

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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APPLYING PRECEPTS

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DO good to them that hate you," says the Bible. "Requite hatred with virtue," says the *Tao Te King*. The word "hate" in this context includes all degrees and shades of dislike from mere indifference to active viciousness. Why should we do good to those who dislike us? To begin with, we must understand that the wise man does not dislike anything or anybody. There is no sound or logical reason for harbouring the feeling of dislike or hate. The wise man functions according to the rules of the mind and not according to the rules of the emotions, which are of the province of likes and dislikes. He realizes that which we too should know: that all persons function according to their natures and according to the degree of development they have achieved. Just as we should bear no hatred or ill will towards the animal that might attack us, so the sage bears no ill will towards evildoers. We know that the animal was acting according to its nature, and therefore to look upon it with hate or anger would be most foolish and a waste of energy. Similarly, the sage realizes that our acts of violence, dislike or hatred arise from lack of knowledge of the basic principles which should govern human conduct. But merely to know the basic principles of conduct is not enough; one must also have the will to apply them in practice.

When another's course of action is disliked by us, it is usually because we have not learned that the world will not conform to our

pattern. We are annoyed when the other person does something that we consider to be wrong, or when he fails to do that which we desire for our personal convenience. And we in turn respond by acting towards him in an unfriendly manner and by harbouring inimical feelings. The result of this is simply a strengthening of the tendency towards hate and malice.

The harm that someone does to us or the dislike he shows towards us, the psychologists would describe as a "projection." This occurs on the emotional plane and is an attempt to relieve the lower nature of a pent-up force which results from the person's inability to solve his problem intelligently, on the mental plane. We do not function at all times like human beings. In fact most of the time we are functioning as animals, for we are following the urges of our emotional and instinctive natures, our likes and dislikes. Constantly, therefore, we fall into the practice of rationalization; that is, we first give way to emotions and then proceed to justify them with logical deductions.

Lower functions should always be subject to higher faculties. Eventually the emotional nature will be under the full control of the intelligent mind. When this occurs, all of our social actions will be reasonable and well thought out, and we will not be propelled to act emotionally, according to the dictates of the lower nature. The key to the situation is the fact that we are dealing with forces at a level and on a plane that is ordinarily little understood. Energy is indestructible. This is demonstrable on the physical plane and is in the process of being demonstrated on the emotional plane. Just as the physical scientist no longer looks for the explanation of physical processes merely in the relationships of molecular activity, so the psychologist is no longer attempting to explain human conduct exclusively in terms of actions of the brain and nervous system.

Since an emotion is a force, and since force is indestructible, it is evident that we should not suppress but transmute and utilize the forces arising from the emotional nature. We are degrading these forces every time we give way to anger or hate or envy. But it is not necessary that the energy be wasted in this manner. This energy can

be directed along constructive lines. Sympathy, devotion to others, a sincere attempt to feel in accord with others, all these are channels that will permit the emotional force to be used in a constructive manner.

To return good for evil, then, is not a mere trite phrase or a purely idealistic admonition. On the contrary, this principle is basic to civilized life. It is founded upon a scientific knowledge of man's nature. The knowledge of the process whereby man functions in his inner life has been obscured for thousands of years. Today we are just beginning to see the depth and extent of the Wisdom-Religion's penetration into the hidden nature of things. Only now are psychologists beginning to understand the necessity and true import of re-educating the lower, emotional nature to conform to the ethical and moral precepts of the Eternal Verities. The practice of these Verities has always been regarded as desirable, but the necessity for such practice was never factually demonstrated outside of the Occult Sciences.

Now we know that suppression of the emotions and failure to practise tolerance and understanding will lead to the gradual disintegration of the personality, that is, the lower man. If inimical emotional energies are expended on the physical plane, they produce unhappy and often tragic conditions in the personal life of the individual. If these adverse emotional energies are expended on the social and political level, they produce war, slavery, violent revolution and all the negative and destructive social events so evident throughout history.

The attempt, therefore, to practise the moral recommendations found in the precepts of all great religions and in such books as *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, etc., is not a diversion that we can indulge in or leave alone according to our inclinations. These are precepts that must be practised if we are to avoid emotional and mental stress and illness. Everyone desires to be a well-integrated individual, but few understand the means and methods that must be used for attaining this. Even Theosophists are often no better off than their good and pure brothers and sisters of some religious persuasion. To read the devotional books without

understanding, and then attempt to practise the precepts advocated therein, will never produce consistent action.

Of course the right practice of these precepts will bring about the desired result—a peaceful, constructive and integrated life. The point, however, is that we cannot practise them properly unless we have the necessary basis of knowledge. If it were possible to practise spiritual precepts without understanding their *rationale*, many more would, by now, have reached the "terrace of enlightenment." As stated before, lower functions must be subject to higher faculties. The mind is a higher faculty than the emotions. But the higher mind can control and function only through spiritual understanding and knowledge of the principles and factors operative in the emotional life of the individual.

"Man, know thyself," is an oft-quoted phrase. But simply to know that one ought not to do this or ought to do that is not self-knowledge; it is a mere repetition of what the teachers have said. If we are really to know ourselves, then we have to make a careful study of our emotional life. Only as we understand it will we be able to control the forces released by the psychic nature. When we are able to control the lower life, we are on the path that leads to superior knowledge and spiritual realization. Meanwhile we have to do our best to restrain the unruly forces of our emotional life by conceding the right of others, by refusing to practise retaliation, by controlling our temper, by not giving way to envies and jealousies. While doing so, however, we realize this is only a stopgap that must be maintained until that time when we shall acquire a full working knowledge of the lower nature on the causative and not merely on the functional level.

YOUR daily life is your temple and your religion.

—KHALIL GIBRAN

DAWN

A MESSAGE FOR 1996

FEW in our age look upon the New Year as a new awakening to life, a new vision in life—in other words, a new Birth. Under the influence of materialistic thought, many deny the very existence of soul, or take a more subtle position and make soul the effluvia of the body. Others, under the influence of religious dogmatism, hand over their future to the custody of blind religious beliefs. "My religion says thus-and-so," says the religiously inclined person, "and that is the truth for me." Because of this dual influence, materialistic and dogmatic, men and women live soul-less lives; they are divine and immortal, yet they live like mortal earthlings. Never questioning, never looking within themselves, they do not see the million miracles that are taking place within and around us all, in this vast Universe.

Our subject, then, deals with the magic of birth, or inner awakening. The word "awakening" suggests movement, and continuity of movement after rest. Our knowledge of philosophy and psychology is so poor that when we speak of birth we associate it in our minds with the occurrence of something entirely new; we rarely consider that birth is a process of awakening. Life itself is a series of awakenings. It never stops; it ever moves, and with every movement of life there is a fresh awakening. Every birth is an awakening, every season is an awakening. Every morning marks the birth of the sun, and every evening the birth of the stars. Death too is an awakening—awakening to a new life.

