

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



*There is no Religion Higher than Truth*

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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## THE MYSTERY OF EARTHQUAKES

Certain cataclysms in nature, which often decimate whole populations, are necessary to mankind. An earthquake may for all the world know, be a bliss and a tidal wave prove salvation to the many at the expense of the few. The "fittest" were seen to survive in the destruction of every old race, and made to merge into, and assimilate with the new, for nature is older than Darwin. Say rather, then, to yourself "whatever happened there can be no cause for regret."—MAHATMA K. H.

Mother earth seems to have been very hard to her children of Quetta. One tremendous quake and thousands have died, and destruction of property has been immense. The sympathy of the world has been aroused and we add our humble thought-energy to the cumulative flow of condolence towards our brethren who are sufferers.

### NOT GOD BUT KARMA

The cataclysm has once again caused many people to talk. While materialistic scientists confess their ignorance about the forces which produce earthquakes, and therefore their inability to predict and to warn, religious folk wonder why God, the All-Merciful Father permitted such a calamity to occur. Many of these people will hear and repeat: "Thy Will be Done," and not raise another question in their minds or on their lips. As men of all religious creeds have died and suffered, the charge of callous heartlessness and abject cruelty has to be laid on the shoulders of Ishwara, Ahura Mazda, Allah and God alike. The destructive act has to be explained by those who believe and assert in the existence of a God in Heaven; but most will mys-

tify and fool themselves and others by saying: "Who can dare to question the wisdom of the All-Merciful?" Logic and simple common sense, we answer. It is not only the right but the duty of the human mind to probe the mystery behind the veil of matter—whether it be the hard crust of earth or the tenuous substance of air.

Dethrone a capricious and cruel God sitting safe in heaven and either producing or permitting such ghastliness on earth. Put in the place of the extra-cosmic God the ever-active Law of Karma, universal, impersonal, which knows neither wrath nor pardon. The great Buddha solved the mystery of human suffering; the cause of both personal and collective suffering is the same. Tracing the root of all misery in this jungle of life to Trishna, Tanha, Kama, the thirst and longing for sensuous existence, He taught that the force of passion overpowering the force of Compassion in the human heart produces strife, just as Compassion overpowering passion creates the peace and serenity of Nirvana. Not God and Devil outside of man, but Buddha and Mara within each *corpus* produce all phenomena which affect the human kingdom. These phenom-

ena are but effects produced by causes, and however terrifying or ugly they may appear, they are but the legitimate and rhythmic outcome of the battle between good and evil taking place in human blood and breast. The Buddha asks (*Light of Asia*, Book VIII):—

What grief

Springs of itself and springs not of Desire ?

And in His answer he gives a great psychological truth, also taught in the fifth chapter of the *Gita*.

Senses and things perceived mingle and light

Passions quick spark of fire :

So flameth Trishna, lust and thirst of things.

The contact between senses and objects allowed to run riot produces catastrophies and suffering in the life of the individual. And what is true of him is also true of collective humanity. The Law of Karma has national, racial and other aspects. The subject is difficult, but a little study of this aspect of the universal Law clarifies our understanding and reveals to us the connection between the individuals who suffer and an accident or a cataclysm which is the means of producing that suffering. To help the reader in the study of the subject we give below some aphorisms on Karma from the U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 21 :—

(a) Karma is an undeviating and unerring tendency in the Universe to restore equilibrium, and it operates incessantly. (No. 3)

(b) Karma is the adjustment of effects flowing from causes, during which the being upon whom and through whom that adjustment is effected experiences pain or pleasure. (No. 2)

(c) Karma operates to produce cataclysms of nature by concatenation through the mental and astral planes of being. A cataclysm may be traced to an immediate physical cause such as internal fire and atmospheric disturbance, but these have been brought on by the disturbance created through the dynamic power of human thought. (No. 30)

(d) Egos who have no Karmic connection with a portion of the globe where a cataclysm is coming on are kept without the latter's operation in two ways : (a) by repulsion acting on their inner nature, and (b) by being called and warned by those who watch the progress of the world. (No. 31)

Thus an earthquake has an immediate physical cause, but that cause, in its turn is rooted in "the dynamic power of human thought." The great Buddha also referred to the proximate and the remote causes of an earthquake. Elsewhere we reprint His statement on the subject.

## FROM THE SECRET DOCTRINE

The above explanation will be regarded as fantastic, and very likely laughed at by those who have indiscriminately drugged themselves with the opium of modern theories. Meanwhile the Theosophical

student and enquirer will ponder over the following few out of numerous references to the subject from H. P. B.'s *Secret Doctrine* with profit.

(a) Violent minor cataclysms and colossal earthquakes are recorded in the annals of most nations—if not of all. Elevation and subsidence of continents is always in progress. The whole coast of South America has been raised up 10 to 15 feet and settled down again in an hour. Huxley has shown that the British islands have been four times depressed beneath the ocean and subsequently raised again and peopled. The Alps, Himalayas and Cordilleras were all the result of depositions drifted on to sea-bottoms and upheaved by Titanic forces to their present elevation. The Sahara was the basin of a Miocene sea. Within the last five or six thousand years the shores of Sweden, Denmark and Norway have risen from 200 to 600 feet ; in Scotland there are raised beaches with outlying stacks and skerries *surmounting* the shore now eroded by the hungry wave. The North of Europe is still rising from the sea and South America presents the phenomena of raised beaches of over 1,000 miles in length, now at a height varying from 100 to 1,300 feet above the sea-level. On the other hand, the coast of Greenland is sinking fast, so much so that the Greenlander will not build by the shore. All these phenomena are certain. (II. 787)

(b) That worlds (also Races) are periodically destroyed by fire (volcanoes and earthquakes) and water, in turn, and renewed, is a doctrine as old as man. Manu, Hermes, the Chaldees, all antiquity believed in this. Twice already has the face of the globe been changed by fire, and twice by water, since man appeared on it. As land needs rest and renovation, new forces, and a change for its soil, so does water. Thence arises a periodical redistribution of land and water, change of climates, etc., all brought on by geological revolution, and ending in a final change in the axis. Astronomers may pooh-pooh the idea of a periodical change in the behaviour of the globe's axis, and smile at the conversation given in the Book of Enoch between Noah and his "grandfather" Enoch ; the allegory is, nevertheless, a geological and an astronomical fact : there is a secular change in the inclination of the earth's axis, and its appointed time is recorded in one of the great Secret Cycles. (II. 725-6)

(c) Lemuria was *sunk* under the waves, owing to earthquakes and subterranean fires,

as Great Britain and Europe will be one day. It is the ignorance of our men of science, who will accept neither the tradition that several continents have already sunk, nor the periodical law which acts throughout the Manvantaric cycle—it is this ignorance that is the chief cause of all the confusion. (II. 266)

(d) We are assured by Archaic Scientists that all such geological cataclysms—from the upheaval of oceans, deluges, and shifting of continents, down to the present year's cyclones, hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, and even the extraordinary weather and seeming shifting of seasons which perplexes all European and American meteorologists—are due to, and depend on the moon and planets; aye, that even modest and neglected constellations have the greatest influence on the meteorological and cosmical changes, over, and within our earth, let us give one moment's attention to our sidereal despots and rulers of our globe and men. Modern Science denies any such influence; archaic Science affirms it. (II. 699)

Just as there are great and small cycles, so are there major and minor cataclysms affecting a whole race composed of millions or a small group of a few thousands.

