

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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KNOWLEDGE AND THE POWER TO KNOW

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Every reader will inevitably judge the statements made from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experience, and consciousness, based on what he has already learnt.—H.P.B.

These subjects (metaphysical) are only partly for understanding. A higher faculty belonging to the higher life must see — and it is truly impossible to force it upon one's understanding — merely in words. One must see with his spiritual eye, hear with his Dharmakayic ear, feel with the sensations of his *Ashta-vijnyâna* (spiritual “I”) before he can comprehend this doctrine fully; otherwise it may but increase one's “discomfort,” and add to his knowledge very little.—MAHATMA K.H.

NUMEROUS are the weaknesses of the eyes — myopia, astigmatism, strabismus, etc. Mental vision is similarly affected. The three dimensions of space, or the three divisions of time related to human consciousness, produce limitations of our mental perception. Human consciousness using the sense of sight encounters the phenomenon of the horizon; so does it in using the thinking instrument called the mind. Each human mind has its horizon. Human consciousness using the bodily senses meets with the phenomenon of the rising and the setting of the sun, which mental perception reverses, declaring that the sun rises not, nor sets. Similarly, every intelligent theosophist knows that there is the intuitive organon, as superior to mind as the latter is superior to the sensorium.

The empyrean ocean of Wisdom is fathomed only by the Masters of Nature. Lesser minds, however great and profound, are horizoned

— “thus far, no farther.” The continent of knowledge of each such mind is mapped out by its capacity and has therefore a boundary. Great minds themselves have to be initiated into perceptive mysteries; they have to acquire the special knowledge by developing special faculties (latent in every human being) before they can become Masters of All Knowledge. In one aspect of his being man is but the outcome and natural product of his environment and period. Even his ideals are often the result of his temperament, and the outcome of that phase of intellectual progress to which a nation in its collectivity has attained.

Just as a pupil at school in learning any subject not only gathers information but also develops the power to learn more, to observe, to reason and to judge, so also the Theosophical student. In his individual study at home or in the corporate effort at Lodge meetings not only is he gathering data and information; he is also unfolding the latent power of intuitive discernment. New knowledge is an extension of what is already known and the power to know grows *pari passu* with that extension. We acquire more knowledge and evolve more faculties at one and the same time. Emphasis on one of these two aspects alone is the cause of numerous problems confronting the educational reformer, and also the Theosophical pupil who is earnest and enthusiastic about his study.

Two sets of obstacles confront us:

First, our own personal make-up, founded upon Karma and reared by the *skandhas*. There is the inherent capacity to learn and understand metaphysical and esoteric ideas. Add to this personal desires, ambitions and the like. In our emotional make-up the presence of jealousy, anger, etc., seriously interferes with our using to the full the capacity we possess. Two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time; when our desires are active our aspirations remain inactive. When we have “made up our mind” on any subject we have given the thinking principle a rigidity and stopped its power to move and to extend in reference to that subject. The immense power of the unconscious and material basis of our nature limits us in ways often unsuspected by us.

Secondly, family, community, nation, race provide us our obstacles as well as our opportunities. We learn to lisp the language of the family and speak it well or ill as we grow. But that does not bar us from learning other languages. A little thought indicates that it is well to know another language and the capacity to learn it is there. Many of our personal prejudices are shallow inasmuch as they are not rooted

in our own mind; a little quiet reflection and we are able to deal with that prejudice successfully.

These two sets of obstacles interfere in our acquiring greater Theosophical knowledge and also in our activating on a larger scale the faculty of intuition. Our duty is not only to keep alive the Light of Intuition in our Soul-nature but to stream forth that Light through the mind and the brain. If our mind is fixed where the Light shines we shall know what is right to say and to do.

When the human mind-soul has acquired the knowledge made available to it in this cycle by the double effort of freeing the mind from the coarsening influence of passions and of making the soul seek the root-light of Spirit, it will be ready for that initiation into the perceptive mysteries of which *The Secret Doctrine* speaks.

To come out from among them whose minds run in the narrow grooves of personal pride and prejudices and to become separate is not enough. One has to go among those who are Companions in a very real sense — Companions to the Great Masters of Life. Those Companions are busy learning the first lessons of the Science of practical occultism in the routine of life with its attractions to pleasures, its aversions to pains, its zephyrs and its gales, its halcyon days and its gloomy nights. And these early lessons are intimately related to the double set of psychic and psychological obstacles. Our Theosophical books and the U.L.T. provide the devout pilgrim with sure means to reach his goal.

HE that will finde Truth, must seek it with a free judgement, and a sanctified minde: he that thus seeks, shall finde; he shall live in Truth, and that shall live in him; it shall be like a stream of living waters issuing out of his own Soule; he shall drink of the waters of his own cisterne, and be satisfied; he shall every morning finde this Heavenly Manna lying upon the top of his own Soule, and be fed with it to eternal life; he will finde satisfaction within, feeling himself in conjunction with Truth, though all the world should dispute against him.

—JOHN SMITH (1618–52)

A MATTER OF FAITH

...the embodied soul being gifted with faith, each man is of the same nature as that ideal on which his faith is fixed.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*, xvii. 3

THEOSOPHY being of the essence of truth, makes a strong appeal to reason, and because of this its tenets become the more readily acceptable to the unprejudiced of mind. Enthusiasm is born of the new orientation that the study of Theosophy provides, and with enthusiasm comes faith — first in the existence of the ever-living, imperishable truth, and thereafter by inference in those who must exist as custodians and repositories of that knowledge.

The infinite capacity of the human mind; the upsurge of psychic forces that have in each century thrust their presence upon the consciousness of man; the testimony of history about the great who in all ages have been known to have touched divinity — all these give the assurance that each man has within him that immortal spark which, given the will and the effort, may some day burst into flame.

That spark is rarely, if at all, sustained by reason. It may be kept glowing by the friction which life provides, or by the touch of another flame, or by the fire which may be invoked from on high in rare moments of ecstasy when the mortal aspects are for the time being paralysed and the Soul's gaze remains centred on the One True Light. By one avenue or another there have appeared souls who have lighted their light and thus become confirmed in their Faith. They are those who have pledged themselves to surrender their entire being to the end that through them the philosophy may become a living, throbbing reality. They are the true missionaries through whom there go out in large and affluent measure those forces of hope, strength and confidence which are needed by the hungry of soul. The light that shines in the tabernacle of these twice-born becomes a beacon that dispels darkness and that serves as a focus of attraction for like-minded missionaries for the forming of a nucleus of enlightened souls dedicated to the service of humanity.

Yet, for the aspiring soul who desires to join that nucleus, dangers lie ahead. For, it is precisely when the aspirant believes that his faith is unshakable that he may relax his efforts; and so relaxing, lose himself. It is often forgotten that faith needs sustenance and that true service may degenerate into a mechanistic posture of missionary activ-

ity. At all times, the man has to pour into his service the warmth obtained from the pin-point of light which he has with pain lit within the inner sanctuary of his being. When the missionary loses sight of this in the rush to do, to do, he trips and sharp unyielding flints cut his feet along the rocky path. There have thus been good souls who for decades have served in one theosophical organization or another and who yet have abandoned quest and service because the warmth has gone out of their lives and devotion has turned into a mere external vesture of convenience, a cloak and a sham that but mocks the image of the reality.

If it is the glow of the inner light which alone can invest service with its power to achieve, it must necessarily follow that the disciple's first duty is to tend the spark which has been ignited in him. His external acts of service become mere corollaries that follow upon its existence. This is so for the reason that service attains a new dimension when it is energized by that which has its roots in the true. Deeds of philanthropy follow upon such acts of service.

The initial danger that confronts the disciple is that he may so surround his glow with opacity that no ray can struggle through. It is erroneous to think that his light cannot be extinguished. It is still more erroneous to think that it cannot be made mute and torpid when shut up in the closed and airless vessel of a truant mind. The spark that has its abode in the inner reaches of the man requires to be tended and nourished and fanned into a flame.

Faith which is a covenant between the higher and the lower self of man waxes and wanes with the strength or weakness of his hold upon the starry soul within. On the physical plane, the fuel that is needed to keep the flame alive has to be purified of dross lest its impurities devour the flame. On the planes of mind and soul, the tending of the flame takes the shape of a conscious daily effort sustained over the years to trim the wick and feed the flame with the oil of devotion. The aspiring student is expected to let the light of his inner god play upon the projected thoughts, words and deeds of the coming day and thus invest his actions with the benign motivation and energy which reside in the true. The spark and the light thrive and subsist on the refined fuel that the waking active consciousness of man can alone provide.

There is no service higher than that of making men see the inner light. There is no sacrifice equal to that of a total surrender of the

self in working for humanity in the mass. Acts of charity and munificence flow from such a dedication. Such service allied to such sacrifice is sustained by faith — faith in the ubiquitous presence of the light of divinity, and faith in the presence, latent or active, of the same light in all human beings. The disciple has to hold on to this vision and never allow it to be erased from his memory.

Faith survives in the man so long as there remains in him the unbroken memory of his dedication. No faltering, no lapse from the coveted position of stability should be allowed to blur that remembrance. So long as the man remains human there must necessarily be stumblings and failures, a wading through the slough of despondency, the going through the tortures of a nightmare wherein no progress seems visible or even possible. Yet, despite these and even through each such adverse circumstance must the thread of memory remain intact — a *sutratma* on the human plane that strings on itself the beads of experiences both foul and clean alike. The lessons which such experiences provide have to be learnt. How else would the soul give the word of cheer to him whose eyes have seen no light and who sits starving for the bread of wisdom? How would he give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim if he himself has not learnt the cause and cure of suffering?