This continuity of birth and awakening is often misunderstood. Christian theology has corrupted people's minds, so that in Christendom they believe that God creates a new soul for every baby born, and that after death that soul lives for eternity in either heaven or hell. But there is a subtle and more philosophical kind of wrong thinking that has influenced the minds of the masses of India. This continuous awakening, this perpetual movement of life which begets change after change, and produces a perplexing variety of phenomena day after day, has been viewed as Illusion—*Maya*. Not

really understanding the doctrine of *Maya*, many regard the earth, the universe, the entire manifestation, the whole round of evolution, as illusion. *Moha* and *Maya*, delusion and illusion, are applied to all the processes of life: everything is *Maya*, therefore nothing matters, nothing counts! This erroneous twist with which the doctrine of *Maya* is viewed, makes people merely look at the wrong side of the great process of Nature. Everything perishes, they say; everyone must die, all must come to an end—and they think they have uttered a deep philosophical truth! In this emphasis on the grinding and death-dealing power of Nature, which is *Maya*, lies one cause of India's downfall. If death is the summation, if things and beings are all *Maya*, illusion, then why bother about life in the body! But *Maya* is not a death-dealing force which crushes; it is the great awakener. The real meaning of the doctrine enables us to pierce the veil of death and to see what immortality is. Just as on a cloudy day people think that the sun is not shining, so also philosophies overcast by the clouds of misunderstanding of the doctrine of *Maya* mislead us into emphasizing the death aspect of Nature. Thus, some fear life and birth, others fear death, as children fear the dark of night. These fears vanish the moment we take the correct view of *Maya*.

What is that correct view? *Maya* is power, *Shakti*, Force, or Energy. The *Gita* refers to "the mighty magic of *Prakriti*." There is a steady, unchanging, undying, immortal, birthless and deathless Power of Life, and in Life, and It produces change after change, death after death, so that birth after birth may result. When people say that everything is *Maya*, and let it go at that, they see but the death-dealing aspect of Life; but true philosophy asks us to look at "the mighty magic *Prakriti*" and see how everything is coming to birth. *Pralaya* is the womb of *Prabhava*; sleep is the mother of the waking state; death is preparation for birth; change and mortality ever reveal the immortality of the One Indivisible Life. The doctrine of *Maya* does not mean that everything is useless and mortal, but that behind and within everything the Essence of Immortality exists.

In the Fifteenth Discourse of the *Gita* (verse 4), Krishna refers

to refuge in "the Primeval Spirit from which floweth the never-ending stream of conditioned existence." Conditioned existence is mortal, ever changing. Where, then, should we seek refuge? This very verse speaks of "that place...from which those who there take refuge never more return to rebirth," for they become immortal and transcend not only rebirth on this earth, but conditioned existence anywhere. If we begin to look for birth in every change, in every death, a continuous, perpetual awakening in and through every event of life, we would be taking the first step toward realizing the immortality of the soul.

So let us watch, let us listen to the ever-waking aspect of Nature: nothing is dying; everywhere there is new birth. The idea of the death of the body, our own or of some dear one, will not sadden us if we know that death is but an awakening process of the soul to new experiences and new lessons. Likewise, looking on sleep as an inner awakening for the soul, we shall not consider the hours of the night as wasted time, and, what is more, we shall prepare ourselves for the new life in the world of dreams. Sickness and disease are avenues to health, as death itself is an avenue to a new body. But, not only in important events should the waking power of Nature be seen; our whole life, with its myriads of events, is nothing but a gigantic process of awakening. In each life there are striking awakenings, and in ancient India the four *ashramas*, stages of life, marked such fundamental awakenings. But in this *Yuga* there is confusion of *ashramas* as there is confusion of *varnas*—castes. The thread-ceremony was once understood as the symbolic representation of an inner awakening—alas, not now! The marriage rite was potent, and awakened new visions and new vistas in the young couple's life—again, no more! Yet it is well to note how our sires in Aryavarta embodied in actual practice their knowledge that in the World-Soul as in the human soul, always there is a waking to new life, new experiences, new visions.

This Power of Nature, this particular aspect of *Shakti*, was represented in the image of Ushas, the Dawn-Maiden. Dawn signifies awakening as nothing else does. Consider such phrases as the dawn of civilization, the dawn of thought, the dawn of the soul,

the dawn of the world, the dawn of a great historical day. Dawn is birth, but more than birth; it is awakening to new life and light. Ushas is the bringer of new light, which opens a new vision, a new world, and that light and that vision make man ever and ever young.

Ushas, the Dawn-Maiden, is called in the Vedas *Ahana* and *Dyotana*, the Enlightener, the Illuminator. We have this description of her in *The Theosophical Glossary*, where she is called "a most poetical and fascinating image":

She is the ever-faithful friend of men, of rich and poor, though she is believed to prefer the latter. She smiles upon and visits the dwelling of every living mortal. She is the immortal, ever-youthful virgin, the light of the poor, and the destroyer of darkness.

What a compact and yet complete description! Ushas awakens and illuminates all, faithfully and punctually. The poor are more faithful to her, for, even physically they wake up with the dawn and begin their labours, while the rich very often are time-wasters at night and sluggards in the morning, and for them the beauty of Ushas exists not. But to the dwelling of each, Dawn comes; and to each her touch brings light and youth. The magic touch of Ushas keeps us young, for it denotes the morning of life. The Greeks named her Eos and called her "rosy-fingered"; from the tips of her fingers the rosy-coloured fluid of life streams forth and keeps people young. The Romans, too, praised her, calling her Aurora, the New Light, which ever comes from the East.

In her spiritual aspect, the Virgin Ushas, the ever-young, is the awakener. She is the Mistress of *Maya*, superior to the power of illusion, for she ever dispels darkness and brings light. When doubts and problems are resolved, we say that a new dawn is upon us. When a person recovers from a serious illness, that too is a new dawn for him or her. A progressive awakening of the soul takes place continuously, but earthly fatigue makes men and women sleep on, even when dawn comes to their very souls. Nature offers opportunities for awakening to the soul, hour by hour, yet people keep chasing the shadows of death!

Theosophy teaches that each one should consciously and deliberately become a votary of the Lady of the Dawn. Let us invoke Aurora, let us imbibe the blessings that flow from the rosy-tipped fingers of Eos, let us become young and remain young by worshipping Ushas, the beautiful maiden, the ever young "daughter of heaven."

Let us look at this world with the eye of wisdom, with the eye that is single, that sees life as one whole. This Single Eye of Spirit, the Third Eye of Shiva, the Maha-Yogi, is not easy to open; but now and then, for the pure and the thoughtful, that Eye of the Real Heart opens. If we use our two eyes, our double vision, correctly and appropriately, then the Third Eye of Wisdom-Compassion shows us the Supreme Truth, *Paramartha-Satya*, which the Universe really is. The left eye is the Eye of Discrimination, *Viveka*, and the right is that of Dispassion, *Vairagya*. When we practise *Viveka-Vairagya*, then only we begin to see truly, and not till then. That is the real esoteric meaning of the phrase: "having eyes they see not." When with the aid of *Brahma-Vidya* or Theosophy we begin to purify ourselves and to study the great Truths, then we see that this world is composed mostly of sleeping units, or the living dead. Analysed roughly, first, there are those dead with their own selfishness, their pride, their self-centredness; second, there are the dead with the wine of sense-life, the dance of passion-Kama; third, there are the dead with the ritual of religions, the ceremonials of creeds, the dogmatism of sectarianism. These three make up the large mass of the human race today. And there is the small fourth class of the soulless, those dead beyond reanimation. On the beneficent side, there are a few who have been quickened into life by Ushas, the Power of the Dawn; her magic touch has awakened the soul from the death of selfishness, from the sleep of intoxicated senses, from the dreams of religious ritualism.

