

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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MAN—THE CREATOR

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...resolving to create, or rather to emanate the universe, IT formed a picture of what should be, and this at once was a modification willingly brought about in the hitherto wholly unmodified spirit; thereupon the Divine Idea was gradually expanded, coming forth into objectivity, while the essence of the presiding spirit remained unmodified, and became the perceiver of its own expanded idea. (*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 24)

MAN is the microcosm of the Macrocosm; he reflects in himself both the Macrocosm and all the other microcosmic aspects of the Macrocosm. But, as all reflections are illusions, *i.e.*, not what they appear to be, the return path of involution-evolution is the getting back to the central essence through *realizing* that all manifestation is but a reflection of that essence. As long as any reflection usurps the place of the reflected, and says of itself, “This is I,” it is held in the web of illusion.

Many a story illustrates this truth. The Greek legend of Narcissus who died through his love of the reflection of himself in the pool, not realizing that it was merely a reflection, and the story of the fox and the grapes and the well, both show how foolish it is to think a reflection is real. Yet we are all enamoured of our reflections, whether of body, character, or ideas. We think we are our reflections on matter of different grades, and whether we are proud or ashamed of them we identify ourselves with them. We forget that to alter the reflection we must alter the reflected as well as the reflecting surface until reflected and reflection are one; until, in fact, we see the Face of Krishna reflected on the waters of Space, no longer distorted but making

a perfect pattern.

In the above quotation from *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita* we are given one of the keys which will enable us to change our reflection, and we are also shown why the creation or emanation of the Divine Idea succeeds while our own creations or emanations fail.

The quotation says: "The essence of the presiding spirit remained unmodified," and therefore "became the perceiver of its own expanded idea." We, on the other hand, become so enamoured of our ideas, that we are, as it were, caught by them. They feed on our life-sap and how—if we wake in time—we wish we had never given birth to them! We must create since we are eternally thinking, but how are we to remain unmodified, as we ought to, even if our creations are harmless?

It is first necessary to grasp, as fully as possible by effort and thought, that we are, in our immortal nature, a differentiation of the One Essence; we are each "a spark from the central fire," and as such we, in our immortal part, partake of the quality of being unmodifiable. Even though this immortal part is surrounded or covered by a human body, "it has the capacity to perceive all the changes going on around the body." As man is the microcosm of the macrocosm, he, too, is a creator; he, too, life by life, day by day, resolves to create his universe and from the materials of his past he forms "a picture of what should be" for his coming incarnation or manifestation or day. This picture expands, and comes gradually into objectivity, while he, the creator or emanator unmodified, perceives all that is happening. Just as the Immortal Spirit becomes the immortal part of every being, so in our incarnations, every aspect of our being contains the Immortal Perceiver. It is *It* which perceives the changes in the body, the feelings, the desires, the thought; *It* is the thread which links all changes and, at death, withdraws itself from the various vehicles as it returns to its first state.

This first state is the differentiation of the One, a spark of the Flame. For many millions of years, the microcosm, Man, loses sight of the Flame, for the differentiated portion does not see beyond itself. It does not see that the films separating it from the Flame are illusion; it does not see that it is part of an emanated picture. The illusion of self separates it from the realization of Non-Self, but as the Non-Self is the unmodified Spirit, at last the illusive quality of self becomes apparent to that self, and, opening itself to the Real, it becomes the *conscious* differentiation of the Non-Self, and perceives the difference between illusion and Real-

ity throughout the Universe.

To leave the matter here, however, will not help us, for on this plane of practical expression we must try to mirror forth the universal plan.