Can a waning faith be revived? Can a weakened battery be recharged? As well ask whether a fire which is burning low can be built up. What is required is desire accompanied by an ever wakeful awareness and a dedication which borders upon total absorption in the service of the Cause. Does the student remember his first ecstatic vision; the admonishment that came from on high; the directives which came to him in moments of calm and which he implicitly and even unquestioningly obeyed? Let him bring back the remembrance and bask in its warmth. Let him chew the cud of memory until he can extract from it its immortal essence and assimilate it in full waking consciousness — a process analogous to that which in the average man takes place only after death. Can the student place himself within the enchanted circle of radiance of his light? Can he at will take shelter within its haven of refuge? When he wants to perform acts of service — the preservation of the philosophy, the promulgation of its beneficence — does he dive into the pool of Light and, securing its strength, emerge and become the mouthpiece of that Light, its capable hands and its compassionate heart? If he can, then is he true to the brotherhood which he forges with those who have preceded him on the Path.

As the pupil persists in his endeavour, he comes to cognize other

and more subtle layers of Faith. He sees its workings in the fashioning of all life and in its ultimate progression and perfection. He learns that charity when divorced from faith becomes a mere product of the emotions; a thing of beauty and yet void of that exaltation which only the things of Spirit can confer. He realizes that hope when not supported by the Faith which moves mountains is forlorn and but tantalizes the man till, on a total eclipse of his beliefs, the hope dies and darkness envelops his thinking.

The dawning of the first glimmer of true Faith makes the life suddenly more purposeful and full of meaning. The inner life touches the outer and in a splendrous manner sanctifies it. The irksome circumstance is found to transform itself into an avenue of hope; the enemy becomes a teacher who explains the theorems of cohesion; the tragic circumstance demonstrates its inviolate aspect of justice — mercy.

Faith requires no proofs; cannot be searched for; is not the product of rites or ceremonies. True Faith is *sui generis*. When it comes, it is like the rising of the sun — unmistakable.

THE primary ground of Faith is a normal and ineradicable feeling, instinct, or attraction, present in all minds which are not disqualified from having it by peculiarities which we should all agree, probably, in calling defects, a feeling or instinct that behind the world of phenomena there is a world of eternal values, attracting us towards itself. These values are manifested, and exercise their attraction, in and through phenomena, though the section of the world which we know, and from which we generalize, is an inadequate receptacle for them. Further, these values have been classified as ideas of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, a threefold cord which is not quickly broken. This is the most general description possible of the objects and contents of Faith, and it is, I believe, all that this primary ground of Faith gives us. It contains vast implications, which can only be unravelled by the full experience of life, developing our personality along the lines of thought, will, and feeling. These three faculties have a natural connection with the ideals of the true, the good, and the beautiful respectively, though we must avoid most carefully the error of separating things which can never exist independently of each other.

—W. R. INGE

SLEEP AND DREAMS — A SUBLUNAR MYSTERY

I. — SLEEP, THE REPOSE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

WHEN our old friend Sancho Panza of *Don Quixote* fame exclaimed: "Blessings light on him that first invented . . . sleep! It covers a man all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak," he was only emphasizing the obvious truism that sleep is much more necessary for man than even food. Denial of sleep is a modern political technique in brain-washing.

There is nothing so universal as sleep; for everything that has life needs this sweet balm of Nature, restoring peace and relaxation to tired nerves, jaded bones and ruffled minds. Neither the cleverest scientist nor the wisest sage has found a substitute for it, as everyone from the strongest to the weakest submits to its sway every night. Nor is man the only object of its influence, for the animals sleep as completely, and some continue their sleep for months on end. Birds go to roost, insects cease to buzz, fishes sink into quietude; and going lower down, even plants shut up shop regularly with sundown, some folding their leaves over the flowers just as birds fold their wings over their heads.

And who will not wish for this happy sojourn in the land of Nod, where all is calm and sedate, quiet and restful, free from the day's toils? Only those suffering the agonies of insomnia can fully appreciate Macbeth's lines of anguish and despair:

Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

In spite of its universality and necessity, no aspect of life has had, till lately, so scant attention paid to it as sleep. It is only recently that it has been possible for workers in various fields — physiology, psychology, neurology, biochemistry, cybernetics, astronautics, etc. — to pool their resources and carry out research in the subject of sleep.

Nearly a century ago, Mecario pointed out that there was no more interesting study than that of sleep, "for it concerns the highest questions of physiology, hygiene, pathology and psychology." It is obvious that sleep must have an intimate and constant relation to life, so that by studying it one is enabled to understand many details of waking

life, which in spite of so many advances in science and technology, remain still obscure. While we grow enthusiastic about things which shine in the far inaccessible distance, we scarcely want to observe the marvels that are spread around and within us; although it should be evident that on a just appreciation of these close and intimate things depends in large part not only our own health but also the comfort and happiness of others.

The ancient Greeks regarded Sleep and Death as twin brothers, for an alternation such as that of sleeping and waking, life and death, day and night, the appearance and disappearance of worlds (*pravritti* and *nivritti*) is a fact so common and so perfectly universal that in it one can see a fundamental law of the universe. It is the law of the regular flux and reflux of the tide, the objective and the subjective, the analytic and the synthetic, the active and the passive — the dual aspects of the One Reality which one observes in the conditioned, phenomenal universe. What happens in the larger cycles of life is being witnessed every day in the smaller cycle of waking and sleeping. In the night-time, the same process of withdrawing from objectivity and witnessing with more or less complacency one's stock-in-trade gained during the day-time is noticeable, and by the same synthesis of thought makes logical categories that serve one through the waking days to come.

During the night the important function of repairing the damage to the bodily structure is carried out with infinite care and skill. In a recent publication entitled *Sleep* by Gay Gaer Luce and clinical psychologist Julius Segal (Coward-McCann, 1966), some "amazing" results of laboratory research on sleep are presented, although the authors affirm that only a beginning has been made. They found that

sleep, far from being separate from man's waking life, was an integral part of its rhythm, and relevant to every aspect of it. . . . For the first time we have begun to gain a glimmer of the astonishing machinery of the mind during periods when it is speaking to itself.

The experiments have shown, not what sleep *is*, but only its necessity for life and sanity at the human level, and the universality of sleep (or a quiescence analogous to it) in lower organisms. For man, the physiological law of periodicity begins in his cells, and "sleep is generated, in part, by these tempos within." Nor has it been determined whether the total amount of sleep necessary should be taken at one time

or whether it may be distributed.

Sleep "data" are gathered by means of a large polygraph machine called the electroencephalograph (EEG) which makes the "shifts" of brain waves visible. Thus it has been found that normal sleep consists of four phases, Stage I beginning when the eyes are closed and the person prepares to go to sleep. The EEG then shows a distinctive pattern, the muscles start relaxing, the heart begins to slow down, and one "drifts," often with idle thoughts concerned with the day's events. At this time the sleeper may be easily wakened and will often insist that he was not asleep. As drowsiness increases, the brain waves change into what researchers call the "alpha" rhythm (Stage II), which is characterized by a "rapid crescendo and de-crescendo" that is unmistakable to the trained observer. If awakened, his dreams will be found to have drawn on the day's events for their material.

In a matter of seconds or minutes, however, the "script" of Stage II becomes interspersed with the large, slow waves which are characteristic of Stage III. It will now take a loud noise to awaken the sleeper, who is at this time breathing deeply and evenly. The heart slows still more, temperature drops lower, and the blood-pressure declines further. The sleeper is about to enter Stage IV, the "delta" phase, that of deep sleep, or the "sleep of the weary." It will take a very loud noise to awaken him, though a baby's cry or his own name spoken clearly may do so. Ordinarily, a person devotes a large part of the first half of the night in delta sleep, and if awakened will usually report that his mind was a blank.

After about 60 or 90 minutes in the deep-sleep state, a strange thing occurs: the person will *appear* to be drifting back into Stage II, the near-waking state; yet he is even closer to "oblivion" than in the delta, or deep-sleep phase. Rapid eye movements (REM) indicate that he is dreaming vividly, but the dreams are seldom remembered. If, however, the sleeper is awakened at this time and does recall, it appears that the material of these dreams has been drawn from deeper layers of consciousness than was the case in Stage II. During this phase, the sleeper seems *completely* withdrawn from the external world, and to be "experiencing" at other levels of awareness. The authors describe what is known of this state in some detail:

Despite the storm of activity in body and mind, the dreamer may seem unusually still. . . . Even with his eyes open, the dreamer is blind to the outside world. Shine a light in the eyes and they

react in an unusual way, slowly diverging, drifting out and then back together. Were it to happen in waking, the person would have double vision. Indeed, narcoleptics, people who lapse directly from waking into a REM state, frequently suffer double vision, as if walking around in a partial dream state. The brain is anomalous. By contrast with Stage IV sleep, its EEG reactions resemble those of waking, in moments of intense concentration. Deep within the brain the temperature rises, as in waking.

The normal person goes through four or five complete cycles each night, with most of the delta sleep occurring early in the sleeping period and REM periods clustering toward morning and becoming progressively more like the sleep of Stage II, the precursor of waking.

Many are the characteristic physiological changes during sleep, chief of them being the inactivity of the nervous system. First, the eyelids are lowered over the eyeballs which turn upwards, and voluntary muscles are relaxed, so that the whole body, especially the face, presents a picture of complete repose. At the same time respiration becomes slower and the amount of inhaled air is considerably diminished. While there is an enlargement of the surface vessels of the body during sleep, the vessels of the brain contract and its volume diminishes.

A bulletin on the physiology of sleep, issued by the *Journal* of the American Medical Association (August 1957), based on studies of the Sleep Research Foundation of New York, gives partial answers to the questions: "How remote from the world are we during sleep?" and "Are we completely detached... or do certain pathways remain open by which we keep some degree of contact with the world?" The bulletin states that the nature of the electroencephalographic (EEG) response to graded stimuli provides another method for determining the depth of sleep. Furthermore, the ability to adapt to stimuli is lost as sleep occurs. A person when awake eventually ignores a repeated sound; but in light sleep, each sound produces a so-called K-response without diminution.