Thus, this Power of Nature personified by Ushas is a very important power. It is the first of the powers that the aspirant and the would-be chela assimilates. The soul must awaken, and on waking must not return to sleep. The magic of Ushas awakens the soul, but our human weaknesses again and again put us to sleep. We

must therefore note this dual power of Ushas—she awakens us and if we begin promptly to imbibe and assimilate her power, we shall ever remain awake and alert. But first we must consider how we can invoke the aid and the blessing of Ushas.

Who are those who are spiritually asleep? Take the first class—the self-centred, full of pride and egotism, desiring name and fame, money or knowledge, power and possessions, which they use to glorify their separated puny selves, and whose selfish habits and indulgence develop in them the weakness of *Moha*-delusion. A self-centred egotist is a deluded person. How did he become deluded?

By belonging in the past to the second class. Those who live lives of intoxication, who live in, for, and by the senses, are on the way to becoming deluded. They have not yet become thoroughly self-centred; they have not yet fully developed their *ahankara*; they are under the sway not of *Moha*-delusion but of *Maya*-illusion. They see nourishment in alcohol; they call *kama*-passion, soul; they name *bhuta*-ghost, spirit! Unless they stop and awaken to the worthlessness of *Maya*-illusion, they are sure to develop on the wrong line; their *Maya* will become *Moha*, the sense of self will harden and bring them pain and anguish.

The third class consists of those who are not dead with selfishness and pride, nor intoxicated by sense-life, but have become fixed and hardened in their habits of life and of thought. The religious life, as ordinarily understood, consists of sectarian modes of thought and feeling. Ceremonies, rites, rituals and outer formalities which are not understood, yet are gone through with the help of the *moulvi*, the *purohit* or the priest, bring false peace, like alcohol brings false exhilaration.

It is from these three stupefying influences that each one must attempt to awaken himself or herself. Look out for the glamour of religiosity and throw it off. Then, look out for the illusion of senses and pierce that veil of *Maya*. Next, look out for the delusion of seeing oneself as separate from all others. Study of one's own nature is the very first step. Take what is called in Occultism "the morning view of life"; that is, recognize that the time has come to

awaken and that all events in life must be seen as awakeners. All friends, all enemies are awakeners. One who takes "the morning view of life" looks upon life and light as a beginning to come into Life. Long is the march, and patience the only rest one is likely to have; but one who begins one's soul-search with the Dawn will very likely reach the spiritual home ere the dark of night sets in.

Once awakened by Ushas, if we persist in keeping awake it will not be long before we see the first of the heralds from the Kingdom of Divinity—Venus-Shukra as the morning star. Venus signifies Wisdom, which is superior to knowledge and is the purifier of the mind. And so the aspirant who has kept himself awake learns the Wisdom of Shukra, Venus-Hesperus. And as he watches, presently his mind's eye becomes keen and sharp, his ideation begins to touch his Heart, and then suddenly he catches the glimpse of Mercury-Budha, the Teacher *par excellence* of Esotericism, *Gupta Vidya*. It is Ushas, the Dawn-Maiden, who brings in her train these spiritual favours. So, whatever our stage in life, whatever our weaknesses or our virtues, let us invoke the blessings of Ushas, the Lady of the Dawn! May this year that is dawning in Nature bring the power of a new dawn into our own lives, and give us all the peace that comes with understanding, the patience that results from knowledge, the devotion that springs from sacrifice! May the Sun, whose messenger Ushas is, hasten for each of us the greater glory of its Father, the Spiritual Sun! The votary of Ushas becomes the child of Surya, the Sun. May we all touch that Spiritual Bliss!

OUR hope of immortality does not come from any religion, but nearly all religions come from that hope.

—INGERSOLL

KINDLING THE DIVINE SPARK

In time you will need no teacher. For as the individual has voice, so has that in which the individual exists. Life itself has speech and is never silent.

—*Light on the Path*

MAN contacts the matter that surrounds him through the agency of his senses. They are the doors and windows through which messages reach him from the great world outside. He reacts to these messages according as they conform or are opposed to his desires. They thus produce in him pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, likes and dislikes. The sense contacts that bring pleasure to some may have adverse effects on others and become the cause of aversions and dislikes.

Gross matter has the power to arouse sensations, memories and desires. The aspects of matter in its subtler forms have the same tendency. The atmosphere that hangs around places, the influences that the mere presence of a person can generate, the spontaneous arising of sense-laden images in the mind, are instances of how matter can affect us, producing in us elation or depression, joy or the dread of harm.

The "pairs of opposites" (the *dwandwa* of the *Gita*) are numerous. Heat and cold, fame and ignominy, joy and sorrow, are but examples. Any one of a pair may come to birth, reach its peak and die, yielding place to its opposite to arise and take over control of the lower mind and emotions. He who thinks he can move from one crest of enjoyment to another, mistakes. If he mounts the crest of a wave, he must as inexorably go into the trough. If he is for the moment in the grip of pleasure, he will have to meet the cyclic onrush of pain. The seeking to prolong a desired experience interminably and to stretch it to cover an entire lifetime is but a pipedream. Inexorably, pain must follow on the footsteps of pleasure, and tears be not far away from the laughter of humans.

We sense this. We have lived too many lives not to know this instinctively. Yet, it seems that the lesson has not been learnt and we therefore continue to seek our felicity in material things.

Writhing in pain, we still hanker after pleasure. Immersed in pleasure, we forget that pain is waiting just round the corner, ready to strike the instant the momentum of pleasure has exhausted itself. This oscillation between the two constituents of a pair is peculiar to matter and therefore to our mortal aspects. The *Gita* says that "those enjoyments which arise through the contact of the senses with external objects are wombs of pain, since they have a beginning and an end...the wise man delighteth not in these" (V, 22). The marks of the immortal and the imperishable are given thus: "The weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth it not, the water corrupteth it not, the wind drieth it not away" (II, 23). One interpretation of this could be that things of earth, fire, water and air have no power to reach to or to affect the inner man. Following on this, it would not be wrong to infer that anything that can be divided or disintegrated by weapons and properties of "earth," anything that can be burnt by "fire," anything that "water" can corrupt or the "air" sear, is mortal and therefore contains within itself what the *Gita* calls the womb of pain. These mortal aspects, and they are legion, can never bring lasting enjoyment. In fact, their touch will produce in the individual reactions that must sooner or later sway him from one pole to another of any one of the several "pairs of opposites."

From these instructions it can be inferred that there exists a wisdom which cannot be reached by a delving into or a deep study of the powers and properties that reside in plant, mineral or the elements. Those who pin their faith on the researches of modern science or on the abstruse findings of the Alchemists forget that they deal only with the evanescent aspects of things. When the human mind loses itself for long periods in the quest of the hitherto undiscovered aspects of matter, it, by that very concentration, disengages itself from the higher and therefore the spiritual potentialities. The forces attracted by a too close study of mortal aspects strike up a harmonic vibration in those chords in the person's make-up as are responsive by consanguinity or karmic heirloom. Vibrations so set up loosen morals because they have the power to stir up the desire nature, and once this bastion falls, there troop in lust,

anger, greed and envy. He who gets engrossed in properties that reside in the perishable side of things is apt to lose his hold upon the spirit. In such case, sooner or later, altruism leaves him utterly and he remains that strange being who has an acute reason but a distorted perspective. He has eyes but sees not. He has a mind that yields no true understanding. The fire of intellection may for a time look wonderful, but the glow fades and death quenches it, leaving but the ashes of a wasted life. The dust ultimately claims its own.