Our earthly life is built on the same plan as is the Macrocosmic life, for Man is a creator by virtue of being the microcosmic differentiation of the Macrocosm. He is a spark of the Flame and therefore has the potentialities of the Flame even though surrounded by veils of matter. Therefore, whether he will or not, he is constantly imitating his Divine Parent. He is creating incessantly as he desires and thinks, but, not observing the method of the Divine Thinker, he creates pictures which turn and rend him, or which fade out before reaching their fruition. He fails to note that as the One Self is *in* every aspect and detail of its vast picture, so he, too, is in every creation of his own making. His creations, in fact, are emanations, for they have a portion of himself in them even though he remains separate, as Krishna says He does with regard to the Universe. It is a terrifying thought when we begin to see how we give a portion of ourselves in every thought, good or bad. Not only so, but every portion must be redeemed. Our first reaction is to struggle to obey *The Voice of the Silence*:

If thou wouldst not be slain by them, then must thou harmless make thy own creations, the children of thy thoughts, unseen, impalpable, that swarm round humankind, the progeny and heirs to man and his terrestrial spoils.

But, carried to excess, this idea leads to passivity, to the negative of the actional quality of the One, and therefore to decay. The positive attitude with regard to thought is *the use of thought* and, between the use of thought for personal ends (harmfulness) by unawakened humanity and its use to further the Divine Idea (selflessness) by the awakened Man, lies the "harmless, good" thinking of the kind though passive ones of humanity. The latter are those who "kill not" ever, physically or mentally; who form the support of the various charities; who, pacifists in war, take little action to seek for the end of war during peace; who form the congregations at churches and the audiences at many a theosophical meeting. If such are earnest, this pause in their life will pass, and they will awaken to see that War is eternal, *i.e.*, that action is the root of the Universe. Wars are the clashing of actions. Only when all actions are harmonious will wars cease; and actions will become harmonious when they are planned actions, in line with the character of the One.

Wars, like those Humanity has been through recently, can teach the student much. Their incidents are not casual skirmishes; they entail planning. The active clash of arms or the carrying out of raids are the last stage of the complete picture. Before they take shape there is the plan of action, the choice of weapons, the choice of leadership and personnel, the gauging of the strength of the enemy. Above all, there is the *motive* behind. The motive should not be either conquest or peace, but helping to bring to birth a New Order of being through the destruction of forms which are inhibiting the Divine Plan. The wars against conditions, which we call Reforms, go through the same stages, but until they are waged against the old ideas instead of against the old conditions there will be a constant war among reformers.

In our own individual lives we find the same thing. As Mr. Judge says, we find ourselves at war with our surroundings and our friends all the time. Why is this? Because reflections are planning in terms of reflections; we plan in terms of details, of altered conditions of life, but not of a *new order* of life. Though there are all the signs of the need for human solidarity, at present the human mind does not grasp the fact and still plans in terms of nations and races. We individually plan our life in terms of our own progress and importance and we find it very difficult to stretch our concept of life to include all others.

To alter the whole we must alter the parts, and the only part we have the power to alter is ourselves. Serious and careful thought is very necessary at this moment on the part of each of us if we would help forward the Divine Plan; and we must start with our daily life.

In the opening quotation we see that we must *resolve* what we want to achieve; then we must form a picture of it, *i.e.*, think or image it in all its details. Having thus sent it on its way it will by its own force gradually come into objectivity. Resolve without thought will not create; thought without resolve will be ineffectual. Unless we vitalize by the will that portion of ourselves which is in the picture, it will fade away. We lose part of ourselves in fruitless thinking or planning, but we gain power through careful planning and action. The difficulty of deciding what is our duty comes because we do not plan. It is not our duty to do everything that crosses our path asking to be done and, although it is true that the immediate thing to be done has the claims of duty for us, just what *is* the immediate thing to be done? The relative value of things to be done has to be weighed, just as sacrifices are not what they seem. A useless sacrifice, says W.Q.J., is a crime of folly. But what is a useless and what a useful sacrifice?