## PREDICTION AND WARNING

One of the aphorisms, No 31, clearly indicates that there are those who possess sufficient knowledge to predict the coming on of an earthquake just as modern scientists predict an eclipse. Theosophy asserts that the great Sages of olden days and their modern heirs possess sufficient data to prophesy. Says H.P.B. in *The Secret Doctrine*—and be it remembered it was published in 1888 :—

To the Occultists, who believe in the knowledge acquired by countless generations of Seers and Initiates, the data offered in the Secret Books are all-sufficient. (II. 700)

Yet in the prognostication of *such* future events, at any rate, all foretold on the authority of cyclic recurrences, there is no psychic phenomenon involved. It is neither *prevision*, nor *prophecy*; no more than is the signalling of a comet or star, several years before its appearance. It is simply knowledge and mathematically correct computations which enable the WISE MEN OF THE EAST to foretell, for instance, that England is on the eve of such or another catastrophe; France, nearing such a point of her cycle, and

Europe in general threatened with, or rather, on the eve of, a cataclysm, which her own cycle of racial *Karma* has led her to. The reliability of the information depends, of course, on the acceptance or rejection of the claim for a tremendous period of historical observation. Eastern Initiates maintain that they have preserved records of the racial development and of events of universal import ever since the beginning of the Fourth Race. (I. 646)

A very natural question will be asked: If some Sages can predict and prophesy, why do They not do so? Why were the poor people of Quetta not warned in good time?

Part of the answer is to be found in the very aphorism, No. 31, quoted above. Karmic entanglements are like cob-webs in which flies are caught; such entanglements form a barrier for any force acting on the "inner nature," and deafen the ear of flesh to any call or warning.

Secondly, there are those to whom such a cataclysm comes as a blessing in disguise, as is pointed out by a Master in the extract quoted as the text of this article.

Thirdly, because the moral nature of the race of to-day has not moved to any height, while the mind has grown out of proportion, and has acquired knowledge which is being used for selfish ends, the real wisdom of the old Alchemists and Astrologers remains *terra incognita* to the modern mind. Just as a blind man cannot see, so a mind blinded by selfishness, greed and passion cannot recognize facts and truths which intimately affect the destiny of the race. The same Mahatma K. H. writes :—

The Occult Science is *not* one in which secrets can be communicated of a sudden, by a written or even verbal communication. If so, all the "Brothers" should have to do, would be to publish a *Handbook* of the art which might be taught in schools as grammar is. It is the common mistake of people that we willingly wrap ourselves and our powers in mystery, that we wish to keep our knowledge to ourselves, and of our own will refuse—"wantonly and deliberately"—to communicate it. . . . Then, knowledge can only be communicated gradually; and some of the highest secrets—if actually formulated even in your well prepared ear—might sound to you as insane gibberish. . . This is the real cause of our reticence. This is why people so often complain with a plausible show of reason that no new knowledge is communicated to them, though they have toiled for it for two, three or more years.

## EARTHQUAKES

### AS THE BUDDHA EXPLAINED THEM

[The following is slightly abridged from the Maha-Parinibbana-sutta, Chapter third—S. B. E., Vol. XI, p. 44 *et seq.*—Eds.]

Then the venerable Ananda went up to where the Blessed One was, did obeisance, seated himself respectfully at one side, and said: "Wonderful indeed and marvellous is it that this mighty earthquake should arise, awful and terrible. What may be the proximate, what the remote cause of the appearance of this earthquake?"

"Eight are the proximate, eight the remote causes, Ananda, for the appearance of a mighty earthquake. What are the eight? This great earth, Ananda, is established on water, the water on wind, and the wind rests upon space. And at such a time, Ananda, as the mighty winds blow, the waters are shaken by the mighty winds as they blow, and by the moving water the earth is shaken. These are the first causes, proximate and remote, of the appearance of a mighty earthquake.\*

"Again, Ananda, a being of great power who has his heart well under control by intense meditation of the finite idea of earth or the infinite idea of water can make this earth move and tremble and be shaken violently. This is the second cause.

"Again, Ananda, when a Bodhisatta consciously and deliberately leaves his temporary form in the heaven of delight and descends into his mother's womb,† then is this earth made to quake and tremble and is shaken violently. This is the third cause.

"Again, Ananda, when a Bodhisatta deliberately and consciously quits his mother's womb,† then the earth quakes. This is the fourth cause.

"Again, Ananda, when a Tathagata arrives at the supreme and perfect enlightenment, then this earth quakes. This is the fifth cause.

"Again, Ananda, when a Tathagata founds the sublime kingdom of righteousness, then this earth quakes. This is the sixth cause.

"Again, Ananda, when a Tathagata consciously and deliberately rejects the remainder of his life, then this earth quakes. This is the seventh cause.

"Again, Ananda, when a Tathagata passes entirely away with that utter passing away in which nothing whatever is left behind, then this earth quakes. This is the eighth cause."

\* The student will be helped to understand this allegorical statement by what W. Q. Judge says on p. 123 of his *Ocean of Theosophy*.—Eds.

† Cf. the statement of W. Q. Judge in his *Letters That Have Helped Me*, pp. 133-4.

## REVIVING THE DEAD

Medical science is still uncertain as to the exact moment when death actually takes place. There are cases of seemingly dead persons returning to life. In such cases the local decomposition of vital organs does not set in and medical authority waits in suspense even to pronounce death. Death has not taken place even when local decomposition has set in; this is shown by a Russian scientist, Professor Andreyev in his experiments of revivifying the dead bodies of animals and even of men.

The *May World* (London) gives one such experiment on a dead body and along with it the conclusion of the Professor thus:—

Into the veins of the corpse was poured a liquid solution of salts of the consistency of the blood fluid. It was found that, after a lapse of some fifteen minutes, the dead body began to show signs of life—a tremor passed over lips and eyelids, saliva flowed from the mouth and an unmistakable groan came from the throat.