The question, "Can we learn during sleep?" intrigues many people. It is asserted by the Sleep Research Foundation that, in the lightest levels of sleep, learning is possible although little memory persists of words and phrases presented to sleeping subjects. In going to sleep, pathways are blocked one by one and entrances to the mind are mostly closed. But some contacts with the world remain and if stimuli are strong or peculiarly meaningful, a person quickly returns to consciousness from the mysterious state of sleep. According to the Sherover ex-

periment, it may be recalled, knowledge could be “funnelled into a sleeping mind.” As an extension of the linguaphone technique for teaching languages with phonograph records, the imaginative Max Sherover turned the phonograph on, sending sound through a concealed pillow microphone, when his students were asleep. Experiments have proved that this kind of sleep-teaching can hasten learning no more than 20 per cent, without taking into account its detrimental effects in brain fatigue and also in an increased passivity.

As to the wonderfully subtle nature of sleep, an article in *Coronet* (June 1955) by John Pfeiffer is illuminating, as it gives the view of “an unbroken stream of consciousness.” Sleep is not something absolute, an isolated process, but a stage of an attention scale. The author goes on:

The low end of the scale — 100 per cent unawareness — occurs only in death or complete coma. At the other extreme is 100 per cent vigilance, a state of increasing interest to sleep investigators. . . . Civilized living rarely demands our full powers of concentration. Most of what we do consists of routines that are merely complicated reflexes. In fact, psychologists estimate that on the average you spend only about *60 seconds* out of every hour doing things that call for anything approaching complete vigilance: that is, about *16 minutes* out of your day that you are really wide-awake and alert.

Even in the restricted field of neurology, there is much more to be learned about sleep, but the research that will provide complete knowledge of what sleep means to man will, it is stated, have to be made on another level. It is of this level that *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* treats where (on pp. 70-71) sleep is defined as

the periodical and regulated exhaustion of the nervous centres, and especially of the sensory ganglia of the brain, which refuse to act any longer on this plane, and, if they would not become unfit for work, are compelled to recuperate their strength on another plane or *Upadhi*. . . . Sleep is a sign that waking life has become too strong for the physical organism, and that the force of the life current must be broken by changing the waking for the sleeping state.

Modern research reveals that the brain is constantly emitting energetic waves of characteristic patterns. The brain of a person in concentrated thought gives off short, irregular waves of high per-second frequency; the brain in relaxation emits tall, neat, uniform waves; while the brain of the sleeping person sends out rambling, irregular patterns. It is hardly

justified, however, to infer from the fact of the brain's being in constant motion that it is able to support the ceaseless impingement on it of sensations from the outside.

Sleep is much more necessary to man, who is endowed with self-consciousness, than to any other creature, for, when awake, he may be said to exhaust a greater amount of his vitality, and consequently to be in need of an adequate supply by way of compensation. Because of the inevitable necessity of sleep for beings possessed of a central nervous system, one may conclude that conscious life involves an expenditure of energy so intense that, while it is being effected, the process of nutrition and the reconstitution of the tissues cannot be completely carried out, and therefore sleep — the repose of consciousness — is needed for the plastic nutrition of the organism and the accomplishment of its vegetative life.

Self-consciousness being the highest of our faculties renders possible a moral ideal and scientific knowledge; naturally, therefore, conscious life requires the greatest effort of the organism. Where consciousness is wanting, sleep becomes useless. The lower animals, with their feeble faculties, even when awake are but little removed from a state of slumber; their faculties, exerted by impulse rather than deliberation, also require sleep, but it is rather as a cessation from motion than from thinking. It is otherwise with man; his brain, fatigued with the various worries and cares which do not vanish even with the departing day, demands a cessation, not less than the body, from toil. They who think most sleep least, as such a consciousness is capable of producing more with least fatigue. While those who think least could do with the smallest share, it is quite common to see that they usually sleep the most. It has to be noted, however, that sleep is not an absolute arrest of cerebral activity, for the brain becomes partially active. Was not Byron aware of this when he wrote:

Our life is twofold; sleep has its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: Sleep has its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality. . . .

The amount of sleep, therefore, required by various persons is in an inverse ratio to the strength and development of the consciousness. Hence children sleep most, and aged persons less. If intellectual powers are well preserved in old age, the need for sleep becomes less. In the old, the passions have retired into the background, and their tastes,

convictions and character have become more fixed. Rarely is to be found in them that internal contest of the man with himself, that struggle of noble ideals with selfish tendencies which consumes so much the strength and health of youth. In the absence of the internal struggle, old men who have preserved their intellectual vigour must become much less fatigued than adults, and therefore liable to insomnia.

Linked up with this is the other side of the medal: Why should infants who work least sleep most? Oftentimes it is forgotten that the baby has a great job of training and developing a crude and helpless vehicle; the potential jelly of the brain has still its grooves to be cut. That sensitive instrument full of tiny cells is awaiting the hidden artist's work. By slow tentative fumblings and gropings, the baby learns. A series of discoveries keeps him busy in the early months and leaves many new grooves in the brain, necessitating longer hours of sleep.

There is thus an intimate connection between sleep and consciousness, the depth and amount of sleep being in inverse proportion to the energy of consciousness expended. Whereas a slight mental exertion exhausts the savage greatly, a scientist is doing exceptionally taxing brain work with ease and skill. Genius then must mean not only greater extension but a narrower concentration and economy in the use of the mind. The study of sleep and consciousness, therefore, has a parallel course, and our knowledge of sleep too is as fragmentary as of our consciousness.

Truly does the old-world legend about the birth of the God of Sleep clarify his power to give renewed life and positivity to the human battery. Before sleep was ordered upon earth to be a blessedness to man there was light and darkness and the gods willed that men should work in the hours of light and rest in quietude through the hours of dark. But the children of men, setting aside divine will, persisted in their work and did not cease from activity when darkness fell, living out the night as noisily as they lived out the day. Jupiter was angry that the gift of the night should be so disdained by men, and therefore made Hypnos, the god of Sleep, and gave him the keys of human eyes and herbs from the groves of heaven and the meadows of Acheron — thus compelling men to rest from their labour and their search for the secrets which it was well for them not to know.

(To be continued)

OSMOSIS

THE PASSAGE OF MATTER THROUGH MATTER

[Under the caption "Some Scientific Questions Answered," the following appeared in *The Theosophist* for October 1883.—Eds.]

A letter was recently received by the Editor from one of our most eminent Australasian Fellows, asking some questions in science of such importance that the replies are, with permission, copied for the edification of our readers. The writer is a Chela who has a certain familiarity with the terminology of Western science. If we mistake not, this is the first time that the rationale of the control exercised by an Adept Occultist over the relations of atoms, and of the phenomenon of the "passage of matter through matter," has been so succinctly and yet clearly explained.

—ED. [*Theosophist*]

REPLIES TO PROF. —————'S QUESTIONS

(1) The phenomenon of "osmosing" (extracting — ED.) your note from the sealed envelope in which it was sewn with thread, and substituting for it his own reply, without breaking either seal or thread, is to be considered first. It is one of those complete proofs of the superior familiarity with and control over atomic relations among our Eastern Adepts as compared with modern Western men of science, to which custom has made me familiar. It was the same power as that employed in the formation of the letter in the air of your room at —; in the case of many other air-born letters; of showers of roses; of the gold ring which leaped from the heart of a moss-rose while held in —'s hand; of a sapphire ring doubled for a lady of high position here, a short time ago, and of other examples. The solution is found in the fact that the "attraction of cohesion" is a manifestation of the Universal Divine Force, and can be interrupted and again set up as regards any given group of atoms in the relation of substance by the same Divine power as that localized in the human monad. Atma, the eternal spiritual principle in man, has the same quality of power over brute force as has the Universal Principle of which it is a part. Adeptship is but the crown of spiritual self-evolution, and the powers of spirit develop themselves successively in the ratio of the aspirant's progress upward, morally and spiritually. This you see is to place our modern Evolution Theory upon a truly noble basis, and to give it the

character of a lofty spiritual, instead of a debasing materialistic, philosophy. I have always felt sure of the warm approval of the most intuitional of your Western men of science when they should come to take this view of our Aryan Arhat Science.

You should not find much difficulty in drawing the line between the "Spook" and the "Adept." The latter is a living man often fit to stand as the grandest ideal of human perfectibility; the former is but undissolved congeries of atoms recently associated in a living person as his lower — or better, his coarser, and more materialistic — corporeal envelopes; which during life were confined in the outermost shell, the body, and after death released to linger for a while in the astral (Ethereic or *Akasic*) strata nearest the earth's surface. The law of magneto-vital affinities explains the attraction of these "shells" to places and persons; and if you can postulate to yourself a scale of *psychic specific gravity*, you may realize how the greater density of a "soul" weighted with the matter of base (or even unspiritual, yet not animal) feelings would tend to impede its rising to the clear realm of spiritual existence. Though I am conscious of the imperfection of my scientific exegesis, I feel that your superior capacity for apprehending natural laws, when a hint has been given, will fill all lacunæ.

Note that no Adept even can disintegrate and reform any organism above the stage of vegetable: the Universal *Manas* has in the animal begun and in man completed its differentiation into individual entities: in the vegetable it is still an undifferentiated universal spirit, informing the whole mass of atoms which have progressed beyond the inert mineral stage, and are preparing to differentiate. There is movement even in the mineral, but it is rather the imperceptible quiver of that Life of life, than its active manifestation in the production of form — a ramification which attains its maximum not, as you may suppose, in the stage of physical man, but in the higher one of the Dhyān Chohans, or Planetary Spirits, *i.e.*, once human beings who have run through the scale of evolution, but are not yet reunited, or coalesced, with Parabrahma, the Universal Principle.