Unless we have a plan of life, a plan of daily activities, nothing will be done. It is true that no occultist is fixed to any mortal plan, but still all occultists plan. Adaptability comes not in doing anything that presents itself, but in adapting oneself to a change of plan or to changing conditions. We are not dealing with dead matter, for there is no such thing, so none of our plans will work out perfectly until we know all the characteristics of the matter we use. And, since we are dealing with other human beings also and a long past of conflicting circumstances, adaptability is a very necessary virtue. Were it easy to force a plan, the Adepts would plan for a perfect world and force the picture to become fact, but we know that this is not how Nature works. It is co-operation and not coercion that forms the perfect whole—but *we must know where we are going*.

The value of the metaphysical glimpse of our relationship with the ALL is that it provides a picture which, when dwelt upon by the mind and heart, becomes the plan of life. All days and years and lives, however misshapen they seem, become part of the picture, but we must search for and strengthen the thread that binds us to the One. We must seek Its plan, not our own, and we must try to live and act, think and feel, not as a reflection but as the central heart of the Universe. There is but One Heart to the Universe and it throbs through every portion of itself in the myriads of "forms"; there is but One Mind alive in every thinker; there is but One Life breathing through all lives. Were that Heart and Mind and Life to stop functioning (to stop holding the Picture in Mind), the Universe would crumble: there would be no matter to reflect It. When every heart beats in unison with the One Heart and feels Its warmth permeating its being; when every mind reflects the Divine Idea, crystal-pure and radiant; when every fragment breathes in harmony with the One Breath, then truly will the Universe reflect the splendour and glory of Perfection.

THIS immortal and perfect soul must be the same in the highest God as well as in the humblest man, the difference between them being only in the degree in which this soul manifests itself.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE THOUGHT AND THE ACT

The seeds of Wisdom cannot sprout and grow in airless space. To live and reap experience, the mind needs breadth and depth and points to draw it towards the Diamond Soul. Seek not those points in Maya's realm; but soar beyond illusions, search the eternal and the changeless SAT, mistrusting fancy's false suggestions.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THERE are certain human undertakings in which man tries as far as possible to co-operate with nature in its variegated moods of creation, preservation and regeneration. The farmer in his field can thus intelligently adapt himself to the recurring cycles in nature and plan his actions accordingly. But the modern successor of the ancient tiller of the soil is no longer in tune with nature and rarely understands its great language. He thus misses out on warnings of floods and draughts, torrential downpours and scorching heat that devastate his crops. The knowledge that can make him wise descends only from the higher planes of being and comes only when deserved. Those who do not merit access to this wisdom have tried to supplement their knowledge by worldly wisdom, and though that has multiplied their crop, it has brought a deterioration in nourishment and produced such unbalanced harvests that in certain countries they have resorted to the pernicious practice of destroying the surplus crop to avert a fall in prices. The plenty that should gladden the heart of the hungry is deliberately destroyed for the aggrandizement of the few.

Husband and wife unite in holy wedlock to emulate nature in its processes of creation. They share in the joys of parenthood, but in modern times they have forgotten the great truth that their union cannot fructify unless there is in the offspring the other union of the *Kshetra* (body) and the *Kshetrajna* (the Lord who is to use that body). The parents may nourish and tend that body; they are in these times totally ignorant of the care to be taken for the training of the soul and the awakening of Spirit. Even in those balmy days of Aryan culture, parents realized that they were not competent to transmit spiritual knowledge, and so they sent their sons to the *ashramas* of the sages. We have glimpses of their methods in some of the Upanishads. It is a sad commentary on human endeavours that tasks which are willed in hours of insight are allowed to be diluted by lowly desires, until in the end the primary benevolence is swamped in a plethora of petty claims of a nation or a group that makes a mockery of

universal benefits to all mankind.

From the times of Shakespeare, who in his plays had shown that men even in high places could be mean, tempted, failing, vengeful, jealous, humanity has been steadily sliding downhill into the oblivion of non-spirituality. Vice has been making inroads into human consciousness, so that even good thoughts as they passed through his despoiled intellect turned into sorry caricatures of their benign and universal selves and emerged on to the plane of action as acts of malignity destined to wade through the sufferings of countless mortals, to culminate in the aggrandizement and glorification of a few.

