated

being. His mind is a scene of diverse thought-movements. What it thinks and wants is often at variance with what the heart seeks. The emotions in his being are always a mixed lot. Most often they run against each other; they are driven by the ego helplessly. The vital impulses sweep everything before them and colour his thinking and feeling. Desire has the whip hand. Added to these discordant factors, there are the obstinate habits of the physical body which insist on repeating themselves whatever the mind may counsel and the heart may feel about them. Furthermore there is the soul within at the core of his being pressing its own call. In short, man is a picture of disharmony, disunity. Before he can contribute anything substantial to the cause of World Unity, it is indispensable that he take steps to establish some order, some assonance, in the multiple movements of his own being. For this he must cultivate the discipline of self-observation, self-introspection. During these periods he must spot the points of disharmony in his nature. Thereafter he must have the sincerity to correct wrong movements—instead of justifying them—and proceed to harmonize the functions and activities of the various parts of his being. In other words, he must build himself up into an integrated whole. In the measure in which he succeeds in doing so, he is bound to be a factor for harmony and unity in his immediate environment. He who subordinates his personal ego to the larger interests of those around and exerts himself to defuse situations of friction and conflict in his surroundings, is on his way to becoming a citizen of the world. (*World Union*, September-December 1989)

The megaliths of Carnac on the southwest coast of Brittany (France) remain an enigma to this day. There has been much speculation on the part of scholars, yet no plausible explanation of the riddle of the massive alignments, menhirs, passage graves—how, why and when they were built. Recently developed dating techniques put the origins of the megaliths—“great stones,” from the Greek—in the fourth and fifth millennia B.C.—3,000 years earlier than experts had previously believed. It is just as possible that future discoveries and more accurate dating methods might push the age further back, disproving all present theories.

According to David Roberts (*Smithsonian*, September 1989), the megaliths of Carnac are even more imposing than those at Stonehenge. While some 80 stones make up that famous megalithic monument, in the vicinity of Carnac there are more than

4,000, forming definite alignments. The heaviest of the giant pillars, now shattered into four blocks, once measured 67 feet and weighed close to 340 tons.

To put it simply [the article states], Carnac's megaliths are the most impressive in the Western world. Two centuries of poking among the Breton fields and forests have unearthed a rich collection of facts and artifacts, but the conundrum of their meaning persists. In the words of Evan Hadingham, a British writer and archaeologist who has done research at Carnac, "It's one of archaeology's most enduring mysteries. I think it poses as many tantalizing unanswered questions as the pyramids."

Around Carnac lie scores of ancient tombs—some, such as Kercado, still buried in the mounds of earth and stone that were heaped up to enclose them, others denuded of cover so that their massive walls and capstones look like the playhouses of giant children whose building blocks were granite. Seemingly at random, the moors and woods are scattered with hundreds of isolated menhirs—in Breton, "long stones"—up to 31 feet in height. . . . But the most arresting sights in Carnac are the alignments. . . .

The idea that the Carnac megaliths had an astronomical purpose was first advanced as early as 1874. In the 1970s, a tall, lanky, retired professor of engineering at Oxford, named Alexander Thom, claimed that. . . the farflung megaliths of Carnac amounted to a highly sophisticated lunar observatory. . . . Thom's work made archaeologists take the possibility of megalithic astronomy seriously. His achievement is that most of us now accept the notion that some imprecise level of prehistoric knowledge of the sun and moon is reflected in the layout of these monuments. . . .

Whatever its meaning, Carnac is now viewed as one of the great wellsprings of megalithic culture in Europe. But trying to sum up its thousands of years of prehistory, without a single written record to guide us, is a daunting task.

Carnac, like other Cyclopean ruins and colossal stones, is a standing challenge to archaeology. The theories advanced by scholars do not tally with the facts recorded in *The Secret Doctrine*, though some among them show intuition in suspecting a connection between Carnac in Brittany and Karnac in Egypt.