Before closing, a word more about the "passage of matter through matter." Matter may be defined as condensed Akasa (Ether); and in atomizing, differentiates, as the watery particles differentiate from superheated steam when condensed. Restore the differentiated matter to the state *ante* of undifferentiated matter, and there is no difficulty in seeing how it can pass through the interstices of a substance in the differen-

tiated state, as we easily conceive of the travel of electricity and other forces through their conductors. The profound art is to be able to interrupt at will and again restore the atomic relations in a given substance: to pull the atoms so far apart as to make them invisible, and yet hold them in polaric suspense, or within the attractive radius, so as to make them rush back into their former cohesive affinities, and re-compose the substance. And since we have had a thousand proofs that this knowledge and power is possessed by our Adept Occultists, who can blame us for regarding as we do those Adepts as the proper masters in science of the cleverest of our modern authorities? And then, as I above remarked, the outcome of this Philosophy of the Aryan Sages is to enable humanity to refresh the moral and awaken the spiritual nature of man, and to erect standards of happiness higher and better than those by which we now govern ourselves.

“SPIRIT is the first differentiation of and in space; and matter is the first differentiation of Spirit.” This is a clear statement of what H.P.B. desired to teach respecting spirit and matter, and as in other places it is said that spirit and matter are the opposite poles of the One — the Absolute — an agreement has to be made between the two. There is no real disagreement, since it is evident that differentiation must proceed in a definite order, from which it results that there must be always one state, plane, place, power, and idea in nature that is above and different from and beyond all others. And when we go beyond spirit, the highest we may speak of is the Absolute, which is the container of the next two — spirit and matter, the latter following the first in order of differentiation. These are said to be coeternal . . . because they exist together in the absolute, and when the first differentiation spoken of above takes place, so does the second immediately. Hence, except when we are dealing with metaphysics, they must be regarded as the two poles of the one absolute.

—W. Q. JUDGE

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

A KEYNOTE for the understanding of this subject is provided by the following quotation from *The Dhammapada*:

The best of Paths is the Eightfold Path; the best of Truths are the Four Noble Ones; the best of states is that of Detachment (*Viraga*); the best of men is the Seer.

This is the Path. No other leads to the pure vision. Enter ye this Path. So shall ye confound Mara.

Treading this Path you will end your suffering. It was shown by me as soon as I learnt how the thorns in the flesh are to be removed.

You yourself must strive. Buddhas are but signposts. Those who enter the path and discipline themselves are released from the bondage of Mara.

Then follow three verses which say that “conditioned beings” — which includes ourselves — are “impermanent,” are “full of pain”, and are “unsubstantial”; and that he who knows this “ceases to be in the thrall of grief.”

The Dhammapada is to Buddhism what the *Bhagavad-Gita* is to Hinduism. The one contains the authentic words of the Buddha; the other, of Krishna. Both are among the great books of the world and both deal with the same subject, the science appertaining to the inner human complex. This science is referred to in Indian lore as *Brahma Vidya*, *Atma Vidya* or *Gupta (Secret) Vidya*, *Vidya* meaning knowledge or Occult Science.

Four propositions in the passage just quoted are of particular relevance to the subject of this article:

- (i) This life is a mansion of grief;
- (ii) The aim of life is Seership;
- (iii) The only way — there is no other — of reaching it is to pursue the Eightfold Path, following the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths;
- (iv) The treading of this Path will put an end to suffering.

These propositions have to be studied in depth. One is struck by their tone of absoluteness. There is not in them any element of doubt, nor are they modified by any qualification. Thus, others may advocate other paths; but the Eightfold Path, which is linked up with the Four Noble Truths, is the only Path leading to Seership, to the vision and

knowledge that causes calm, insight, enlightenment, and *Nibbana*. The other propositions are also, likewise, “musts” or “certainties.”

This tone of absoluteness is not new. We find it in the *Gita*, too. In the early part of Chapter IX, we are assured that, if we acquire the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery, we shall “be delivered from evil” — the evil that we generate during our lifetime and, eventually, the evil of involuntary rebirth. As in the case of the *Dhammapada*, the converse also applies: Those who do not believe in the Kingly Knowledge and the Kingly Mystery will “find me not”; and, “revolving in rebirth,” will “return to this world, the mansion of death,” until they accept and pursue the prescribed Path — the Path of Yoga, of discipline, meditation and worship, the subject-matter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*.

We have here two great *Avatars* — both Buddha and Krishna are described as such in Hindu tradition — each telling us, in absolute terms, that there is the one Path leading to the goal. The Paths they spoke of are identically the same. H.P.B. has assured us that the Ethics and Occult tenets and teachings of Buddhism and Hinduism are the same in essence. The only difference is that the Hindu scriptures are in Sanskrit and the Buddhist ones in Pali. There is no conflict between the two, though at the level of rituals and priestly dogmas Buddhism and Hinduism may diverge. If both the *Gita* and the *Dhammapada* deal with the same science, the science of the inner man, the statement of the Buddha regarding the Eightfold Path and of Krishna regarding the Kingly Mystery are statements of eternal scientific truths and, therefore, are in absolute terms.

What are the Four Noble (*Aryan*) Truths? They are an integral part of the Middle Path, the Path which avoids the two extremes — on the one hand, of “devotion to the pleasures of sense,” which the Buddha taught was “a low and pagan practice, unworthy, unprofitable,” though such was “the way of the world”; and, on the other, of “devotion to self-mortification,” which was also “unworthy, unprofitable” and, in addition, “painful.” This Middle Path is the Eightfold Path. It comprises Right View, Right Aim, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Contemplation.

The Eightfold Middle Path will lead man, the conditioned being, to Enlightenment and *Nibbana* (Pali for *Nirvana*) — freedom from this ocean of *samsara* or suffering. The Four Noble Truths relate to this suffering — to the diagnosis of the ailment and the prescription

for its cure. These Truths are: Suffering; the Origin of Suffering; the Ceasing of Suffering; and the Way Leading to the Ceasing of Suffering.

In this philosophical system, Suffering includes birth, death, sorrow and grief, woe, lamentation and despair. The Origin of Suffering is the craving for sensation and rebirth and also the aspiration "to have done with rebirth," as the achievement of the latter, too, involves the erasure, through suffering, of the pilgrim's unexpiated balance of Karma. The Ceasing of Suffering is the total banishment of this craving for sensation and for rebirth; and the Way leading to the Ceasing of Suffering is the Aryan Eightfold Path.

The initial or preparatory stage for the practitioner of the Sacred Science is the penetrative recognition, *i.e.*, knowledge in depth, of the Four Truths. In the words of the Buddha: "Through not understanding, through not penetrating the Four Aryan Truths, brethren, we have run and wandered round this long, long journey (or rebirth), both you and I." The gaining of this knowledge is the first step on the Eightfold Path. If this knowledge is not there, it is useless thinking of taking the other steps along the Path. The pilgrim can hardly expect to make any progress.

A penetrative recognition of the Four Noble Truths involves much more than mere intellectual understanding of them. Are there any tests to assess our fulfilment of this requirement? *The Voice of the Silence* has clearly specified certain psycho-spiritual touchstones for ascertaining whether we have a real knowledge in depth of the Four Noble Truths. These touchstones are: (1) Does thy Soul smile while bathing in the Sunlight of thy Life? (2) Does thy Soul sing within her chrysalis of flesh and matter? (3) Does thy Soul weep inside her castle of illusion? (4) Does thy Soul struggle to break the silver thread that binds her to the MASTER? (5) Does thy budding Soul lend ear to the World's turmoil? (6) Does thy Soul respond to the roaring voice of the Great Illusion? (7) Does thy Soul, frightened at the sight of the hot tears of pain and deafened by the cries of distress, withdraw like the shy turtle within the carapace of SELFHOOD?

If the answer to these touchstone queries is, more or less, "Yes," then, be assured, warns *The Voice of the Silence*, that "thy Soul is of the earth" and that it is "an unworthy shrine of her Silent 'God.'" We have, in that eventuality, really no "knowledge" of the Four Noble Truths; we have only intellectual perception of them. If, on the other hand, the answer is "No" — *i.e.*, if the Soul does not react in the

manner indicated in the queries — then the aspirant will have taken the first step along the Eightfold Path, and may march forward with some assurance.

We have statements in the *Bhagavad-Gita* bearing on the Four Noble Truths. This world is referred to as the “mansion of death” in Chapter IX; and, in the same Chapter, the disciple is enjoined: “Having obtained this finite, joyless world, worship me.” In Chapter XIII, which prescribes the discipline for the attainment of “true Wisdom” (Seership or *Nirvana*), one of the tasks of the disciple is given as “meditation upon birth, death, decay, sickness, and error”; and in Chapter XV, the aspirant is assured: “When one hath hewn down with the strong axe of dispassion this *Ashwattha* tree with its deeply-imbedded roots” — which is the tree of conditioned existence, to which the Four Noble Truths relate — “then that place is to be sought after from which those who there take refuge never more return to rebirth,” *i.e.*, they attain *Nirvana*. Thus, the Buddhist system is not a first-time-ever revelation. It is but a restatement of the age-old *Sanatana Dharma*, or Theosophy.

The driving force behind *Tanha* (thirst for life), which causes rebirth, is Karma. There is no means of getting away from the bonds of the latter except by applying to the daily routine of life the teachings of the Sacred Science. The *Bhagavad-Gita* emphasizes that we cannot forgo Karma by forsaking the world. To imagine so is wrong *Sannyas* or wrong forsaking. The same theme is repeated in *The Voice of the Silence*: “If thou art taught that sin is born of action and bliss of absolute inaction, then tell them that they err.” On the other hand, says the Buddha: “When these Four Noble Truths are understood and penetrated, then is uprooted the craving for existence, cut off is the thread that leadeth to rebirth, then is there no more coming to be.”

It is utter ignorance of the Law of Karma that leads some persons to commit suicide, under the artificially worked up impulse that the sorrow and suffering of life was too much to bear. Suicide does not obliterate Karma. The very combination of Karmic circumstances, which caused suicide, will come back to the individual in his next birth.