..... when death came as a result of a severe illness causing affection of the vital organs, then, of course, there was no hope for the success of the experiment; but in cases where the heart and breathing stopped under chloroform or from bleeding, and no other means were available, the success attending the experiment on animals gave sufficient ground for trying it on human beings.

Readers' attention may be drawn to the following from H.P.B.'s *Isis Unveiled* (I. 483):—

In the case of what physiologists would call "real death," but which is not actually so, the astral body has withdrawn; perhaps local decomposition has set in. How shall the man be brought to life again? The answer is, the interior body must be forced back into the exterior one, and vitality re-awakened in the latter. The clock has run down, it must be wound. If death is absolute; if the organs have not only ceased to act, but have lost the susceptibility of renewed action, then the whole universe would have to be thrown into chaos to resuscitate the corpse—a miracle would be demanded. But, as we said before, the man is not dead when he is cold, stiff, pulseless, breathless, and even showing signs of decomposition; he is not dead when buried, nor afterward, until a certain point is reached. That point is, *when the vital organs have become so decomposed, that if reanimated, they could not perform their customary functions*; when the main-spring and cogs of the machine, so to speak, are so eaten away by rust, that they would snap upon the turning of the key. Until that point is reached, the astral body may be caused, without miracle, to reënter its former tabernacle.

## YOGA VIDYA

## SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY H. P. B.

A Hindu gentleman of the Madras Presidency propounds a number of questions about Occult Science which we answer in these columns, as the information is often demanded of us and we can reach all at once in this way.

Q. Do you or Col. Olcott undertake to teach this wonder *Vidya* to any one who may be anxious to learn it?

A. No: the correspondent is referred to our January number for remarks upon this point.

[We insert a reprint of those remarks here.—Eds.]

In common with all who have made any study of Occult Science, we have the greatest repugnance to the fame of a worker of wonders or "miracles." Since the discussion of the Simla occurrences began, some two months ago, we have been flooded with all manner of absurd requests that we would find missing persons and property of sorts: as though no nobler use could be made of one's time and occult knowledge than the turning of one's self into an "occult retriever"—to use the *Pioneer's* happy expression. Once, and for all, let it be understood that Madame Blavatsky pays no attention to such idle requests, and that she deserves no credit for the Simla phenomena, which—as a careful reading of the *Pioneer* letter will plainly show—were understood to have been done by quite a different person. (*The Theosophist*, II, 92, Jan. 1881)

As far as the manifestations are concerned we again repeat that we firmly believe in their occurrence and reality from our personal knowledge; and we should be glad to prove their existence to the sceptics and thereby turn the laugh on many a scoffer we know. But beyond expressing our firm and unwavering belief in the genuineness of most of the mediumistic phenomena and the frequent occurrence of such, independently of any medium whatever, we venture to say no more. Let every one build his own theory as to the agency at work, and then we may be able to compare notes with better success than heretofore. (*The Theosophist*, II, 183, May, 1881)

Q. Would you like to give proofs of the existence of occult powers in man to any one who may be sceptically inclined, or who may desire to have his faith strengthened, as you have given to Mr. and Mrs. . . . . and the Editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*?

A. We would "like" that every one should have such proofs who needs them, but, as the world

is rather full of people—some twenty-four crores being in India alone—the thing is impracticable. Still such proofs have always been found by those who sought them in earnest, from the beginning of time until now. We found them—in India. But then we spared neither time, trouble nor expense in journeying around the world.

Q. Can you give such proofs to one like myself who is at a great distance; or must I come to Bombay?

A. Answered above. We would not undertake to do this thing, even if we could, for we would be run down with thousands of curiosity-seekers, and our life become a burden.

Q. Can a married man acquire the *Vidya*?

A. No, not while a *Grihasta*. You know the invariable rule was that a boy was placed at a tender age under his *guru* for this training; he stopped with him until he was 25 to 30; then lived as a married man 15 to 20 years; finally retired to the forest to resume his spiritual studies. The use of liquors, of beef, and certain other meats and certain vegetables, and the relations of marriage prevent spiritual development.

Q. Does God reveal himself by inspiration to a Yogi?

A. Every man has his own ideas about "God." So far as we have learned, the Yogi discovers his god in his inner self, his ATMA. When he reaches that point he is inspired—by the union of himself with the Universal, Divine Principle—Parabrahma. With a personal God—a God who thinks, plots, rewards, punishes and repents—we are not acquainted. Nor do we think any Yogi ever saw such an one—unless it be true, as a missionary affirmed, the other day, at the close of Col. Olcott's lecture at Lahore that Moses who had murdered a man in Egypt and the adulterous murderer, (David), were Christian Yogis!

Q. If any adept has power to do any thing he likes, as Col. Olcott said in his lecture at Simla,\* can he make me, who am hungering and thirsting after the *Vidya*, a thorough adept like himself?

A. Colonel Olcott is no adept and never boasted of being one. Does our friend suppose any

\* Col. Olcott never said anything of the kind.—Ed. [*The Theosophist*.]

adept ever became such without making himself one, without breaking through every impediment through sheer force of WILL and SOUL-POWER? Such adeptship would be a mere farce. "AN ADEPT BECOMES, HE IS NOT MADE" was the motto of the ancient Rosicrucians.

Q. How is it that in the presence of such clear proof the most civilized nations still continue to be sceptical?

A. The peoples referred to are Christian, and although Jesus declared that all who believed in him should have the power to do all manner of wonders (See Mark, XXVI, 17, 18), like a Hindu Yogi's, Christendom has been waiting in vain some eighteen centuries to see them. And now having become total disbelievers in the possibility of such *Siddhis*, they must come to India to get their proofs, if they care for them at all.

Q. Why does Col. Olcott fix the year 1848 as the time from which occult phenomena have occurred?

A. Our friend should read more carefully and not put us to the trouble to answer questions that are quite useless. What Col. Olcott did say was that Modern Spiritualism dates from 1848.

Q. Are there any such mediums in India as William Eddy, in whose presence materialized forms can be seen?

A. We do not know, but suspect there are. We heard of a case at Calcutta where a dead girl revisited her parents' house in broad daylight, and sat and conversed with her mother on various occasions. Mediumship can be easily developed anywhere, but we think it a dangerous thing and decline to give instructions for its development. Those who think otherwise can find what they want in any current number of the *London Spiritualist*, the *Medium and Daybreak*, the *Melbourne Harbinger of Light*, the *American Banner of Light*, or any other respectable Spiritualistic organ.

Q. How do these mediums get their powers;—by a course of training, or as the result of an accident of their constitution?