Lust, anger and greed mark the behaviour of the one who leans heavily upon the emotional oscillations that matter continuously generates. His thirst is not killed out by satiety, but gains on him so that, like the drunkard, he needs must rush often and then oftener to his flagon of wine. He cannot but be angry if the object of his desire is snatched away from him. He deeply resents someone else experiencing the very enjoyment that is denied him by man or nature. So is generated envy and then follows greed which compels him to store away his source of pleasure. The idea that his stock may be diminished if shared with another is abhorrent to him. The very concept of such a depletion is agonizing, and he remains a prey to mental anguish and self-inflicted torture. Ambition to hug wealth and fame and position or to have children, wife and household; anger at being laid aside and side-stepped through deceit or even merit; envy and a raging hunger when he sees another satiating his desires in abundant measure—these are all indications that the animal in him is very much alive and has still the power to go on a rampage. Bulwer-Lytton has said that the soul of man cannot mirror both heaven and earth, and that the one disappears from its surface as soon as the other is reflected upon its deep. Where lust, anger and envy are reflected, there charity, brotherliness and generosity are effaced. You cannot have light and darkness at the same time on the same spot in space. When a person seeks for that knowledge which cannot but arouse lust, anger and greed in himself or another, he by that act of searching repels his own spiritual nature because his mind, oriented to his wish, can but pick up and retain such knowledge as is consubstantial to his materialistic bent. How then can his coarsened mind retain and

protect undefiled or undistorted the higher Wisdom, the nobler science?

When the person, even the vile one and the boor, glimpses the halo behind the sacrifice, he kindles in himself a fire that burns the dross of ages. He may refuse to feed the holy fire and in his intoxication extinguish it, preferring to live in the darkened oscillations of the nether gloom. But the light has a consciousness of its own. It cannot be denied. It will search him out even if he flee to the far corners of the earth, and will light up the mean and squalid pettiness of his existence. Such is the fate of the coward and the renegade, the deserter of the battlefield and the patricide of his higher potentialities. For the one who through the worst of divagations still remembers his pedigree, still yearns for the nobler life, there may be breakers ahead and life may present to him horrifying pictures that may chill his soul. Yet, if he but keep the spark alive, it will surely one day light his life and make it rich and benign so that fruits follow it.

The divine spark is kindled and fed by sacrifice and by devotion. It is sacrifice when at humbler stages the person resists the impulses that arise from lust and anger. The man offers these—his successes and even his failures—to the Supreme that he cannot see, but which in moments of exaltation he can sense. When he is on the way that leads to dedication, he sees in his acts of sacrifice a voluntary and even a desired abandonment of success or failure. His tears and laughter, his pains and his pleasures, can now be looked upon as passing phases—welcome, because from these he can extract offerings worthy of the Supreme. He seeks nothing and nothing rejects, since anything that comes or departs is the result of the play and interplay of the terrestrial and mortal elements of nature. He is neither pleased nor displeased at the ebbs and tides of existence. He sees them and takes note of them as one does the coming on of night or day, of rain or shine, and of the variegated fauna and flora of the world. A renunciation of this order is difficult of attainment unless he has willed himself to engage in the right discharge of actions which are obligated on him by duty. But this duty is stern; it is exacting and can have no earthly overtones. It

cannot discriminate between mine and thine; it cannot lean towards the pleasant and away from the unpleasant. One in the midst of sacrificial action must be firmly fixed in the understanding that the only self to whom he can look for solace or guidance is the Self of all creatures. He can no longer differentiate between man and man, nor between man and the multitudinous life that surrounds him. As *The Voice of the Silence* puts it: "...feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in SELF."

If the individual desires the life enduring, if he seeks to unite himself with the undying aspect that overbroods him, he must of necessity shun the mortal trappings of life. He cannot prepare for a journey to the immortal and still attach himself by lengthening chains to those aspects of the perishable that still arouse fond memories of the past. He can approach bliss only when the bonds of earthly joys and woes lose their power to disturb his safe eternal peace.

Knowing that I, the great Lord of all worlds, am the enjoyer of all sacrifices and penances and the friend of all creatures, he shall obtain me and be blessed. (*Gita*, V, 29)

THERE is in man a star of whose rising he retains a dim remembrance, having seen it emerge from the horizon of a celestial country; and ever and anon during his terrestrial sojournings across the country of earth it gleams upon his memory to enlighten his dark way and comfort him with assurance that he has not wandered away from his native home. It rises not in the horizon of sense, the opaque orb distant from his former dwelling-place, but in the land of light; and its setting shall not be seen with other eyes than those of the spirit as it passes over the mountains of time and shines no longer to illumine the vales of space. Ideal, primal, original, is its shining, illumining the firmament of creation.

—BRONSON ALCOTT

THE KEY OF ANALOGY

WE are told that the law of analogy and correspondence can be used with a view to developing intuition. This offers a wide open field for thought and practical application which should help us to see the world in a grain of sand, God in the spider's web, and the divine in drudgery.

The law of analogy and correspondence teaches us to see the ordinary things of life as reflections of the inner life of spiritual realities. With the help of this law, should we not see the little duties of life as reflections of the great duties of the Universal Home? Do not the orderliness of the stars in their course and the beauty of the peacock's train teach us something? Should not everything be viewed as a reflection of the higher? Do not punctuality and accuracy in our everyday affairs put us in harmony with the universal rhythm and with the Great Powers whose intelligence lies at the base of all universal happenings? If we view everything thus, the world of day-to-day living becomes transformed; our individual relationships become changed. And as it is the mundane aspects of life that make us feel tired, dispirited, emotionally upset and mentally confused, this new outlook will enable us to do all things with a cheerful mind guided by a well-developed Intuition.

Is this why we are taught to think over our coming day during our morning meditation and to get a right attitude towards it, to see ourselves as integral parts of the universal scheme, carrying out cheerfully all the tasks that need to be done? It would seem that as soon as we realized the usefulness of everything, we should be able more easily to bring enthusiasm to life and to make an effort of the will to accomplish anything.

What makes us weary of life? It is our dissatisfaction with what we have to do, so that when we review our day's activities we feel as though nothing has been achieved. How can this be when no effort, not the smallest, can vanish from the world of causes? The performance of the mundane duties of life fills us with enthusiasm and cheer when we use the key of analogy to trace their celestial counterparts.

Thought and meditation are needed along this line to see our daily life and its little irksome duties as reflections of the Divine. We, too, are reflections of the One Creator, Preserver and Destroyer-Regenerator.

Along these lines, and not emotionally, let us clear the mind and make it cheerful and active. Let us cleanse our will of personal taint and use it to do all that needs to be done, impersonally, so that the universal Will can function through us. And let us tune our hearts to the great Heart at the centre of the Universe, which throbs compassionately "for all—save for itself." Then, indeed, shall we see the ALL in the smallest point of life as in the greatest of Suns; and slowly, but surely, will the intuitional flash come to us that there is but "one common vital principle that pervades all things," and this has its source in the glory and radiance of the great Dhyani-Buddhas, Themselves having Their root in the ALL.