We are told that there is more than one record of Karma. Every act of ours — whether of body, speech or thought — gets automatically registered in our brain, the physical memory, and in the astral light, or *Akasha*. The memory in the physical brain, no doubt, goes with the body, at death. But the other record remains. The Akashic records exist for

Kalpas and *Kalpas*. Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "E'en wasted smoke remains not traceless." "A harsh word uttered in past lives is not destroyed, but ever comes again." Karma can be erased only through suffering its effects. Suicide, if successful, is, indeed, like burning the carbon copy of the promissory note, thinking that this may get rid of the debt. But the original of the promissory note is with the creditor and he may take a court decree, in the event of default.

Not only is nothing gained by suicide, but it turns the clock back. The individual who puts an untimely end to his life does not go into *Devachan* for blissful rest, as after natural death. He continues in the atmosphere of the earth for the rest of the allotted life-span, which suicide cuts short, there undergoing untold suffering, because the soul is helpless without a physical body. The development of its faculties and the recuperative *Devachanic* rest are cut short, too, so that, at the next rebirth, the soul comes to life much debilitated — not strengthened, as happens in cases of natural death — when once again it has perforce to bear, on its shoulders, the cross of its Karma.

— In your world, said the little prince, men cultivate five thousand roses in one garden . . . and still they do not find what they seek . . .

— That is true, I said.

— And yet what they are seeking may be found in a single rose or a drop of water.

— So it can, I answered.

And the little prince went on:

— But the eyes are blind: one must seek with the heart.

—ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY

ZOROASTRIANISM

IN THE LIGHT OF OCCULT PHILOSOPHY

[This is the concluding portion of an article by H. P. Blavatsky that appeared originally in *The Theosophist* for July 1883. As readers will recall, it is in reply to a letter from a Parsi gentleman, which in turn was occasioned by Col. H. S. Olcott's lecture on "The Spirit of Zoroastrianism." Relevant portions from the letter, on which H.P.B.'s comments are based, are printed in smaller type.—Eds.]

II

THE OFFERS made by Ahura-Mazda to Yima (the first man) to receive instruction from him *are rejected* (*Farg.* II. 17). Why? "Because," as he answers, "I was not born, I was not taught to be the preacher and the bearer of the law." No, he was not born, the Occult Science tells us, for from whom could he have been born since he was *the first man* (let the modern anthropologists and physiologists explain if they can). But he was *evoluted from a pre-existing form*, and as such had no need as yet of the laws and teachings of his seventh Principle. The "Supreme" and the "Almighty" remains satisfied! He makes him only promise that he will take care of his creatures and make them happy, which promise is fulfilled by "the son of Vivanghat." Does not this show that Ahura-Mazda is something which can be explained and defined only by the Occult Doctrine? And wisely does it explain to us that Ahura is our own inner, truly *personal* God and that he is our Spiritual light and the "Creator of the material world," *i.e.*, the architect and shaper of the Microcosm, *Man*, when the latter knows how to resist Angra-Mainyu, or Kama — lust or material desires — by relying on him who overshadows him, the Ahura-Mazda or Spiritual Essence. The latter invokes "Vayu," who, in the Mazdean occult sense, is the *Universal*, as he is the *Individual*, light of man. Hence his prayer to "Vayu," that Zarathushtra, the being who will teach truth to his followers, should side with him, Ahura, and help him to fight Ahriman, without which help even "He" (our seventh Principle) is powerless to save man *from himself*; for Ahriman is the allegorical representation of the lower human principles, as Ahura-Mazda is that of the higher.

Then, think of the symbolical allegory in Yima, the representative of the first *unborn* human race of this, our Fourth Round.¹ It is too

¹ See "Fragments of Occult Truth."

spiritual, too unacquainted with evil upon its first reawakening to life, to be yet in need of the truths of the sacred science, the common foundation of all the great religions. Hence, "the great shepherd," Yima, refuses Ahura's instructions, for Ahriman is so far powerless over the innocence of infancy, irresponsible and unconscious of moral and physical danger. He "keeps (spiritual) death and disease away" from his people, and "enlarges three times the earth"; for the root-race multiplies and "shoots off seventy times seven branch races." But Zarathushtra accepts and worships Ahura-Mazda in the *Vendidad* and elsewhere, because this prophet in the generic sense of the name is the representative of the latter portion of the *second* race.

And now let the Parsee mathematicians calculate how long ago lived the *first* Zara-Ishtar, or Zoroaster; and let them study the *real* Mazdaism, not the later excrescences with which it became overgrown throughout the cycles of the ages and races. Which of the Zarathushtras was the real lawgiver of the Chaldean Mazdaism? Surely not he to whom Ahura-Mazda says: "The fair Yima... O holy Zarathushtra, he was the first mortal *before thee*, with whom I, Ahura-Mazda, did converse, whom I taught the law of Ahura, *the law of Zarathushtra*" (*Farg.* II. 2). Teaching the law of Zarathushtra to the same Zarathushtra, and ages before that Zarathushtra was born, reminds one of Moses made to narrate in his *Pentateuch* his own death and burial. In the *Vendidad*, if Ahura is "the Creator of the *material world*," the Microcosm man, Yima, is the real creator of the earth. There, he is shown master of Spenta Armaiti, the genius of the earth, and he, by the power of his innate *untaught* light and knowledge, simply for the absence of Angra Mainyu — who comes later on — forces "the earth to grow larger and to bear flocks and herds and men *at his will and wish*" (*Farg.* II, 11). Ahura-Mazda is also the father of Tistrya, the *rain-bestowing* god (the sixth Principle) that fructifies the parched soil of the fifth and fourth, and helps them to bear good fruit through their own exertions, *i.e.*, by tasting of *Haoma*, the tree of eternal life, through spiritual enlightenment. Finally and undeniably, Ahura-Mazda being called the chief and father of the six "*Amesha Spentas*," or of the six principles of which he is the seventh, the question is settled. He is "Ahura" or rather Asura, the "living spirit in man," the first of whose twenty different names he gives as "Ahmi," "I am." It was to impress upon his audience the full importance of the recognition of, and reliance upon, (hence that of addressing *it* in "prayer") this one God from whom proceed and in whom are centred *Humate*, *Hukhte* and *Huva-*

reskte,² the sublime condensation of all human and social law, that Colonel Olcott recommended to the Parsee youths the study of *their* prayers. It is very likely, as Darmesteter thinks, that "Herodotus may have heard the Magi sing, in the fifth century B.C., the very same gathas which are sung nowadays by the Mobeds in Bombay," but it is most unlikely that, sung as they are now, they are anything better than the "shells" of the old gathas, the animating spirit having fled from them, never to return unless forcibly recalled by the resurrecting potentiality of the "Occult Sciences."

Will the learned Colonel be so kind as to say whether in his opinion it does not appear that the *Zendavesta* represents the genuine *dictates* of Zoroaster, or that it contains extreme mutilations and additions made before it was written and after it was written?

We think we can, for the Colonel's opinions are ours, having studied under the same Master and knowing that he shares in the same views, namely, that the *Zendavesta* represents now only the general system, the dead letter, so to say, of the *dictates* of Zoroaster. If the Orientalists agree that the bulk of the *Avesta* is pre-Sassanian, nevertheless, they do not, nor can they, fix a definite period for its origin.

As well expressed by Darmesteter, the Parsee "sacred books are the ruins of a religion." The *Avesta* revised and translated into Pahlavi by Ardeshir Babagan is not the *Avesta* of modern Parseeism, with its numberless interpolations and arbitrary commentaries that lasted until the last days of the Sassanian dynasty; nor was the *Avesta* of Ardeshir identical with that which was brought out and given to Gushtasp by Zara-Ishtar (the thirteenth prophet of the *Desatir*); nor that of the latter quite the same as the original Zend, although even this one was but the *exoteric version* of the *Zen-Zara* doctrines. As shown by Burnouf, the Pahlavi version is found nearly in every case to wander strangely from the true meaning of the original (?) Zend text, while that "true meaning" wandered (or shall we say — was veiled?) as greatly from the esoteric text. This, for the good reason that the Zend text is simply a secret *code* of certain words and expressions agreed upon by the original compilers, and the key to which is but with the Initiates. The Western scholars may say, "The key to the *Avesta* is not the Pahlavi, but the *Vedas*"; but the Occultist's answer is, "Aye; but the key to the *Vedas* is the Secret Doctrine." The former assert correctly enough

² Purity of speech, purity of action, purity of thought.

that "the *Vedas* come from the same source as the *Avesta*"; the students of Occultism ask: "Do you know even the A B C of that source?"

To show that the Occultists are justified in their disrespectful remark, it suffices to give one instance. On page six of his *Introduction IV*, to Part I of the *Zend-Avesta*, the *Vendidad*, Mr. J. Darmesteter has the following remark:

The Ancestors of the Indo-Iranians had been led to speak of seven worlds, the Supreme God was often made sevenfold, as well as the worlds over which he ruled. . . . The seven worlds became in Persia the seven KARSHVARE of the earth: the earth is divided into seven KARSHVARE, only one of which is known and accessible to man, the one on which we live, namely, "hvaniratha": which amounts to saying that there are seven earths.

The latter belief is attributed, of course, to ignorance and superstition. Nor do we feel quite certain that this opinion will not be shared by those of our readers who neither are Chelas nor have read the "Fragments of Occult Truth." But we leave it with the "lay-chelas" and others to judge whether this sevenfold division (see *Farg. XIX*) is not the A B C of the Occult Doctrines. The agreement found between the statements of Plutarch and Anquetil's translation of the *Avesta* only shows the correctness of the latter; it does not at all prove that Plutarch gave the true version of the secret meaning of the Zoroastrian religion. Well may Sir W. Jones have exclaimed that the *Avesta* of Anquetil, so full of silly tales and laws so absurd, could not be the work of such a sage like Zoroaster!