A. Mediums are mainly so from birth; theirs is a peculiar psycho-physiological constitution. But some of the most noted mediums of our times have been made so by sitting in circles. There is in many persons a latent mediumistic faculty, which can be developed by effort and the right conditions. The same remark applies to adeptship. We all have the latent germs of adeptship in us, but in the case of

some individuals it is infinitely easier to bring them into activity than in others.

Q. Col. Olcott repudiates the idea of spirit agency as necessary to account for the production of phenomena; yet I have read that a certain scientist sent spirits to visit the planets and report what they saw there.

A. Perhaps reference is made to Professor William Denton, the American geologist, author of that interesting work *The Soul of Things*. His explorations were made through psychometry, his wife—a very intellectual lady though a great sceptic as to spirits—being the psychometer. Our correspondent should read the book.

Q. What becomes of the spirits of the departed?

A. There is but one "Spirit"—Parabrahma, or by whatever other name one chooses to call the Eternal Principle. The "souls" of the departed pass through many other stages of existence after leaving this Earth-body, just as they were in many others anterior to their birth as men and women here. The exact truth about this mystery is known only to the highest adepts; but it may be said even by the lowest of the neophytes that each of us controls his future rebirths, making each next succeeding one better or worse according to his present efforts and deserts.

Q. Is asceticism necessary for Yoga?

A. Yoga exacts certain conditions which will be found described at p. 47 of our December number. [Swami Dayanand's views about Yoga]. One of these conditions is seclusion in a place where the Yogi is free from all impurities—whether physical or moral. In short, he must get away from the immoral atmosphere of the world. If any one has by such study gained powers, he cannot remain long in the world without losing the greater part of his powers—and that the higher and nobler part. So that, if any such person is seen for many consecutive years labouring in public, and neither for money nor fame, it should be known that he is sacrificing himself for the good of his fellow-men. Some day such men seem to suddenly die, and their supposed remains are disposed of; but yet they may not be dead. "Appearances are deceitful"—the proverb says.

## VAST WORKS OF THE PAST

In the March *Aryan Path* Mr. S. V. Viswanatha presented the old Indian view on "The Citizen and the State." It pictures but the actual reality of conditions in ancient India :—

It was looked upon as the duty of the government to provide facilities for irrigation as will be clear from the question that Narada put to Yudhishtira in the *Mahabharata* (Sabha, V. 81). "Are large tanks and lakes constructed in the country in suitable places and filled with water so that the thirsty fields may not be entirely dependant on the water rained by the heavens?" Larger schemes of irrigation and public works too ambitious for individual enterprise were undertaken by the state, while the cultivators provided the minor ones which they could easily manage to institute themselves.

These remarks recall the article which was published in Mr. Judge's *Path* for September 1894, under the above caption and we reprint it here :—

"The objection is often urged against Theosophical theories that they were produced by Eastern nations, and if we are to judge by India of to-day these beliefs will result in stagnating human effort. But the facts do not support the objection. Indeed, if we think of the present works of man in the West and make any comparison with the older days, we must conclude that ours are the most fragile and will the sooner yield to the destroying touch of time. What modern work is to be compared to the pyramid of Ghizeh in Egypt? None in respect to any of the elements involved. Which of our huge buildings will last for more than ten thousand years? In Chicago the place where most, perhaps, the tall buildings are found in one spot, they say the foundation is really mud, and even now the tallest tower of all must come down and other buildings show signs of weakness. As light convulsion would wreck them all. And what of our records both of literature and science? All will wither, disappear, be eaten up by moth and worm and after a time not a line be left. What do we record on our inscriptions on buildings when we make any? Only some unimportant names of builder, contractor, or official in the municipality. There are no sentences of art or science or philosophy. And even the foundation stones contain but silly remains and small things of no use to future men. Most of our energy is devoted to getting mere coin that must soon or late be lost or given up, be melted, and altogether done away with. Yet though the Egyptians, who long ago left the scene, held beliefs that we might regard as superstitious, they made buildings and inscriptions and pictures which confront us to-day as the mute proofs of the mightiness of a nation that rules its life by theories we do not accept.

"But in India and the rest of the East

is where the objection is directed. Even there the facts are to the contrary. What of their tanks for watering towns and fields; of their great temples; of their awe-inspiring underground constructions; of those buildings cut out of the solid mountain with mathematical precision. Can these be the work of people whose beliefs tend to stagnate human effort? I think not.

"The caves of Ellora and Elephanta contain immense images and carvings which would do credit to this day. The caves of Kailas are 401 feet deep and 185 feet wide. Man made these. Inside is a conical pagoda 100 feet high, with a music gallery, five large chapels, a large court, and a colonnade. Three immense elephants are there cut from the stone. An image of Lakshmi reposes with two elephants standing on their hind legs as if pouring water over her. A passage then opens right and left. Thirty feet on there are two obelisks carved, being 41 feet high and 11 feet square. Thirty feet more and you find a great pagoda carved inside and out. There are sixteen pillars, twenty-two pilasters, and five entrances. The roof is carved to represent cross beams, and each pillar is different from the other.

"At Ajunta are twenty-seven cut caves, the inscription seeming to give the date of 200 years B.C. What is the temple of Solomon to all this?

"Then look at India's tanks. We would call them reservoirs. That of Lingamputti is a great triangle  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, 1 broad at the base, and 200 years old. Bhusrapatanam tank is 13 miles in circumference; Guntoor 8 miles; Gurgi 12 miles; Shengalmalla 11 miles; Duraji 9 miles. Chambrambakam was twenty miles, and watered sixty-eight villages. Vivanam has a dam 12 miles long. At Hyderabad is a great tank about 20 square miles, watering the city.

"All over the East are immense works of the past which we could not duplicate, and which our sordid civilization would not permit us to think of "wasting" money upon. If we seek further and inquire of the works of the mind, the ancient astronomy confronts us. Were it not for it, our astronomers might now be wondering what was the meaning of the backward motion of the sun in the Zodiac, if they knew anything at all about it. It is fair, then, to say that there is no force at all in the objection to Theosophical thought as an Eastern product on the ground that it will or might inhibit effort. On the contrary, it will broaden our civilization and make us create works as great if not greater than those of the past. But we must not ignore the past, for to do so is to incur a sure if mysterious retribution, because that past belongs to ourselves and was a part of our own doing and begetting."



## GANDHIJI ON CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES

In the June *Aryan Path* Dr. Bharatan Kumappa, a liberal minded Indian Christian, criticised Christian Missions in India and wrote against their proselytizing work. The following appears in Gandhiji's *Harijan* (Poona) for 11th May :—

“One of our missionary visitors put a number of interesting questions. Last came the question of questions which missionary friends are not tired of asking and Gandhiji is not tired of answering : ‘You would prevent missionaries coming to India in order to baptize?’