EVERY ONE of us possesses the faculty, the interior sense, that is known by the name of *intuition*, but how rare are those who know how to develop it! It is, however, only by the aid of this faculty that men can ever see things in their true colours. It is an *instinct of the soul*, which grows in us in proportion to the employment we give it, and which helps us to perceive and understand the realities of things with far more certainty than can the simple use of our senses and exercise of our reason. What are called good sense and logic enable us to see only the appearances of things, that which is evident to everyone. The *instinct* of which I speak, being a projection of our perceptive consciousness, a projection which acts from the subjective to the objective, and not *vice versa*, awakens in us spiritual senses and power to act; these senses assimilate to themselves the essence of the object or of the action under examination, and represent it to us as it really is, not as it appears to our physical senses and to our cold reason. "We begin with *instinct*, we end with omniscience," says Professor A. Wilder, our oldest colleague.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

A SCIENTIST begins by asking questions of nature. They are usually quite trivial ones, unlike those of the old philosophers who inquired into the nature of the first cause and into the purpose of existence.

The scientist with his methods of investigation can never penetrate into the "kernel of matter" and get to the "soul of things." Instead he creates a conception of objects or of phenomena on the basis of sense data which he believes approximate to reality. *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 329-30) puts it this way:

The pure object apart from consciousness is unknown to us, while living on the plane of our three-dimensional World; as we know only the mental states it excites in the perceiving Ego. And, so long as the contrast of Subject and Object endures—to wit, as long as we enjoy our five senses and no more, and do not know how to divorce our all-perceiving *Ego* (the Higher Self) from the thralldom of these senses—so long will it be impossible for the *personal* Ego to break through the barrier which separates it from a knowledge of *things in themselves* (or *Substance*).

The scientist, on the basis of his observations and experiments and in order to obtain some insight into their meaning, creates concepts of what some part of the real world might be like, and then applies these concepts to increase his power over nature. Before attempting to evaluate the scientific approach to nature, one must consider the enormous increase in physical power that it has brought.

Some other characteristics of this approach must be noted. The questions a scientist asks determine to an important extent the answers that he receives, while the traditions and discipline of science help to shape, in their turn, the kind of questions he is capable of asking. For example, the first question a medical researcher is likely to ask is: "What organism is the cause of this disease?" And most probably he will succeed in isolating the guilty bacteria or virus. A psychologist, however, with a different training and different interests, may ask what emotional disturbance

predisposes his patient to the disease. He, too, will probably succeed in isolating this. Each succeeds in finding a portion of the truth according to the questions he asks of nature.

Conversely, with but a few exceptions, the orthodox scientist has difficulty in tracing intelligence or purpose in the operation of nature, simply because his training and traditions cannot let him ask what intelligence and purpose are at work. It is not, strictly, that he denies these things, but he considers them useless to him as concepts. As he understands history, the tremendous scientific advances of the past few centuries only became possible when these concepts were abandoned.

It has been pointed out recently that if intelligent beings exist on other planets, their concepts of physics and chemistry might be entirely different from ours for no other reason than that they had asked different questions of nature.

Next, science is essentially analytical. Every research into the structure of the atom, for instance, is a process of analysis, an attempt to isolate some part of the atom from the rest so that it may be considered separately before the whole may be understood.

Intimately connected with the analytical approach of science is its specialization. Whether or not something is lost in the process we shall consider later. Meanwhile, it must be understood that from certain points of view it has made possible great advances of a kind. Each specialized field of science tends to develop its own methods and its own concepts, but sometimes a concept may be used to link two or more fields together. However, as W. Q. Judge points out in his article "The Synthesis of Occult Science," science achieves synthesis only "incidentally or empirically."

One further traditional feature of science is its public or international character. The foundation of all scientific thought or imagination is physical observations that can be repeated and confirmed by anyone at any time. Similarly any process of logical deduction should be open to the critical onslaught of anyone at any time.

Before considering some of the features of Occultism as given in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, we should say

something in general of attempts made from time to time to show that science has come closer to Occultism. Some of these certainly show a basic misunderstanding of science, let alone of Occultism. In an important respect the gap between the two is as wide as ever, for what was written by H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 477-78) is as true now as it was then. Scientists cannot unveil the mysteries of nature because they are limited by their five senses and cannot transfer their consciousness "into the region of noumena and the sphere of primal causes." There have, however, been some fundamental changes in science in the past few decades. Apart from the more abstract nature of its concepts, there is, for one thing, the recognition that man is not observing the universe from outside. He is part of it, and every attempt at observation and measurement changes what is being observed or measured so that there is inherently a limit to the knowledge he can obtain by this means. Earlier, science recognized no limit.

In approaching the study of real Occultism, we must consider very seriously, first, that the Occultist has developed faculties that in the ordinary run of humanity have atrophied over millennia, and, second, that the habits of thought inculcated by modern education are not conducive to the understanding of Occultism. The faculties referred to atrophied in the process of natural physiological development and through wrong choices made by ourselves in the course of that development. As a result we are today creatures of our generation, mentally and physically. There are very definite limits to our perceptions and ideas, which are imposed by our temperaments and by the intellectual progress which a nation in its collectivity has attained. As explained in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (p. 96), the prototypes or ideas of things exist first in the *Akasa*, the eternal divine consciousness, but are reflected reversed in the Astral Light, which latter also reflects on its lower individual plane the life of our Earth, recording it on its "tablets." It is from this Astral Light that we get so many of our ideas, and the would-be Seer must get beyond its illusive influence if he would see the truth, or look below the surface of things. The kind of discipline, the degree of dedication to the interests of humanity

which this demands, is forcefully described by H.P.B. in her articles on Occultism gathered together in the book *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*. It is a matter of initiation into perceptive mysteries. (S.D., I, 326)

There is a sentence to be pondered on page 45 of Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine*: "Alone the Initiate, rich with the lore acquired by numberless generations of his predecessors, directs the 'Eye of Dangma' toward the essence of things in which no Maya can have any influence." Then there is another passage on page 516 of the same Volume: "Occult Science has its *changeless* traditions from prehistoric times. It may err in particulars; it can never become guilty of a mistake in questions of Universal laws, simply because that Science, justly referred to by philosophy as the '*divine*,' was born on higher planes, and was brought on Earth by beings who were wiser than man will be, even in the seventh Race of his Seventh Round." Although these traditions had to be tested and verified by the "Wise Men" of the Fifth Race, their existence did mean that these Adepts were not subject to the same kind of limitation on their level as scientists are on ours. The latter are somewhat in the position of children whose outlook and habits of thought have been shaped by "other members of the gang" instead of by loved and wise parents, whose influence liberates the perceptions and the imagination.

The gaze of the Occultist can penetrate into the "soul of things" where the scientist can perceive "but the external work of form." It is important not to confuse this penetration with the facile visions of the psychic. Something of its true nature is shown by sentences here and there in *The Voice of the Silence*. The soul of things is called there *Alaya*.

Behold how like the moon, reflected in the tranquil waves, Alaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the non-existent!

Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal

Harmony, Alaya's SELF; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal.

Here lies the crucial test of the capacity to look into the soul of things. Do we see compassion as an attribute possessed by rare human beings in a world of wars and class struggles and religious dissensions, a world where there is a struggle for existence and survival of the fittest? Or is compassion as the Law of Laws and fitness of all things as real to us as bodily sensations are to the majority? It is because compassion is the nature of Reality (using the term in a somewhat different sense than the One Reality or Beness) that the supreme requirement of the would-be Occultist is the great renunciation of the Self, unconditionally and absolutely, in thought as in action. If we really appreciated what this means, it would be a terrifying prospect for most of us in our present state. It is because of this nature of Reality that the pursuit of Truth, as distinct from the speculation of science, and active and universal beneficence blend into each other. In fact, the very thought of the true Occultist becomes invested with power for good, begetting correlations upon correlations.