Within a few years of the founding of the Theosophical Society, it became apparent that the grownups—those who were supposed to transmit the spiritual verities to the young—had hardly any knowledge as to how the twin doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation would work in the case of those who were fast straying into aberrations of soul-life. To warn them of the great dangers that people were deliberately wishing on themselves for long and weary centuries, the Great Master, He whom H.P.B. called “the *Paraguru*—my Master’s MASTER,” wrote to some of the principal workers of that day. The letter surveys the human scene and gives the results in unmistakable terms. Says the letter:

The intellectual portion of mankind seems to be fast dividing into two classes: the one unconsciously preparing for itself long periods of temporary annihilation or states of non-consciousness, owing to the deliberate surrender of intellect and its imprisonment in the narrow grooves of bigotry and superstition—a process which cannot fail to lead to the utter deformation of the intellectual principle; the other unrestrainedly indulging its animal propensities with the deliberate intention of submitting to annihilation pure and simple, in case of failure, and to millenniums of degradation after physical dissolution. Those intellectual classes reacting upon the ignorant masses—which they attract, and which look up to them as noble and fit examples to be followed—degrade and morally ruin those they ought to protect and guide. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 33*)

Strong words, these, hardly to be found in any extant scriptures except perhaps allegorically and in veiled language. Yet, coming as they do from a high and unimpeachable source, they deserve the student’s utmost respect in thought and action.

In *The Voice of the Silence*, which contains translations by H.P.B. of chosen fragments from the *Book of the Golden Precepts* for the daily use of Lanoos (disciples), there is a verse which

reads: "But even ignorance is better than Head-learning with no Soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it." But, then, where can this Soul-wisdom be found? It is nowhere taught in our great institutions of learning, and money is incapable of purchasing it. This Wisdom from above of which Job and James spoke is *sui generis* and, given the conditions, it rises up spontaneously in the human heart. No tomes contain it, no man can transmit it to another, yet it exists and is perceived by one who desires perception. Desires, angers, greeds, envies, hates are the weeds that stifle and choke its growth, and it remains atrophied so long as one pays homage to the lower devilish knowledge which sooner or later results in setting up one human being against another, the ambitions of one against the ambitions of all else.

The real wisdom has to be diligently striven after; it has to be invoked; it has to be sought after and looked for even amid the raging of the storm and in the battle which must inevitably follow between the forces of darkness and those of Light. Truthfulness, purity, self-denial, charity, etc., provide the soil and the manure, the water and the sunlight which aid its burgeoning processes. Therefore is it that in his letter the Paraguru wrote:

It is not the individual and determined purpose of attaining Nirvana—the culmination of all knowledge and absolute wisdom, which is after all only an exalted and glorious selfishness—but the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause to benefit by it as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can, which constitutes the true Theosophist.

It is only here and in such conditions that thought percolates unadulterated into action.

IF thou wouldst perfect thyself in Knowledge, perfect thyself in Love. If thou wouldst reach the Highest, ceaselessly cultivate a loving and compassionate heart.

—JAMES ALLEN

THE CURSE OF SEPARATENESS

[Reprinted from *Theosophical Siftings*, Vol. II, 1889-90.]

Nothing in the world is single;
All things by a law divine
In one spirit meet and mingle.