“Who am I to prevent them? If I had power and could legislate, I should certainly stop all proselytizing. It is the cause of much avoidable conflict between classes and unnecessary heart-burning among missionaries. But I should welcome people of any nationality if they came to serve here for the sake of service. In Hindu households the advent of a missionary has meant the disruption of the family coming in the wake of change of dress, manners, language, food and drink.

“Is it not the old conception you are referring to? No such thing is now associated with proselytization.

“The outward condition has perhaps changed but the inward mostly remains. Vilification of Hindu religion, though subdued, is there. If there was a radical change in the missionaries' outlook, would Murdoch's books be allowed to be sold in mission depots? Are those books prohibited by missionary societies? There is nothing but vilification of Hinduism in those books. You talk of the conception being no longer there. Only the other day a missionary descended on a famine area with money in his pocket, distributed it among the famine-stricken, converted them to his fold, took charge of their temple, and demolished it. This is outrageous. The temple could not belong to the converted Hindus, and it could not belong to the Christian missionary. But this friend goes and gets it demolished at the hands of the very men who only a little while ago believed that God was there.

“The lady seemed to be touched. Perhaps she had not heard of the incident. She

said, ‘In our hospital we do not try to influence our patients in their religious beliefs. Our doctor says we should not take an undue advantage of people in distress coming to us for treatment. But, Mr. Gandhi, why do you object to proselytization as such? Is not there enough in the Bible to authorize us to invite people to a better way of life?’

“Oh yes, but it does not mean that they should be made members of the church. If you interpret your texts in the way you seem to do, you straight away condemn a large part of humanity unless it believes as you do. If Jesus came to earth again, he would disown many things that are being done in the name of Christianity. It is not he who says ‘Lord, Lord’ that is a Christian but ‘He that doeth the will of the Lord’ that is a true Christian. And cannot he who has not heard the name of Christ Jesus do the will of the Lord?

In this connection Theosophical friends are requested to read the editorial in June *Aryan Path* on the subject of “Religions and Religion”. And true are the words to-day as they were in 1877 when H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 531, 536):—

Despite missions, despite armies, despite enforced commercial intercourse, the “heathen” find nothing in the teachings of Jesus—sublime though some are—that Christna and Gautama had not taught them before. And so, to gain over any new converts, and keep the few already won by centuries of cunning, the Christians give the “heathen” dogmas more absurd than their own, and cheat them by adopting the habit of their native priests, and practising the very “idolatry and fetichism” which they so disparage in the “heathens”.

The three personalities of Christna, Gautama, and Jesus appeared like true gods, each in his epoch, and bequeathed to humanity three religions built on the imperishable rock of ages. That all three, especially the Christian faith, have in time become adulterated, and the latter almost unrecognizable, is no fault of either of the noble Reformers. It is the priestly self-styled husbandmen of the “vine of the Lord” who must be held to account by future generations.



## STUDIES IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

## VIII—ETHICS

Great intellect and too much knowledge are a two-edged weapon in life, and instruments for evil as well as for good. When combined with Selfishness, they will make of the whole of Humanity a footstool for the elevation of him who possesses them, and a means for the attainment of his objects; while, applied to altruistic humanitarian purposes, they may become the means of the salvation of many.—S. D. II. 163.

Between metaphysics and morality there is an intimate connection. Our civilization does not recognise it. Theosophy does. The modern metaphysician deals learnedly in speculations and abstractions which have no ethical bearing. In the popular mind ethics are related to religions and naturally there is talk about Christian ethics, and Hindu ethics, etc. In reality religion makes little difference and every one knows that there are moral, unmoral and immoral people belonging to every religion. Every religion, without exception, has lost its pristine purity and its original universal character. One of the main contributory causes of this corruption is the divorce between metaphysics and ethics. When true philosophy, which deals with cosmic ultimates and reveals the indissoluble and intimate connection between universe and man, ceases to be the soul of ethics we have false moral principles. Thus in the Christian church, where the philosophy of the great Gnostics is not imparted, the sublime ethics of Jesus are not possible of practice. That is one of the interpretations of the true saying—"nearer to church further from God." The same phenomenon is to be found among followers of other faiths; the orthodox Hindu cannot practise the ethical principles of the *Gita* and remain orthodox; the same may be said of the orthodox Zoroastrian and the Gathas. How can a man avoid polluting things in and of space when he is not given some instruction of boundless space of which he himself is an expression? How can a man conceive of immortality and see that he never was born, nor will he ever die, when he is not taught about timeless duration and long eternities which begin and end? How can a man confidently go forward fighting his own defects without a perception that Life is the Great Breath, the Perpetual Motion, unfolding and awakening to perfection beyond perfection and that he himself is the creator of the future. In a previous study (No. V, p. 73, March) we saw how the false teaching about the personal god results in a false view about the human personality, developing the vice of egotism. It can similarly be shown that human vices and weaknesses are born of ignorance of philosophy and that many a virtue highly commended by sectarianism is not a virtue.

One of the tasks of Theosophy is to restore to modern humanity moral principles which are but

faithful expressions of metaphysical ideas. To show, for example, how the ideas of the immanence of God and the brotherhood of man are respectively the philosophical and ethical phrases which express one and the same truth. Every great Theosophical book, e.g., the *Bhagavad-Gita* or the *Tao Teh Ching*, give metaphysical and ethical principles and ideas side by side.

H.P.B.'s message, exoteric and esoteric, is based on the Ancient Record (see Studies Nos. I and IV in November 1934 and February 1935 issues) and in that message both ethics and metaphysics and their intimate kinship are given. The Stanzas of Dzyan on which *The Secret Doctrine* is based and the Book of the Golden Precepts from which the fragments called *The Voice of the Silence* are given may be described as the metaphysical and ethical aspects of that message. In her Preface to that little gem "Dedicated to the Few" H.P.B. writes:—

The work from which I here translate forms part of the same series as that from which the "Stanzas" of the *Book of Dzyan* were taken, on which the *Secret Doctrine* is based.

In the study of *The Secret Doctrine*, metaphysics play a very important part as was shown in the last instalment (No. VII, p. 122; June 1935). But it would be a very serious blunder to think that its philosophy could be comprehended without a practice of its ethical precepts. The ethics of Theosophy are the very instruments through which the cosmic ultimates can be perceived. Just as a drunken man cannot see his surroundings in the true perspective, an immoral profligate cannot see his cosmic surroundings in the true perspective. Because the modern scientist asserts that his powers of observation and understanding have nothing to do with his virtue, goodness and morality, he is not able to go beyond surface appearances. Because the modern philosopher does not connect his mental activity with his moral character his metaphysical abstractions and mathematical equations do not enable him to bear a tooth-ache with equanimity.