The first Zara-Ishtar was a Median, born in Rae, say the Greeks, who place the epoch in which he flourished five or six thousand years before the Trojan war; while according to the teachings of the Secret Doctrine this "first" was the "last" or *seventh* Zarathushtra (the thirteenth of the *Desatir*), though he was followed by one more *Zuruastara* or *Suryacharia* (later, owing to a natural change of language, transformed into Zuryaster and again into Zarathushtra), who lived in the days of the first Gushtasp (not the father of Darius, though, as imagined by some scholars).³ The latter is very improperly called "the

³ It is now an exploded theory that showed King Vistaspa—(or Gustasp) as identical with the father of Darius, hence as flourishing 600 B.C. Vistaspa was the last of the line of the Kaianian princes who ruled in Bactriana; and Bactriana was conquered by the Assyrians 1200 B.C. Our earlier Zend scholars are guilty of more than one such gross mistake. Thus Hystaspes is made in *History to crush the Magi, and reintroduce the pure religion of Zoroaster*, as though those were two distinct religions; and at the same time

founder" of modern Monotheistic Parseeism, for besides being only a revivalist and the exponent of the modern philosophy, he was the last to make a desperate attempt at the restoration of pure Magianism. He is known to have gone from Shiz to the Mt. Zebilan in the cave whither proceeded the Initiates or the Magi; and upon emerging from it to have returned with the *Zend-Avesta* retranslated and commented upon by himself. This original commentary, it is claimed, exists till now among other old works in the secret libraries. But its copies—now in the possession of the profane world, bear as much resemblance to it as the Christianity of today to that of its Founder.

And now, if we are asked, as we have been repeatedly, if there are indeed men in whose power it is to give the correct version of true Zoroastrianism, then why do not they do so?—we answer, "because very few will believe it in *this* our age." Instead of benefiting men they would but hurt the devotees of those truths. And as to giving to the world more information about the locality known as Airyanam Vaejo, we need point but to the sentence in *Fargard* I, in which we find Ahura-Mazda saying to Spitama, "the most benevolent," that he had made every land—even though it had no charms whatever in it—dear to its dwellers, since otherwise the "whole living world would have invaded the Airyanam Vaejo" (v. 2).⁴ Hence, unable to satisfy entirely our readers, we can say but very little. If our opinion can in any way help our correspondent, we are ready to share it with him and say that, Zend scholars and Orientalists notwithstanding, it is our belief that not only have the Persian theologians of the latter portion of the Sassanian

an inscription is found on the tomb of Darius or Darayavush, stating that he (the crusher of Magianism!) was himself "teacher and hierophant of magic," or Magianism! (See *Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II, pp. 141-42).

⁴ Why do we find Zoroaster in the *Bundehesh* offering a sacrifice in "Iran Vej"—distorted name for Airyanam Vaejo—and where or what was this country? Though some Orientalists call it "no real country," and others identify it with the basin of the Aras, the latter has nothing to do with Airyanam Vaejo. The last Zarathust may have chosen, and he has so chosen, the banks of the Aras for the cradle of his newly *reborn* religion; only that cradle received a child reborn and suckled elsewhere, namely, in Airyanam Vaejo (the true "seed of the Aryas," who were then all that was noble and true) which place is identical with the *Shamballah* of the Hindus and the Arhats, a place now regarded also as mythical. In *Fargard* II Ahura Mazda calls together "a meeting of the celestial gods," and, Yima, the first man "of the excellent mortals," in the Airyanam Vaejo—"in the far-off lands of the rising sun," says the *Book of Numbers* of the Chaldees, written on the Euphrates. Those of the Parsees who have ears, let them hear, and—draw their inferences; and perchance it may be also found that the Brahmans who came from the North to India bringing with them all the learning of secret wisdom, came from a place still more northward than Lake Mansarovar.

dynasty disfigured entirely their sacred books, but that, owing to the presence of the pharisaical element and the Rabbis during the pre-Christian as well as post-Christian periods in Persia and Babylonia, they have borrowed from the Jews at least as much as the latter have borrowed from them. If the sacred books of the Pharisees owe their angelology and other speculations to the Babylonians, the modern *Avesta* Commentaries owe the Jews undeniably their anthropomorphic creator, as well as their crude notions about Heaven and Hell.

The learned Colonel will be doing a great favour to the Parsees if he will consent to say what he thinks of the following from the *History of the Conflict between Science and Religion*, by W. Draper:

“Persia, as is the case with all empires of long duration, had passed through many changes of religion. She had followed the Monotheism of Zoroaster; had then accepted Dualism, and exchanged that for Magianism. At the time of the Macedonian expedition, she recognized one Universal Intelligence, the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things, the most holy essence of truth, the giver of all good. He was not to be represented by any image or any graven form. (p. 15)

“In the latter years of the empire, the principles of Magianism had gradually prevailed more and more over those of Zoroaster. Magianism was essentially a *worship* of the elements. Of these, fire was considered the most worthy representative of the Supreme Being.” (pp. 15-16)

Colonel Olcott would probably answer that Professor Draper was right with regard to the many phases through which the great religion of Persia — if we have to call it thus — had passed. But Draper mentions by name only Monotheism, Dualism, Magianism — a kind of refined Visishtadwaitism — and Fire or element worship, whereas he might have enumerated the gradual changes by the dozen. Moreover, he begins his enumeration at the wrong end. If Monotheism has ever been the religion of the Parsees at any time, it is so now, not then, namely, in the Zoroaster period.

The *Zend-Avesta*, with some exceptions, contains nothing essentially different from what the *Vedas* contain. The gods, the rites, the ceremonies, the modes of prayers, and the prayers themselves, are but a reflex of the *Vedas*. Surely then, when Zoroaster dissented from the Brahmans, it could not be merely to

adopt the same pantheism or polytheism in a different language. The teaching of Zoroaster must necessarily be something quite different. Some may say he dissented from the idol worship of the Brahmans; but I think history can prove that the *Brahmans* were idolaters before *they left Ariana*. Does it not rather appear that the Magians who followed Zoroastrianism copied everything from their close neighbours, the Brahmans, and muddled it up with the current and easily reliable name of Zoroaster, forgetting, perhaps, under the sway of altered popular superstitions of the age, the true teaching of Zoroaster? The learned Colonel, or yourself, or any of your contributors, whose learning is, I may say without flattery, very enviable, will be doing a great service to the Parsees if he will kindly say what he thinks the true teaching of Zoroaster was.

Enough is said, we believe, in our preceding statements to show what we honestly think of "the true teaching of Zoroaster." It is only in such rare non-liturgical fragments as the *Hadokht Nosk*, for instance, that the *true* teachings of Zarathushtra Spitama, or those of primitive Magianism, may yet be found; and even these have to be read as a sacred code to which a key has to be applied. Thus, every word in the tenets given in the *Hadokht*, and relating to the fate of our soul after death, has its occult meaning. It is not correct to say even of the later versions of the *Zend-Avesta* that its gods, prayers and rites are all "but a reflex of the *Vedas*." Neither the Brahmans, nor the Zoroastrians, have copied one from the other. With the exception of the word *Zeruana* in its later meaning of "Boundless" *time*, instead of the "Boundless" Spirit, the "One eternity," explained in the sense of the Brahmanical *chakra* or endless circle, there is nothing borrowed from the *Vedas*. Both the *Vedas* and the *Zend-Avesta* originating from the same school, have naturally the same symbols — very differently explained, still having the same esoteric significance. Professor Max Müller, speaking of the Parsees, calls them "the disinherited sons of Manu"; and declares elsewhere that the Zoroastrians and their ancestors started from India during the Vaidic period, "which can be proved as distinctly as that the inhabitants of Massilia started from Greece."⁵ We certainly do not mean to question the hypothesis, though as he gives it, it is still but a personal opinion. The Zoroastrians have as undoubtedly been "settled in India before they immigrated into Persia," as they have ages later returned again to Aryavarta, when they got indeed "under the sway

⁵ See Vol. 1 of *Chips*, p. 84

of altered popular superstitions and forgot the true teachings of Zoroaster." But this theory cuts both ways. For, it neither proves that they have not entered India together and at the same time as the first Brahmans who came to it from the far north, nor that the latter had not been "settled" in Persia, Media, Babylonia and elsewhere before they immigrated into the land of the Seven Rivers. Between Zoroaster, the primeval institutor of "Sun" *worship*, and Zarathushtra, the primeval expounder of the occult properties and transcendental powers of the divine (Promethean) Fire, there lies the abyss of ages. The latter was one of the earliest hierophants, one of the first *Athravans* (priests, or teachers of "fire"), while the Zoroaster of "Gushtasp" was living some 4,000 years B.C. Indeed, Bunsen places Zoroaster at Baktria and the emigration of the Baktrians to the Indus at 3784 B.C. And this Zoroaster taught, not what he had learned "from," but with, the Brahmans, *i.e.*, at Airyanam Vaejo, since what is identical with Brahmanical symbolism is found but in the earlier *Vedas*, not in any of the later Commentaries, that it may be even said of the *Vedas* themselves, that though compiled in the land of the Seven Rivers, they existed ages before in the north. Thus, if anyone is to be blamed for getting under "the sway of altered popular superstitions" of the Brahmans, it is not the Zoroastrians of that age, but indeed Hystaspes who, after visiting "the Brahmans of Upper India," as Ammianus tells us, and having been instructed by them, infused their later rites and ideas into the already disfigured Magian worship.

Hargrave Jennings, a mystic, has eulogized fire as being the best symbol of worship, but he says nowhere that the fire symbol, directly worshipped in its own name and as one of the created elements, as is done in *Zend-Avesta*, is in any way defensible. The learned Colonel, in his lecture on the Spirit of Zoroastrianism, defends fire-worshippers, but does he really understand them as offering direct prayer as above stated? Fire-worship is borrowed from the *Vedas*.