In conclusion, we should summarize by saying that, while Occult Science, like modern science, is both experimental and analytical, and accepts no observation without confirmation from independent witnesses, there is yet a fundamental difference between them. As we have tried to show, modern science seeks synthesis, but it is a synthesis suggested to its limited imaginations by a knowledge of a small part of the total fact. Occultism is synthesis itself. Every process of differentiation is perceived as taking place from and in that World of Unity which is an actuality to the Occultist. Every phenomenal appearance is seen as merging into that Unity. Finally, every process is understood as a living movement, part of that universal movement of the evolution of beings who are themselves knowledge and wisdom and compassion incarnate.

EPICS, MYTHS, LEGENDS

UNIVERSAL RECORDS OF HUMAN EVOLUTION

IN the epics, myths and legends of every people, of whatever age or whatever race, Man is the Hero. The great stories are all allegorical, and symbolic of the journey of man to the world of the Gods, *i.e.*, Perfect Men. They tell of the many tests and trials that he must undergo, of the experiences and powers he must gain, of the indispensable knowledge he must acquire through his own efforts and sacrifices, of his conquest over his lower tendencies, in order that the *Purusha*, the Spiritual Person he *is*, may shine forth. And all this so that he can in the end return willfully to the world of ordinary human beings, with the power to help others to follow in his footsteps—become Saviours of mankind in their turn.

No great civilization has failed to leave on record some account of the One Great Adventure, some poem, some song, about the Great Hero—Man. The Norse *Eddas* and Sagas of Scandinavia; the Finnish *Kalevala*; the Persian *Shahnama* of Firdausi; the mediaeval German epic *Nibelungenlied*; the Babylonian *Gilgamesh Epic*; the Greek epics *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; the Indian *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*; the *Popol Vuh* of the ancient Guatemalians; the *Song of Hiawatha* and other legends and traditions of the North American Indians; the *Book of the Dead* of ancient Egypt, and the fragmentary remains from the records of other great civilizations such as those of Central and South America—all tell the same tale; the evolution of Man. They depict Man in all his phases, in every age, at every degree of development, in every predicament, undergoing every trial. They tell of his unfoldment from within himself, his heroic adventures, his ultimate conquest of the forces of darkness and ignorance within himself, and his mastery over the inferior powers of nature. They show that at the end of the Great Adventure he becomes fit to help, teach and inspire his fellows who are travelling behind him on the same journey.

Man is the Magician; his conquest and use at will of the forces within himself in order to control and use beneficently the same forces outside himself is called Magic—White Magic or Wisdom.

It seems strange that though these universal records of the destiny of man exist for our instruction and benefit, we do not quite grasp what is their implication as applied to ourselves, each one of us. It is a difficult idea to assimilate that "I" have to begin to see myself as one who, through sacrifice and suffering, must gain the knowledge and power to create myself into a Hero in order to fulfil my destiny and be able in the true sense to help, guide and teach those who know less than I do. But until we begin to recognize this fact and dwell on it, begin to look at it in the light of the reason and logic of the mind, and "sense" some of its significance and inspiration in our heart, we will not begin in dead earnest the sacrificial Journey. Nay more, we will not understand, except in an intellectual, theoretical way, why the stories deal so much with demons, dangers, pitfalls, enemies, delusions—all of which must be met and dealt with by Man who undertakes the Great Adventure.

The great Heroes of all times are made to meet the equivalents of the "Labours of Hercules," the temptations of Christ in the wilderness, or of the Buddha under the Bo-tree. The "dark night of the Soul" is experienced by each and all, and many have been found to cry out that they have been forsaken. This, too, is one of the great Trials. But man must *become* an Adept—he can never, never be made one—and he can become only through his own efforts, courage, strength, faith and vision.

Let us then read and study the legends, stories, myths, epics, songs and poems that have been left to us by our Predecessors. Let us keep in view the vision they give of our true destiny. Let us heed their warnings, discern the deep psychological truths implied in their tales. Thus we shall learn much that will lighten the Path of the Soul and touch it with a sense of the fitness of things.

It has been written: the Way is the Middle Way; the Path is the Path of Compassion. We only dimly glimpse as yet what these sayings mean—but we must learn their full meaning before we can become real Heroes. Reading the tales of the adventures of the Heroes will help us to understand our destiny better and make clear how we may follow in their footsteps.

ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT

[The following article by the poet George William Russell, best known by his pen name of "AE," appeared in *The Irish Theosophist* for February 1895. It was written at the time of the conspiracy against Mr. Judge and the consequent crisis that arose in the Theosophical Movement of the day. AE was one of the group of Irish Theosophists who remained faithful to Mr. Judge, as this article bears out.—EDS.]

I AM minded to put down some intuitions about brotherhood and trust in persons. A witty friend writes, "Now that I have made up my mind, I intend looking at the evidence." A position like that is not so absurd as at first it seems. It is folly only to those who regard reason alone and deny the value of a deep-seated intuition. The intuitive trust which so many members of the T.S. have in William Q. Judge, to my mind shows that he is a real teacher. In their deepest being they know him as such, and what is knowledge there becomes the intuition of waking hours. When a clamour of many voices arises making accusations, pointing to time, place and circumstance; to things which we cannot personally investigate, it is only the spirit within us can speak and decide. Others with more knowledge may give answering circumstances of time, place and act; but, with or without these, I back up my intuition with the reason—where the light breaks through, there the soul is pure. Says a brother truly:

The list of his works is endless, monumental; it shows us an untiring soul, an immense and indomitable will, a total ignoring of himself for the benefit of his fellow-members. This is not the conduct of the charlatan, not of the self-seeker. It is that of one of those brave and long-tried souls who have fought their way down through the vistas of time so that they might have strength to battle now for those who may be weaker.

Others may have been more eloquent and learned, but who has been so wise? Others may have written more beautifully, but who with such intimations of the Secret Spirit breathing within? Others

have explained intellectually *tattvas*, principles and what not, but who like him has touched the heart of a hidden nobility? Has he not done it over and over again, as here?

Do what you find to do. Desire ardently to do it, and even when you shall not have succeeded in carrying anything out but some small duties, some words of warning, your strong desire will strike like Vulcan upon other hearts in the world, and suddenly you will find that done which you had longed to be the doer of. Then rejoice that another has been so fortunate as to make such a meritorious Karma.

Or he speaks as a hero:

To fail would be nothing, but to stop working for Humanity and Brotherhood would be awful.

Or as one who loves and justifies it to the end:

We are not Karma, we are not the Law, and it is a species of that hypocrisy so deeply condemned by It for us to condemn any man. That the Law lets a man live is proof that he is not yet judged by that higher power.

To know of these laws is to be them to some extent. "What a man thinks, that he is, that is the old secret." The temple of Spirit is inviolate. It is not grasped by speech or by action. "Whom the Spirit chooses, by him it is gained. The Self chooses his body as its own." When the personal tumult is silenced, then arises the meditation of the Wise within. Whoever speaks out of that life has earned the right to be there. No cunning can simulate its accents. No hypocrisy can voice its wisdom. Whose mind gives out light—it is the haunt of the Gods. Does this seem too slight a guarantee for sincerity, for trust reposed? I know of none weightier. Look back in memory; consider how you have gained the truths you hold most sacred. Out of the martyrdom of opposing passions, out of the last anguish came forth the light. It was no cheap accomplishment. If someone meets us and speaks knowing of that law, we say inwardly, "I know you have suffered, brother!" But here is one with a larger wisdom than ours. Here is one whose words today have the

same clear ring. "The world knows him not." His own disciples hardly know him; he has fallen like Lucifer. But I would take such teaching as he gives from Lucifer himself, and say, "His old divinity remains with him still."