Thus while on the one hand religions fail because they try to preach ethics without philosophy, science and philosophy fail because they try to impart knowledge without consideration of moral

and ethical principles. The division between the sacred and the secular will continue as long as the divorce between morality and metaphysics continues. Theosophy alone can bridge the gulf.

Now, *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that in the present era vices are an abnormal phenomena. It may not be possible for man to manifest his divine powers, but it is possible for him to express his human nature. Instead, animalism is to the fore. Says H.P.B.:—

In short, Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus*, that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution—at least they ought to be so. The fact that mankind was never more selfish and vicious than it is now, civilized nations having succeeded in making of the first an ethical characteristic, of the second an art, is an additional proof of the exceptional nature of the phenomenon. (S. D. II, 110)

What is the very first step which has to be taken by the student who desires to assimilate the philosophy and ethics which are but aspects of the Wisdom-Religion or Theosophy? He must recognise the underlying unity between far-away cosmic ultimates and the near-at-hand human relations. To understand and assimilate the metaphysical morality and the ethical philosophy the student has to begin to feel in his heart the truth of his mental perceptions. He must learn to see himself endowed with divine powers, and feel in himself his *inner* God—a man-God in his true nature, though an animal in his physical self. The struggle between the two is the struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. The end of the struggle should also be perceived: He who conquers the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joins the Sons of Light. He who falls victim to his lower nature, becomes the slave of matter; he has fallen in the battle of mortal life with Life Immortal. The student is requested to read carefully p. 272 of Vol. II of *The Secret Doctrine* and note the adaptation of the words of H.P.B. to ourselves and our own conditions of to-day, and see a fresh interpretation of the saying that the disciple must gain the child-state he has lost.

Next we must see the fundamentals of the philosophical morality advanced in the great book.

## SANJAYA

### THE WITNESS OF THE GITA

Sri Krishna recited the Gita, Arjuna was the active listener, while Sanjaya applauded it.

Besides the description to his king of the disposition of the fighting ranks in the field of battle, in the first canto and the three introductory verses in the second, Sanjaya spoke in the eleventh canto after the *Visvarupa Darsana* and at the end, summing up the essence of the teaching. He described in the eleventh chapter the Vision of the Supreme Self, in which Arjuna was shown the unity in multiplicity and the uniformity in variety of Manifestation. (XI. 10-13)

Whereas Arjuna had to be endowed by the Master with the vision to behold His Form as it really was, Sanjaya had already received the power to perceive it from the great sage Vyasa. As Arjuna had only then been initiated, he was dazzled by the Might and Majesty of the Lord, and wondered at the unusual and unexpected form his Teacher had taken. He was perturbed and knew not his place in the cosmic scheme. He felt steadied only when he saw the aspect to which he was accustomed. But Sanjaya, who had already the background cleared, described the transcendental figure in expressions which disclose his mental equanimity. It is evident that at that particular stage of Arjuna's mental development, Sanjaya was superior to him in point of Divine Knowledge. To put the idea in modern educational phraseology, the process of "apperception" had already taken place in Sanjaya, while Arjuna as a Chela was only then experiencing it. To give a spiritual interpretation it may be said, that previous to this juncture the dominant quality in Arjuna was *Tamasa-Rajasic*, while in Sanjaya it was *Rajasa-Sattvic*. It is perhaps because this difference in the attitude of the two "Listeners" is not properly understood that Mr. G. V. Ketkar remarked in *The Aryan Path* for June 1933, (Vol. IV, p. 386):—

Sanjaya lacked one quality which is essential to a perfect listener. He must have been previously seeking the message..... He had ears to hear the message—but they were not longing for it.

Indeed, the longing was not there, for there was no necessity for it. He was already acquainted with what was to happen. If this is borne in mind, the view that on Sanjaya the teaching was "like seed thrown on ordinary soil but on Arjuna it was like seed thrown on a soil duly ploughed for receiving it" will have to be reversed slightly to take somewhat

this form :—The mind of Sanjaya was like ordinary soil ready prepared for raising the crop ; while that of Arjuna was virgin soil that only then had been cultivated.

The position of Sanjaya can be understood only from the context of the *Gita* in the *Mahabharata*. He was the Minister of Dhritarashtra and obviously the one most trusted. The *Dharmasastras* declare that ministers are a king's eyes ; the strength of a kingdom rests on the right choice of the chief councillor. Especially, one who had to serve a master devoid of physical vision (not mental, for one of his names is *Prajna-Chakshu*) should have possessed extra-ordinary powers of sight, to make up for this failing in his sovereign. He not only was a wise minister but also was gifted with superior powers of spirituality. As shown in *The Aryan Path* for July 1934, (Vol. V, p. 441) in the last verses of the *Gita* he helped to unfold the threefold processes involved in the Teaching of Divine Knowledge—the Wonderful Dialogue (*Samvadam*), the Marvellous Form (*Visvarupa*), and the Eternal and Permanent Abode (*Sthāna*) where the Master and Disciple are in intimate Communion. In the last stanza, he summed up the greatness of the Teaching—Prosperity, Victory, and Happiness are fixed only to that spot where stand in unison the Yogesvara Krishna and the master-archer Arjuna. It required uncommon courage and undaunted conviction in a courtier to express such sentiments before his royal master who was at the time in miserable plight.

Sanjaya does not figure in the *Mahabharata* before the Sabha Parva. At the Rajasuya sacrifice (Sabha 37), in the division of duties among the king's men, he was specially commissioned with the reception of the royal guests. Duryodhana cited him as witness to the wealth and worldly glory that the Pandavas had accumulated after their conquest of the quarters (Sabha 76) to induce confidence in his father who, he feared would not believe him otherwise. His name was mentioned among the few famous votaries of Patience in the Vana Parva (29). He also gave timely advice, only to have it rejected, to the Kauravas (Sabha 98) not to court the Devil by challenging Yudhishtira and his brothers a second time to a game of dice.

The conversation between Sanjaya and his king at the end of the Sabha Parva (103) illustrates his outspoken courage in advising his master, as well as his wonderful circumspection and prevision. Duryodhana had succeeded in sending the Pandavas into exile ; but Dhritarashtra was filled with fear of impending war with the Pandava Princes. Sanjaya asked : " Why do you grieve, O Lord of the worlds, having now acquired unquestioned mastery over the earth and its possessions ? " The king answered : " Where is peace and rest for those who have fear of

impending war with the Pandavas of tried valour ? " Sanjaya was not in the least perturbed but with courage undaunted spoke in ironical strain : " The play at dice, the humiliation of Draupadi, the exile of the brothers are all ultimately for good, and the war that must be waged is bound to cleanse the earth, bringing in its train degradation, desolation and death."