We think not. Fire-worship, or rather reverence for fire, was in the remote ages universal. Fire and water are the elements in which, as Occult Science teaches, the active and passive productive powers of the universe are respectively centred. Says Hippocrates (*Divite* 1-4): "All living creatures . . . animals and men originate from the two Principles, differing in potency but agreeing in purpose. I mean Fire and Water. . . . Father Fire gives life to all things, but Mother Water

nourishes them." Has our friend who seems to show such an evident scorn for the emblems of his own religion, ever studied those of other people? Has he ever been told that there never was a religion but paid reverence to the Sun and Fire as the fittest emblems of *Life*, hence — of the life-giving principle; nay, that there is not, even at present, one single creed on our globe (including Christianity) but has preserved this reverence in its ritualism, though the emblems with time have been changed and disfigured? The only essential difference between the modern Parsi Mobeds and the Christian Clergy lies in this: the devotees of the former being profoundly attached to their old religion — though they may have forgotten its origin — have honestly left exoteric Zoroastrianism standing before the jury of the world, who judges on mere appearances — *unveiled* in its apparent nakedness; while Christian theologians less unsophisticated, kept perpetually modifying Christianity in exact proportion as science advanced and the world became more enlightened, until finally their religion now stands under a thick, withal very insecure, mask. All the religions from the old Vaidic, the Zoroastrian and the Jewish creeds down to modern Christianity, the illegitimate and repudiated progeny of the last, sprang from archaic *Magianism*, or the Religion based upon the knowledge of Occult nature, called sometimes Sabaism — the "worship" (?) of the Sun, moon and stars. See what even Powell Meredith in his "Correspondence touching the Divine Origin of the Christian Religion," with the Vicar of Whaplode, says:

Your sacred books, Sir, are replete with phrases used in fire-worship and with narrations of the appearances of a fire-god. It was as a flame of *fire* that the Jewish Deity first appeared to Moses. It was as *fire* he gave the law on Mount Sinai. It was the God, that answered as *fire*, who was to be the true god in the contest held between Elijah and the Prophets of Baal. It was as *fire* the same God answered his servant David. The altar of incense displayed this *fire*. The same *fire*, with incense — a perfume used by heathens in their worship — was carried by the priests in their censers; and this *fire* once miraculously killed some of them. All the burnt offerings of the Jews, like those of other nations, originated in fire-worship, the worshippers supposing that the God of *fire* devoured their sacrifices as food, whether vegetable or animal, human or bestial. In "a Chariot of *fire*, and horses of *fire*," precisely like the heathen chariot and horses of the Sun, Elijah went up to heaven. We are told that Jehovah went before the Jews, as a consuming *fire*; and we are assured, not only by the Jew, that his Jehovah Aleim is a consum-

ing *fire*, “even a jealous God” (or, as some translate the latter expression, the burning God...) but also by the Christian, that Theos or Zeus (*Ioue, Iove, Jove, Jupiter*, etc.) is a consuming fire! We find that the sacred fire of Jehovah was in Zion, as well as in the temple Vesta or Minerva (*Isa. xxxi, 9*), and as a still more remarkable proof of the identity of the Jewish fire-worship, with that of the Gentiles, we find *that the fire of Jehovah, on the brazen altar, was to be kept always burning — was never to be allowed to go out (Lev. vi, 13)*. Precisely in like manner was the sacred fire kept burning in the temple of Diana, among the Persians. The Magi of Persia and Chaldea had the care of preserving this holy *fire*. In the temple of Ceres and of Apollo the sacred *fire* was always kept burning. The preservation of the *fire* in the temple of Minerva was entrusted to a number of young women, just as the vestal Virgins were charged with the preservation of the sacred fire in the temple of Vesta under penalty of death, if they allowed this precious fire to be extinguished. The custom of preserving the sacred fire is much older than the Hebrew mythology. Diodorus Siculus tells us that it was derived by the Romans from the Greeks, and by them from the Egyptians (who borrowed it from the Chaldees). There is very little doubt that it is nearly as old as Sun-worship, and that fire when worshipped was originally regarded as an emblem of the Solar Deity. All the ancients imagined the god to be a body of fire. By all his worshippers, he was considered to have existed from Eternity, and to have created, not only all other luminous bodies but the whole Universe. He was thought to be the father of lights and to have all other luminaries, such as the Moon, stars, and so on, under his control and guidance. As a creator, he was called *Helios Demiurgos — the Sun-creator or the Solar creator*. In the Psalms, as well as in other parts of the Bible, the creation and government of the world are attributed to the Solar Deity in a vast number of instances which you will find in the sequel (Vid. Vossius, *de Orig. et Prog. Idol.*, lib. ii, c. 5. Bochart Canaan, lib. ii, c. 5) as Governor of the Celestial Bodies, thought by the ancients inferior gods. The Helio Deity of the Bible is continually called “God of Hosts,” “Lord of Hosts,” “Lord God of Hosts,” etc. (*Jahovah Tsabaoth, Alei Tsabaoth*). Whenever the God of Hosts is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, there can be no room for doubt that the writer meant the Sun (the Lord of the Host of Stars). We often read of the *light, glory, and shining* of the God of Hosts, such as — “O Lord God of Hosts, cause thy face to shine” (*Psalms lxxx*). — *The Reformer*, “Delot on Theism,” pp. 28, 29.

We invite our correspondent, if he wants to trace in the Ritualism of modern Christian theology the old Fire-worship, to read *The Rosicrucians*, by Hargrave Jennings, with more attention than he has hitherto done. Fire is the essence of all active power in nature. Fire and water are the elements to which all organized and animated beings owe their existence on our Earth; at any rate, the sun is the only visible and undeniable Creator and Regenerator of life.

If one should take a cursory glance through the Spiegel Bleek translation of *Zend-Avesta*, he will find that the portions in languages other than Zend are marked in italics. He will also find that in common with several others, all the penitential portions in the *Avesta*, without exception, are also in italics, indicating that the portions and the doctrine they contain were introduced at a very late period. Will the learned Colonel or yourself, or any of your contributors, kindly say what Zoroastrianism looks like when divested of the doctrine of penitence? And when further divested of all that has been copied by the Magians from the *Vedas*, I think nothing worth knowing remains.

We would put the last sentence otherwise, and say that "divested of its few remaining *non-liturgical* fragments," and a few *Fargards* and *Yashts* explained esoterically, *nothing worth knowing* can be found in the *Avesta* as it stands at present. Prodicus and some of the early Gnostics were the last who had in their possession some of the secret books of Zoroaster. That those "secret" books were not the *Avesta* in its present form, can be proved by the non-attractiveness of its texts which have nothing in them, as explained now, to fascinate the mystic. Prodicus had the secret code as well as the key to it. A few of the adepts of ancient Magianism existed and were known publicly in those days, since Clement Alexandrinus speaks of those who follow the *heresy* of Prodicus and "boast of possessing the secret books of *Zoroaster*." (*Strom I*)

You have often said, and your Theosophist brothers have also said, that the Christians live in a house of glass, and that the Theosophists know what the Christians are. The same is said of Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. But we are never told what the Christians really are or what their true teaching should be. Do Theosophists think that such general remarks, without the slightest attempt to support them by proofs better than those furnished by ordinary histories, will in any way serve any purpose? If the *arguments should be any other* than founded upon

Occult philosophy, then I think the difficulties in your way should prove similar to those that have beset and deterred the Christian missionaries in India.

The followers of every one of the present great exoteric religions "live in a house of glass." The impeachment is pretty well proved, we should say, by their respective inhabitants having nigh broken by this time all the window panes of their neighbours, who have returned the compliment. It is sufficient, we believe, to study Christianity, and compare its hundreds of mutually conflicting and destroying sects, to find out what they are, or rather what they are not; for surely a true Christ-like Christian is rarer in our days than a white crow. It is not, however, in the columns of this journal that we can undertake to show all that "they really are," nor have we hitherto shown any signs — whenever occasion presented itself — of limiting our charges to "general remarks"; but, since truth is very unpalatable, and as they are showing by their actions, better than we can ever do in words, their real moral standard, we regard it as a loss of time to be ever presenting before them a mirror. It is the task undertaken and carried out in a most excellent way by the freethinkers, in whose current literature one can find everything one may desire in the shape of proof. Our business is to winnow by the means of Occult philosophy the grain from the chaff, to show what a thing is not, and thus allow the profane an opportunity to judge for themselves and see what it is.

The above are the questions that have been embarrassing me for months, and I do hope that diffuse though they are, you will do me the favour to insert them in the next issue of *The Theosophist*. If they will only serve to stir the Parsee scholars (unfortunately I am not a scholar) I shall be satisfied.

We have done our best to satisfy our correspondent. The subject is of tremendous interest to every thinking Parsee, but he has *to help himself* if he would learn more. His religion is not dead yet; and under the lifeless mask of modern Zoroastrianism the pulse of the Magi of old still beats. We have endeavoured as briefly as possible to give a correct, though a very superficial, view of the purport and spirit of true Magianism. There is not a sentence in this for which authority cannot be shown.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In recent times, with the increase in life expectancy at birth, the proportion of elderly people is growing in many countries. In *Réalités* for May 1971, under the title "The Fires of Autumn," Régine Gabbey discusses the problem that inevitably faces all those who live long — how to slow down the decline into old age. In the author's words:

... the agonizing question sooner or later has to be faced: is life worth living after sixty-five? If one goes into the question of old age from all points of view, psychological, physiological, and social, one soon comes to realize that there are an enormous number of misconceptions and false ideas current about it. Today it is possible to do something about the inescapable process of growing old, and there is a whole range of possibilities open to old people. . . .

But old age — and this is the first important point — can no longer be measured by purely chronological criteria. One can be old at forty-five and young at sixty-five, in terms of biological, psychological and socio-economic criteria which we can control to a certain extent. . . .

What is the main factor in growing old? Inactivity, without a shadow of doubt. The less the organs are used, the quicker they wear out. As soon as a person has stopped growing, certain physiological and psychological functions cause wear and tear, but this is soon offset by the regeneration of functional cells. When physical and intellectual activity stops, so does this faculty for regeneration, thereby accelerating the aging process. . . .