The archaic records show the Initiates of the Second Sub-race of the Aryan family moving from one land to the other for the purpose of supervising the building of *menhirs* and dolmens, of colossal Zodiacs in stone, and places of sepulchre to serve as receptacles for the ashes of generations to come. When was it? The

fact of their crossing from France to Great Britain *by land* may give an idea of the date when such a journey could have been performed on *terra firma*. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 750)

Had there been no giants to move about such colossal rocks, there could never have been a Stonehenge, a Carnac and other such Cyclopean structures. . . . We say, that most of these stones are the relics of the last Atlanteans. We shall be answered that all the geologists claim them to be of a natural origin. That, a rock when "weathering," *i.e.*, losing flake after flake of its substance under influence of weather, assumes this form. . . . But read what Geology has to say, and you will learn that often these gigantic masses do not even belong to the countries wherein they are now fixed; that their geological congeners often pertain to strata unknown in those regions and to be found only far beyond the seas. (*Ibid.*, II, 341-343)

The *Secret Doctrine* statement, that the Earth is, in fact, a huge living being, "the water of life flowing around and animating her body" (II, 400), is likely to be dismissed by the lay reader as a myth. H.P.B.'s monumental work explains that the Earth's electric and magnetic disturbances, its storms, earthquakes and convulsions, are biological phenomena, mental and emotional reactions such as those of a normal human being, only on a vast scale and in such an impersonal manner as to escape detection for what they are. The Earth "is the mother and nurse, augmented with all creatures and *their* qualities, *the comprehender* of all the worlds." (*S.D.*, II, 401 fn.)

It is refreshing to note that some farseeing, intuitive people have now begun to realize the sacredness of Mother Earth, when modern technological society is desecrating it by its uncontrolled industrial pollution. In a recent issue of *The WorldPaper* (featuring fresh perspectives from around the world on matters of global concern), Edward Goldsmith, the publisher of the British magazine, *The Ecologist*, sounds an alarming note:

The Third World War has already been declared. It is being waged against nature, and nature is in retreat.

The natural world is dying. It is dying fast—so fast that if current trends continue it will soon cease to be capable of supporting complex forms of life such as human beings. . . .

Our agricultural lands are being eroded, salinized, desertified and paved over at the rate of some 20 million hectares per year. Our oceans, seas, rivers and groundwater resources are being used as

a dumping ground for prodigious amounts of sewage, heavy metals and toxic chemicals—absorbing, among other things, much of the more than 10 billion tons of toxic chemicals disposed of every year by US industry alone.

Stressing the urgent need to face this emergency created by the industrial society which by its very nature should necessarily destroy the natural world on which it ultimately depends for its sustenance, Goldsmith continues:

We must reconsider the most basic assumptions underlying our modern world-view. The most fundamental is that science, technology and industry can create a paradise on Earth. This assumption implies that the world is a lousy place, unfit for human habitation, and that to make it habitable modern man must systematically transform it to make it conform to his own vastly superior design.

Modern man has, in effect, defined himself. But he is a false God. It is not a paradise that he is creating on earth but a nightmare—a nightmare world to which man is becoming less adapted, and that is becoming incapable of satisfying his social, psychological, spiritual and aesthetic, let alone his ecological, needs. Ours is becoming a world designed for unfeeling robots, not for living people.

In this connection, it is worthwhile to remember H.P.B.'s prophecy:

It hardly seems possible that science can disguise from itself much longer . . . the fact that things that have life are living things, whether they be atoms or planets. (*S.D.*, I, 49)

Like other organisms, the earth is an entity and has a unity of its own, its sphere of circumambient electric vitality, varying with the daily round of the sun, and thus necessarily affecting the vital currents of all beings. Like any amoeba, it has its osmosing coating. Its atmosphere disintegrates the countless tons of meteoric material falling upon it, thanks to the Van Allen belt, but for which the crushing impact of meteors would render human life impossible. But human beings have already begun to make dents in the ozone layer with their nuclear-weapon tests and pollution.

Goldsmith concludes his article thus:

Clearly, if we are to face this terrible emergency, economic considerations must be ruthlessly subordinated to social, ecological and other imperatives. Our overriding priority must be to protect what remains and indeed recreate social and ecological wealth, thereby increasing the capacity of the natural world to sustain us.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the Philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF, a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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