Sanjaya combined in one person a master of statecraft, a councillor of courage and conviction, and a sage of no mean order. These qualities seem to be summed up in the short but significant name Sam Jaya which means Complete Conquest (*Jayatam vara* in *Mahabharata*, Santi I. 5).

## STUDY OF THE SELF

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass :

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.—*James* I. 22-25.

Right study is the magic wand that charms the mind away from the hypnotic attraction of trifles, and helps it to gravitate towards things that are congenial to its own pure nature and its very root—the Self.

But this kind of study is not generally undertaken by men who covet the prizes of this world. Only an earnest wish to solve the puzzles of life or to refine one's own character purging it of its weaknesses, takes a man towards the higher study. Those for whom the world has attractions seek knowledge which will aid them to satisfy their ambitions. In fact, men and women of to-day are educated to run the race of life in the competitive spirit and to win it by fair means and foul. They are taught to look upon the world not as a battle-field on which they should fight the evil within and wickedness without, but as upon a race-course where people speculate with their intelligence and gamble away their lives. For a single success there are a million failures.

The wrong view of life has produced a wrong system of education. The craze is to amass as much knowledge as is possible, without caring whether it has a definite utility of its own. Our universities are intent upon treating the brains of the young like a warehouse where corn and chaff are heaped together, with unfortunately a preponderance of the latter. Brought up as the student of Theosophy is, in such uncongenial circumstances, he has not only to

disburden himself of a large amount of useless lumber, but he has to train his mind afresh, so that it may not wander into deserts where no nourishment is to be found. While modern education colours his mind, family and society colour his heart, weakening its perception, narrowing its vision from the universal to the particular and personal.

Study of the Self is self-study. Even students, though they use the words Deity and Atman and Self are so saturated with the idea of a God outside (due to family and school bringing up) that generally it is not perceived that study of the Great Self is self-study, and should begin with study of the small or lower self and its walk in life.

In our constitution, the higher mind and the lower continuously strive for mastery, and in the minor incidents of daily routine, we constantly and often unconsciously place ourselves under the sway of the one or the other. To undertake a study of the true Self, the lower must be paralysed, its force subdued in order that the higher may come into its own, bringing with it true light without which study is a desultory pursuit and barren of results. Our Self, which is but a portion or aspect of the All-Self and partakes of its qualities, can be felt and known by us by an unswerving zeal and a patient application in daily life of the things learnt from Theosophical books. This alone is the solvent of all the evils that flesh is heir to. As practice widens, our power for beneficent works increases; as loving deeds multiply, through the continued use of study, self-knowledge increases, till it embraces the All-Self.

The study of the Self requires a bent of mind guided by a purposeful desire to achieve that inner equipoise which helps the evaluation of everything. Those who have these—the bent of mind and the desire to achieve—instinctively seek the company of those similarly imbued. The unity of thought, will and feeling that pervades a conclave of students reacts for their mutual good, helping them on to see the unity of all things. Good comrades are like the sturdy timber which time has seasoned. They support our falling edifice, and help us to tide over our weaknesses, and the vicissitudes they cause. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," is a fact of Occultism which is soon known by the earnest mind who joins the gathering of genuine Theosophists. Supplementing these, the wide awake companions, and extending as beneficent an influence are the authentic text books which help to keep the mind tuned to a higher note of moral intellection. What companions are to a gathering, books are in one's loneliness. These two give idea-pictures which tone the imagination, the creative faculty of making images, which is the strengthener of the human soul.

Then, study demands and in part creates an atmosphere of inner equilibrium which helps us to remain unconcerned with fruits of action. Study is pre-eminently the effort to tune oneself to be in harmony with life, that is to find through persevering devotion, the link that binds one unit of the human race to another and the rest. And if the unity that is felt is to be realized, then the potency of selflessness which the mind sees as benign has to be acted out in the hard school of the selfish world. The results of study when diverted to selfish ends lead to that isolation, first temporary then permanent, which is the opposite pole to unity realized through unselfishness and then selflessness.

The student knows from the first that the task before him is of a long duration—not of a life but of lives. How else then can he begin save by giving as well as receiving help and instruction? What a deep significance is there in these words of a great Theosophist?—"Those pearls you found for another and gave to him, you really retained for yourself in the act of benevolence."

Each soul energised to take up the great quest joins the army of those who lay aside all considerations of self in order that the Self may shine forth. There are deserters and run-aways; there are those who dare not be in the right with two or three, who follow the pull of the world. But for all the renegades and cowards, there are those who hear in the heart the Ancient Call and who become active partners in the Company which carries on the business of Right Living. They begin the watch over the fitful, wayward self of matter, endeavouring to manifest the serene Self of Spirit. Beginning with self-study, they find the Self of All—the Great Light.

## THE RELIGION OF OLIVE SCHREINER

[In our issue of February, 1934, appeared some extracts from the writings of Olive Schreiner, whose grasp of Theosophical ideas was the more remarkable since there is no record of her having contacted directly the main stream of Theosophical inspiration and activity in our era. Her ideas on religion, amplified in the following article, contain a message for the earnest student.—EDS.]

Intellectual freedom was the breath of life to Olive Schreiner from childhood onwards. "We cannot live," she wrote, "if we are not free." In what is perhaps her best-known allegory, the seeker after truth rejects all blind beliefs. His dauntless search for the white bird of truth carries him forever from his native valleys of superstition and through the horrors of the land of absolute negation and denial. Then slowly, doggedly, painfully, while his strength lasts, he struggles up the crags of stern reality. By the steps he cuts others may mount,

but the heights are not for his feet ; his but one snowy feather from the wing of truth, which flutters down into his dying hand.

With orthodox religions Olive Schreiner had scant sympathy.

"The more one teaches children morality and right doing and love for all animals and people in the world *without* fastening it on to any system of theology, Mohammedan, Christian, Buddhist or any other, *the safer will its roots be.*"

"Experience will inevitably teach us . . . that the laws for a wise and noble life have a foundation infinitely deeper than the fiat of any being, God or man, even in the ground work of human nature."

"We in the heart of the nineteenth-century civilization," she declared, "regard, and most rightly, with an almost unqualified scorn the modern man or woman who submits to priestly dictation." To a friend she wrote :—

"It's funny to me to think of your having the little son christened. It's to me quite as savage an institution as a Kaffir witch-doctor weaving a spell to keep away the evil eye : and so un-Jesus-like. But then all Christianity, so called is."