"After all you may be mistaken," someone says. "The feet of no one are set infallibly on the path." It may be so. Let us take that alternative. Can we reject him or any other as comrades while they offer? Never. Were we not taught to show to those on whom came the reaction from fierce effort, not cold faces, but the face of friendship, waiting for the wave of sure return? If this was a right attitude for us in our lesser groups, it is then right for the whole body to adopt. The Theosophical Society as a whole should not have less than the generous spirit of its units. It must exercise the same brotherly spirit alike to those of good or evil fame. Alike on the just and the unjust shines the Light of It, the Father-Spirit. Deep down in our hearts have we not all longed, longed, for that divine love which rejects none? You who think he has erred, it is yours to give it now. There is an occult law that all things return to their source, their cycles accomplished. The forces we expend in love and anger come back again to us thrilled with the thought which accepted or rejected them. I tell you, if worse things were true of him than what are said, if we did our duty simply, giving back in gratitude and fearlessness the help we had received from him, his own past would overcome the darkness of the moment, would strengthen and bear him on to the light.

"But," some push it further; "it is not of ourselves, but of this Society and its good name, we think. How can it accomplish its high mission in the world if we seem to ignore in our ranks the presence of the insincere person or fraud?"

I wish, my brothers, we could get rid of these old fears. Show, form, appearance and seeming, what force have they? A faulty face matters nothing. The deep inner attitude alone has power. The world's opinion implicates none of us with the Law. Our action may precipitate Karma, may inconvenience us for an hour; but the end of life is not comfort but celestial being; it is not in the good voice of the world today we can have any hope: its evil voice may

seem to break us for a little; but love, faith and gratitude shall write our history in flame on the shadowy aura of the world, and the Watchers shall record it. We can lose nothing; the Society can lose nothing. Our only right is in the action, and half the sweetness of life consists in loving much.

While I wrote, I thought I felt for a moment the true spirit of this pioneer body we belong to. Like a diver too long under seas, emerging I inhaled the purer air and saw the yellow sunlight. To think of it! what freedom! what freshness! to sail away from old report and fear and custom, the daring of the adventurer in our hearts having reliance only upon the laws of life to justify and sustain us.

—AE

THE Light that came from him [W. Q. Judge] was the same as that which came from H. P. B., and is in some measure also in the hearts of all who love either of them. It is of the very central essence of our being as Theosophists, the cause of the love we bear to Teachers and the love itself. It needs for its reawakening in each successive life but the merest moment of personal contact. And that moment came with the attack. He helped us from within and from without; was never ruffled, never irritated, never contemptuous, untiring in response. It is useless to make many words, and because a personal note is for the moment to be sounded, though my outer contact with him was neither frequent nor prolonged, I will say that the help he gave me must bear fruit for all time; that he showed the deepest knowledge of my inner necessities, weaknesses, and possibilities; that he was to me wise Teacher, and friend to the very centre; and that his utter integrity and the fullness of his humanity have helped me to the fashioning of an ideal of the perfect man. For which reasons his memory, the mere sound of his name, awakens an emotion that cannot be done into words, and that is in no way affected by the thought and the knowledge that he yet moves among the ranks. And all of this is only the corroboration of what will be said and has been said by our brothers through the world.

—HERBERT CORYN

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The general belief that science and religion are antagonistic to each other has been refuted by many modern thinkers. In *Bhavan's Journal* for October 31, 1995, Dr. D. R. Sharma, former Vice-Chancellor of Vikram University, Ujjain, writes of the developments in science in recent decades, and points out that it has now become necessary for it to understand the phenomenon of consciousness. In his view, there can be no conflict between science and religion, and both can find a common basis in mysticism.

In India, since ancient times the two kinds of knowledge, *Para Vidya* and *Apara Vidya*, have been considered complementary to each other. In the West, however, it is only lately that the dichotomy between science and religion has started narrowing. The scenario began to change dramatically and a new vision of reality emerged with the arrival of what is known as "new physics" with its philosophical implications. In Dr. Sharma's words:

First came the theory of relativity which demolished Newton's assumptions of space and time. Then came the theory of quantum mechanics which completely transformed our ideas of matter. Newton's determinism gave way to Heisenberg's "Principle of Uncertainty." ...Atomic and subatomic particles no longer have separate well-defined position and velocity; instead they have a quantum state which is a combination of position and velocity. Reductionism is now being replaced by "holism" which refers to an understanding of reality in terms of an integrated whole whose properties cannot be reduced to its smallest units....

Considering that the new physics is now several decades old, it is somewhat surprising that the philosophical implications of this branch have not yet percolated to society in spite of several excellent books by experts in non-technical language. Some of these books have commented on the parallels between concepts of new physics and those of Eastern mysticism....

While quantum mechanics had astonishing success in explaining wide-ranging physical phenomena, it swept away many deep-rooted assumptions about the nature of reality....This has led the famous astronomer Sir James Jeans to remark: "Today

there is a wide measure of agreement which on the physical side approaches almost unanimity that the stream of knowledge is heading towards a non-mechanical reality. The Universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine. Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect we ought rather to hail it as a creator and governor of the realm of matter." ...

Some theoretical physicists consider the whole Universe as one system—a vast network of particles. This interconnectedness gives a holistic flavour to the worldview. Some of these connections are unseen. According to David Bohm, they belong to the realm of "implicate" (unmanifest) order... In view of this interconnectedness, any fragmented or reductionist worldview becomes completely untenable....

With the advent of new physics there is a growing overlap between science and spirituality. Questions such as the nature of consciousness and the relationship of man with cosmos which were considered as belonging entirely to the domain of religion are now being investigated with scientific techniques....

Professor Geoffrey Chew, Chairman of the Physics Department, Lawrence Berkley Laboratory, California, says: "Our current struggle with certain aspects of advanced physics may thus be a foretaste of a completely new form of human endeavour, one that will not only lie outside physics, but will not even be describable as scientific." Such statements by the experts in the field of particle physics are indicative of the unity of all knowledge. Both Bohm and Chew look at the world as a dynamic web of interconnected, interpenetrating and interdependent particles. Both recognize that consciousness is an important aspect of the Universe....

Thus the latest science and the oldest wisdom are in perfect tune with each other. In a way, new physics is offering a modern scientific basis of synthesis with true religion—the *Sanatan Dharma*. There can be no legitimate conflict between science and religion provided we accept the basic tenets of both with humility. In fact, they are not only two facets of the same reality, but are also complementary to each other.

The controversy as to when a person is really dead was revived at a Delhi seminar on the ethics of dealing with death (*The Times of India*, November 14). The organ transplantation law recognizes brain-death as real death; that is, a person can be pronounced dead not when the heart stops beating, but when all electrical activity has ceased in the brain and the electroencephalogram comes out flat.

However, not all scientists agree with this definition of death and argue that there remain certain cases where the conditions for death may not be as well defined. There was, for instance, a hotly debated case in Germany of an 18-year-old girl who met with a road accident and was given intensive care in a hospital in Erlangen. Three days later, medical tests showed that brain death had occurred. But the girl was in the 13th week of pregnancy and the medical staff decided to maintain her bodily functions on the chance of the foetus surviving. A heated debate followed, with the girl's parents opposing the doctors' decision. A well-known German surgeon, Julius Hackenthal, argued that the girl was not really dead:

The expression brain death is a verbal construction that avoids the heart of the matter. In fact, only the cerebrum of the patient does not function, but the rest of the brain works very well. She is alive.