To slow down physiological aging, the first rule is to continue to use one's body for as long as possible. . . . Gerontologists today all agree that rejection from the active community is one of the principal factors in the speeding up of the aging process, and that retirement, imposed on grounds of age alone, is a great mistake, generating stress and even "death by retirement." . . .

There is one field in which we do know the formula for keeping young: that of the intellect. It is perfectly simple. All that is required is an active intellectual life, which implies constant curiosity and interests. As one distinguished French doctor says: "I know of only one fount of youth — the faculty for amazement." . . . The only way to keep this intellectual capital and even to make it pay interest is to keep up stimulating activity, whatever the difficulties.

Among the failings that occur in the old, the most commonly cited is loss of memory. . . . Dr. Baumgartner, director of a centre well known for memory cures, considers that the two most important factors in keeping one's memory are intensive brain activity and, a very recent idea, the constant affection which aging people often lack. . . . A lack of affection is a threat to any old person; it is absolutely indispensable to use all one's willpower and make an effort to get out of oneself, to go out and meet other people. . . .

The important thing is always to be doing something. One should not abandon a single activity, drop a single friendship, centre of interest, or reason for living. Finally, to move gently into old age, very often an old person need only convince himself that he is heading for a serene, philosophic period when he can fulfil himself, make new discoveries, enjoy new pleasures and sublimate others. His acquired experience and the serenity of an age in which passions are less easily roused combine to set an older person at a certain distance from events and give him the ability to distinguish the essential from the trivial.

So, is life worth living after sixty-five? Yes, one can answer fairly and squarely, on condition that resignation is replaced by dynamism, rest by activity and solitude by solidarity. Voltaire wrote at sixty-eight: "One must continue to correct oneself even at eighty-five. I dislike old men who say: 'I'm in a rut now.' 'Well, you old idiot,' I want to say, 'get out of it!'"

Currently, a controversy is raging on the question of legalizing abortion, one side defending its position by asking about the right to life of the fetus; the other countering with the mother's right to self-determination. The psychological problems of abortion are discussed by Colman McCarthy in an article in the *International Herald Tribune* for March 9. "Except for the inevitable profiteers, few can rest easy with abortions spreading so quickly," he writes, "because indisputably abortion is currently the worst form of birth control."

The writer quotes many authorities, among them Dr. Julius Fogel of Washington's Columbia Hospital, a gynecologist-obstetrician who is also a psychiatrist and has been thinking deeply about the psychological effects of abortion on the mother's soul and mind:

Abortion is an impassioned subject and finally the laws are being liberalized. But psychologically and emotionally we are only

beginning to learn something of its effects on the women involved. I think every woman — whatever her age, her background or sexuality — has a trauma at destroying a pregnancy. A level of humanness is touched. This is a part of her own life. She destroys a pregnancy, she is destroying herself. There is no way it can be innocuous. One is dealing with the life force. It is totally beside the point whether or not you think a life is there. You cannot deny that something is being created and that this creation is physically happening. . . .

Often the trauma may sink into the unconscious and never surface in the woman's lifetime. But it is not as harmless and casual an event as many in the pro-abortion crowd insist. A psychological price is paid. I can't say exactly what. It may be alienation, it may be a pushing away from human warmth, perhaps a hardening of the maternal instinct. Something happens on the deeper levels of a woman's consciousness when she destroys a pregnancy. I know that as a psychiatrist.

A Swedish investigator, Arens, who has studied 248 legally aborted women, found that some 23 per cent eventually suffered severe guilt, 25 per cent mild guilt, the symptoms including insomnia, decreased work capacity and nervousness.

Speaking before a 1966 meeting of the American Society of Psychoanalytic Physicians, the American psychiatrist William E. Sorrell said: "Any abortion is an emotionally traumatic experience, and is sometimes a precipitating and unsuspected cause of a typical psychotic reaction." Also quoted is a statement by Dr. Nicholas J. Eastman: "The feeling is growing apparently among the leaders in psychiatry that therapeutic abortion on psychiatric grounds is often a double-edged sword and frequently carries with it a degree of emotional trauma far exceeding that which would have been sustained by continuation of pregnancy."

The article goes on to point out that a woman who discovers her pregnancy and is not happy about it, needs proper guidance to help her through the tension and confusion that might otherwise lead to a decision to abort. According to Dr. Herbert Ratner, M.D., public health director of Oak Park, Illinois, and a force behind the Birthright movement in America which renders assistance to pregnant women in continuing their pregnancies:

Many who are pushing abortion often care more about the issue than the person. A woman is in trouble, they say, so let's help her fast. That is a fine attitude, but too often abortion is

anything but help. Many women accept abortion because they mistakenly think it is the only way out of a jam. It isn't. If the woman's initial shock and nervousness can be calmed, she can often be persuaded that bearing the child will be much better than aborting it. This can be accomplished by working out with her alternative solutions, and by helping her to see the long-range advantages of a human rather than a veterinarian solution.

The fact that abortion is the worst form of birth control cannot be debated. Though laws, speeches and public relations can separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing, on the psychological and spiritual levels such separation is hardly possible. The karmic consequences of this crime against nature will, sooner or later, have to be faced by the mother and all those who assist in this wilful and sinful destruction of life.

According to an eminent engineer working with the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, half of what we shall need to know in 1978 is not yet at our disposal. His remark is based on the extraordinary advances in science and technology in the last decade which, while giving us more and newer things, have also alienated us from our very environment. Commenting on this, an editorial in *The Times of India* of April 3 states:

The boy who learned a skill in 1900 (as another commentator has put it) knew that he would use it all his life, whereas today and in the coming years "every individual will be expected to acquire two, three or even four skills, perhaps all of them unconnected, between starting work and retiring." This places a heavy burden on educationists, for new demands will be made on the very basis of imparting and gaining knowledge. Polymer chemistry gave us a new world of materials (not excluding wonder drugs); electronics has revolutionized communication; space studies have brought on a new attitude towards our place in the universe; and certain far-afield biological experiments have changed our concepts about matter. And, from the looks of it, we have only started on it; the process will speed up still further from now on. Many things that will be in everyday use in 1980 do not even exist yet. But the multiple skills that an individual will be obliged to acquire may not serve him well at all. For while the progress has been hectic there has been no corresponding increase in true understanding. In fact, as the engineer concedes, "no one knows what it's all about." Precisely; that is what is

causing all the confusion. Sociologically the many-skilled men and the bright young innovators will be in the nineteenth century. The only way to prevent such an undesirable development is to lay stress on liberal education and to recognize that specialization has its drawbacks.

The following from another editorial in *The Times of India* (March 26) illustrates that there is little to warrant modern science's boast of superiority over an ignorant ancestry:

Couch therapy, according to Dr. Fuller Torrey of the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health, is no better (and perhaps no worse) than the ancient techniques used by witch-doctors for centuries. . . . Twenty-five years before reserpine was found by the westerners to have a marked tranquillizing effect, a Nigerian witch-doctor went to London to treat a fellow national who had gone nuts. The stuff he used to cure the patient was a rauwolfia root. Shock therapy for the mentally ill was introduced in the 1930s, but electric eels did the same thing 4,000 years ago in Greece and Egypt. Sigmund Freud spun his celebrated theories in 1900, but 300 years before that the Iroquois Indians had a number of bright ideas relating to the interpretation of dreams. Apparently there is nothing new under the sun; other cultures, other symbols — that's all. Dr. Torrey uses the same methods for curing patients as witch-doctors did of yore and "is getting about the same results." . . . "If one is science, so is the other. If one is magic, so is the other," he says.

In view of accumulating evidence that what is known today was also known to the ancients, how futile seem all our claims of originality!

Four-year-old musical prodigy, Ravikiran, recently astounded packed audiences at the Shanmukhananda Hall in Bombay with an accurate demonstration of identification of choice Carnatic *ragas* and *talas*. Just a few snatches of a song were enough for him. When asked all sorts of random questions on the intricacies of Carnatic music, he replied at once with an amazing accuracy. The curiosity of those who came was well rewarded. Even the few who had a critical attitude at first, stood up and cheered the child.

According to his father, *gottuvadyam* player N. Narasimhan of Madras, Ravikiran can today identify as many as 325 Carnatic *ragas* and 175 *talas*. He can identify the compositions of famous composers,

can tell which are the predominant notes in a *raga* and can recite the *arohana* (ascending) and *avarohana* (descending) notes of the *raga* easily. He can specify *akshakalams* and is familiar with *gamakas*.

An article on him in the *Times Weekly* of April 4 recounts how, even as an infant, Ravikiran used to swing his legs in perfect unison to a *raga* whenever Carnatic music was played in his house. When he was a little over two years old, he gave his first raga-and-tala identification programme in Bangalore, and last year he gave a demonstration before the Madras Music Academy. His father, who is desirous of nurturing his son's talent on proper lines, is well aware that he should not make Ravikiran a matter of commercial curiosity and exploit him for commercial reasons. Several offers have been made to him which he has rejected totally.

Ravikiran's future will be watched with great interest. It remains to be seen whether he will blossom into a *maestro* or whether his talent will fade away with the passage of time.

Though reincarnation can explain most cases of child prodigies, the claim that Ravikiran is the reincarnation of his grandfather, a famous musician who died some years ago, seems unjustified considering that there is a longish *devachanic* interlude between births.

Noted psychiatrist Dr. William C. Menninger lists six guideposts to judge emotional maturity: (1) having the ability to deal constructively with reality; (2) having the ability to adapt to change; (3) having relative freedom from symptoms that are produced by tensions and anxieties; (4) having the capacity to find more satisfaction in giving than receiving; (5) having the capacity to relate to other people in a consistent manner with mutual satisfaction and helpfulness; (6) having the capacity to sublimate, to direct one's hostile energy into creative and constructive outlets. (*Coronet*, April 1971)

Doctors estimate that from 20 per cent to 45 per cent of those seeking medical aid are actually suffering emotionally. Emotional maturity is sadly lacking in our age.