She distinguished, however, between religions and Religion :—

"The difference between a dead and a living religion is vital : the first weighs down the man who carries it ; the living religion up-bears him. There is perhaps no life quite worth living without a living religion, under whatever name or form it may be concealed, vivifying and strengthening it."

She recognised belief in Law as fundamental.

"Whether a man believes in a human-like God or no is a small thing. Whether he looks into the mental and physical world and sees no relation between cause and effect, no order, but a blind chance sporting, this is the mightiest fact that can be recorded in any spiritual existence."

When she was twenty-three years old, Olive Schreiner wrote to a friend : "If we are willing to give up nothing, we must expect nothing. . . . Nothing for nothing ; the longer I live the more I feel that to be nature's inexorable law." Years later she wrote of "my deep Jewish faith—'Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.'"

Her God-concept was essentially Theosophical :—

"The stars are wonderful, the light in a human eye is wonderful ; but is there anything more wonderful than the power which keeps together the particles, which in fact constitutes them? There is only one name which I can give it, it is the same name I give to that I find working and moving in my own little personality."

To her husband Olive Schreiner wrote in 1903 :—

"As vast and incomprehensible in its ultimate nature as light or time, or space, or matter generally, is that other vast reality, which we know and feel more intimately than anything else in the universe, the will within us that is not time nor space, that is not light nor heat ; incomprehensible in its ultimate essence by our puny intellects as is everything else in the universe, yet never for a moment to be ignored if we do not wish to wreck our lives."

Her religion was essentially practical. "The causes and evils of slavery," she declared, "are not to be studied in South Africa or America, but among the shadows within our own hearts."

To her close friend, Havelock Ellis, she wrote in 1884 of the change there would be in the whole of London "if only something could come suddenly and touch our hearts one night. . . . everybody looking with loving eyes at the world about them. That would be heaven and it only wants a little change of heart. I haven't faith in anything that promises to raise us by purely material means."

"Undoubtedly" she declared, "there are lofty and powerful spirits who have reached a deep and calm clear-sightedness which no aspect in the world immediately about them can obscure, to whom the city and the petty sights and sounds of our little human creation are seen abidingly to be as much the outcome and mere passing development of the powers beyond and behind them as the silent plain and the mountain top."

Was not such an ideal of the heights that man can reach at once the keystone of her religion and the fruition of the vision of which she had written years before :—

"That vision of the human soul which I have seen slowly growing before me for years and years, forming ever since I was a little child, is the work of art ! The perfect, the beautiful, which alone I desire."

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

We are glad Reuter has thought it necessary to supply India with this item of news :—

“Public opinion respecting cremation has greatly changed during recent years,” states the Cemeteries Committee of the Wandsworth Borough Council when reporting on the advisability of establishing a crematorium in the district. On investigation the Committee found that there were 7,480 crematoriums in Great Britain during 1933 as compared with 1,988 in 1923.

The first cremation in the U. S. A. took place under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, in 1876. The first crematorium opened in Europe was at Gotha in Germany in 1879. The Cremation Society in Great Britain offered to the public the use of the crematorium at Woking in 1885.

From every point of view, hygienic, psychological and mystical, Cremation is the best method for the disposal of dead bodies.

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A very thorough and well documented article opens the March number of the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* on “The Black Magic in China known as *Ku*”. It is the work of H. Y. Feng and J. K. Shryock of the University of Pennsylvania. For the Theosophical student the article has its own value. The scholar may look upon the practices described as mere superstition; but these have been in vogue for long centuries: if they were ineffective superstitions they would have disappeared; their continuance is indicative of their effectiveness, and the latter in turn shows that knowledge, however weird and revolting, existed. In this connection we may draw attention to H.P.B.’s article on “Chinese Spirits” in the book *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*.

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From Chinese *Ku* to Korean *Tok-Gabi* is not a far cry. Bearing in mind that *Tok-Gabi* is the equivalent of Elementary, and also an Elemental-souled *Kama-rupa*, the Theosophical student will learn something from a story in June *Asia*—“Cast No Spell on Me, *Tok-Gabi*” by Frances Kelly. In her introduction the writer says—“If the reader is of skeptical turn, he may hesitate to believe it, but the essentials are on record in the files of the Japanese Society for Psychological Research.”

Kurbad Ali of Dacca who calls himself a snake-charmer is reported to have entered into a contract for supplying cobras to some medical college. He is touring for that purpose and the following piece of news is supplied by the Associated Press from Dumka :—

Kurbad Ali was permitted by Mr. S. M. Majumdar, District Engineer of Sonthal Paragnas to catch a cobra in his garden. He finished his job in about a minute by overpowering the cobra by a herb. Reports Mr. Majumdar :—

At my request the snake charmer placed the cobra on the ground, but it hissed with a mighty rage and displayed its panoramic hood in an attempt to bite the man. But, nonchalantly enough he drew out the herb and the King Cobra was silenced in a second... At my request he gave me a bit of the herb and instructed me in detail as to how to use it in cases of snake-bite.

Our civilization is getting on! A snake-charmer in the service of the medical profession! Why should not the medical students use the herb to catch their own snakes? Perhaps Kurbad Ali is getting civilized and will insist on commercializing his knowledge and making money out of it! The story has more than one moral.

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Organized churchianity is getting it hot from numerous quarters. Here is the well-known writer Mr. Gerald Bullett who offers trenchant truth in an article on “What can we Believe?” in *News Chronicle* (London) of May 1st :—

The doctrine of forgiveness, brilliantly and provocatively expounded in the Sermon on the Mount, is the practical application of the more general doctrine of love. These words, love and forgiveness, which we are shy of using for fear of being derided as sentimentalists, are of the essence of Christianity. They constitute the secret (the open secret) of all sane living.

The Christianity of Jesus, which official Christianity has for the most part either ignored or sought to explain away, is utterly remote from the self-indulgent emotionalism of sentimentality: it is nothing more or less than a piece of divine common sense. . . . . We of other nations are in no position to throw stones at General Ludendorff and his sabre-rattling compatriots. The statesmen of the Allied Nations have never, it is true, publicly disowned Christ, as General Ludendorff has done: they preferred to adopt the time honoured expedient invented by Judas Iscariot, paying lip-service to an ideal of decency which they had not the smallest intention of pursuing.

True words courageously spoken.

## THE U. L. T. 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 given to Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local lodges. There are no dues of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

Correspondence should be addressed to:—

THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS  
51, Esplanade Road,  
BOMBAY

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