According to Anton Leist from the University of Zurich, one of the participants in the Delhi seminar:

Resistance to medical decisions not rarely results from deep-reaching confusions and lack of clarity, but it also, of course, can result from reasonable disagreement on fundamental opinions and values. Deeper cultural and philosophical resistance meets the brain-death conception of death, even in countries where it has been officially accepted.

Indian medical scientists at the seminar raised questions not just on how to define death, but also on the doctor's role in determining the importance of the patient's life, especially when there is limited accommodation in a hospital's intensive care unit. Dr. Sunil Pandiya, neurologist, said that one criterion could be

"expectation of a meaningful life after treatment."

According to Dr. Leist:

We must differentiate between the preservation and saving of life and its unnatural prolongation. Unnatural prolongation of life in an individual permanently deprived of his senses is irrational—it prolongs the agony of family and friends, it consumes scarce resources in a futile exercise. In its extreme form such attempts lead to cryogenic preservation of the brain and an attitude that commands death to wait.

Scientists' attempts to define death have invariably run into intricacies. German philosopher Hans Jonas says: "Death in reality is an event with blurred boundaries, a process rather than an event." According to him, the taking of organs from a dying patient, whose heart-lung function is still intact, amounts to an inhuman "instrumentalization" of the patient.

What medical men are now finding out about when a person is *really* dead, was asserted by Theosophy long ago:

The last portion of the frame that dies is the brain—which is often alive and thronged with images, long after, or, at any rate, for many hours and days after life has been pronounced by the spectators to be extinct. ("Fragments of Occult Truth": *The Theosophist*, September 1882; reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, February 1954)

As the state of the organ transplant art progresses, the moral and ethical questions are bound to become more complex.

How did birds evolve? Palaeontologists have been arguing about this for more than a century and to this day there is no agreement among them over the issue. Most of them think birds have descended from the smaller dinosaurs, but even that is under dispute. It is generally believed that *Archaeopteryx*, the oldest known bird combining reptilian and avian characteristics, appeared some 145 million years ago. Even some modern bird groups

are said to have been in existence before the mass extinction ended the Cretaceous Period and wiped out the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. These bird orders are said to have originated on the ancient supercontinent called Gondwanaland before it broke up. (*Discover*, October 1995)

An ornithologist from the University of North Carolina, U.S.A., Alan Feduccia, now suggests a new picture of bird evolution, based on Cretaceous fossils. Between 145 and 65 million years ago, he argues, virtually the only modern birds alive were an obscure group of shorebirds. They survived the mass extinction and later gave birth to the major water-bird and land-bird lineages. Other researchers, however, see things differently. Molecular biologist Alan Cooper's work with bird genes supports the conventional theory that most modern bird groups are 120 million years old—twice as old as Feduccia claims. The debate between palaeontologists and molecular biologists rests there for the moment.

The occult doctrine admits the derivation of birds from reptiles. On the ladder of evolution, "the reptile preceded the bird, and the bird the mammal" (*S.D.*, I, 404). "The missing links representing this transition process between reptile and bird are apparent to the veriest bigot, especially in the *ornithoscelidae*, *hesperornis*, and the *archaeopteryx* of Vogt" (*S.D.*, II, 183). *The Secret Doctrine* further tells us:

The amphibia, birds, reptiles, fishes, etc., are the resultants of the Third Round, astral fossil forms stored up in the auric envelope of the Earth and projected into physical objectivity subsequent to the deposition of the first Laurentian rocks. "Evolution" has to deal with the progressive modifications, which palaeontology shows to have affected the lower animal and vegetable kingdoms in the course of geological time. It does not, and from the nature of things cannot, touch on the subject of the pre-physical types which served as the basis for future differentiation. Tabulate the general laws controlling the development of physical organisms it certainly may, and to a certain extent it has acquitted itself ably of the task. (II, 684)

Everyone responds to music of some kind. It is more than just a pleasant diversion; the intuition of the ancients and the investigations of modern science alike declare it to be a powerful tonic both for mind and for body. In many cultures, healing still remains a primary purpose of music as it has been throughout history. In more advanced societies, however, with the advent of modern medicine, music was relegated to the category of entertainment arts—but its more meaningful role is being rediscovered today.

Some present-day physicians and psychologists are veering round to the view that the right kind of music can sometimes be a better prescription for health and happiness than drugs. Nancy Butcher's article in *The World and I*, November 1995, gathers together expert opinions on the subject:

Acceptance of the idea that music can be a powerful adjunct to standard medical treatment has been on the rise within the medical community in recent decades. For example, Dr. Raymond Bahr, head of the coronary care unit at St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore, believes that listening to classical music for thirty minutes does the same for his patients as ten milligrams of Valium....

Dr. Ira Altshuler, a pioneer in the field, wrote that music is an excellent therapy "because it meets with little or no intellectual resistance and does not need to appeal to logic." In the words of Hans Reese, formerly a professor of neuropsychiatry at the University of Wisconsin medical center in Madison, music gains access "through the 'back door,' at the unconscious level." Music therapists believe that through this back door, music can reach those suffering from serious depression, anxiety, and other emotional problems.

The exciting field of *psychoneuroimmunology*, or PNI, deals with the connections between moods, the nervous system, and the immune system....Perhaps PNI explains why music appears to ease some physical symptoms—like the pain associated with surgery, childbirth, and cancer—and ameliorates some cases of high blood pressure and gastric disorders. Migraine headaches, too, sometimes respond to music therapy....

Although music's effects on healthy people are necessarily

less dramatic than its results with the seriously ill, they are no less important. "Surrounded by the right sounds," says John Diamond, a behavioural kinesiologist, "we all can be invigorated, energized, entertained and balanced... Music, then, can be an important part of our programme of primary prevention."

Both *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* contain references to the curative properties of music, which form a subdivision of the larger subject of the vast potencies of sound—"a tremendous Occult power." Music is "the combination and modulation of sounds and sound is the effect produced by the vibration of the ether." "From the remotest ages the philosophers have maintained the singular power of music over certain diseases, especially of the nervous class." In ancient Egypt, "music was used in the Healing Department of the temples for the cure of nervous disorders." Some 20 centuries ago, Asclepiades employed music for the same purpose. Democritus affirmed that many diseases could be cured by the melodious sound of a flute. Kircher and Mesmer used harmonicas successfully. It has been known to some down the ages that "sound has an attractive property; it draws out disease, which streams out to encounter the musical wave, and the two blending together, disappear in space."

Music is known to have an effect even on animals and plants. But whether the subjects are human or non-human, the important point is the type and quality of the music. Certain kinds of music can throw us into frenzy while others exalt us. It should be realized that every sound awakens a corresponding one in invisible spheres and "the repercussion produces either a good or bad effect." The following valuable instruction given by H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* is pertinent:

Harmonious rhythm, a melody vibrating softly in the atmosphere, creates a beneficent and sweet influence around, and acts most powerfully on the psychological as well as physical natures of every living thing on earth; it reacts even on inanimate objects, for matter is still spirit in its essence, invisible as it may seem to our grosser senses. (II, 411)