—SHELLEY

“THE eternal unity of all things” was an elementary doctrine of the most ancient Eastern philosophies, and their final resolution into the universal soul was their ultimate hope and desire. “Destroy separateness!” says the modern Theosophist. “Cast out the self—the personality which is maya or delusion.” “That they may be one as We are one” was the last prayer of Jesus Christ, referring to that transcendental unity of the Divine Trinity, as the ultimate goal whereto His followers should aspire. The modern nineteenth century man, to whom the light of the ancient wisdom is new and strange, asks with bewilderment what it all means, for race instincts inherited through countless generations, and all the course of Western education, from the cradle to the grave, tend to the development of the personality,¹ the glorification of self, and the accentuation of separateness. Nay, even our family affection, highest and purest of all our emotions, as we Westerns count it, is but a more refined selfishness, according to the tenets of the East. “He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me,” says Jesus, again, speaking as the Christ-spirit, as the manifestation of the universal soul, union wherewith is our hope and our destiny.

The Oriental and the Hermetic philosophies are at one on this, yet it is hard for the mind to grasp; but when once the fact is realized that separateness, individuality, disunion, by whatever name you call it, is, in fact, the source of all evil, the key to every curse that broods over humanity, the root of every error, it will be found that in this one principle we have a key that will unlock many of the secrets and solve many of the problems which now perplex humanity.

That each individual man is an image of the whole universe, that within his soul is, as it were, reflected the microcosm answering to the macrocosm, which is universal, is a Hermetic axiom which Jesus enunciated when he said, “Behold, the king-

¹ Meaning by this term the sum-total of the qualities which separate one individual from another, and constitute what in popular language is called Individuality.

dom of God is within you"; and even the unmethodized, unscientific study of one's own inner self which the ordinary man can give, may furnish a clue to many important occult principles, if undertaken in a careful and honest spirit. Consider then, first, how the mechanism of the material body is carried on. Everywhere are nerve centres, and the mechanism of a centre involves first a sensitive surface; secondly, a nerve carrying the thrills of sensation received by that surface to the appropriate brain-cell, as a telegraph wire takes a message to headquarters; thirdly, a return nerve bringing back instructions, and fourthly a muscle, which, receiving these instructions, expands or contracts with a nicety of adjustment which no machine could equal. Many thousands of these pieces of mechanism are located all over the body, and so far, as above indicated, we can trace their functions; but how the message is received and the command transmitted from the brain-cell no science has ever yet been bold enough even to speculate upon. Herein lies the life of man, and this is unity, the spirit which harmonizes every sensation, so that "If one member suffers, all its members suffer with it; and if one member rejoices, all the members rejoice with it"; and if this unity be disturbed, if there be but the slightest separateness in any of the countless nerve centres, pain and disease follow as a matter of course. Let there be from any external cause an excitation of a surface, the natural action of the nerves quickly recalls the blood and restores equilibrium; but if any failure of connection with "headquarters" prevents this natural action, there results a stagnation of the blood, followed by inflammation and rapid deterioration of the unoxidized blood, mortification and poisoning of the healthy blood through all the body, resulting from the separateness of one or more nerve centres. The fault may be in the centre itself, in the transmitting power of the nerve, or in the brain-cell which ought to send the orders; but wherever the fault is, it is separateness which directly causes pain and disease and death in the material body, and if the whole were harmonious there could be no such things.

Here, then, is one result of the fall of man, or, in other words, the descent of the spiritual into matter; for, if the spiritual entirely dominated the material envelope, as it did before the fall, no separateness, no pain or death could be possible. And what is thus true of man's material body is true also of other things. Needless to say that precisely the same remarks hold true of the material bodies of animals, and it needs but little extension of the principle to see that it applies to plants as well. Many would

probably be startled at the bare notion of a brain in connection with a plant; but those who have watched and studied the motions of the sensitive radicle-tip, varying according to circumstances, and the corresponding development of the plumule, the motion of the currents of protoplasm, and the general phenomena of growth of every plant, from the lowliest moss to the most stately oak, must admit that there is a unity, and a harmony of principle about it all, which can only be satisfactorily accounted for by the theory of a central authority, receiving messages from the remotest portions and transmitting orders accordingly. Any particle which is not subject to that central authority is dead, so far as the life of the plant is concerned, even as a leaf, when the connection of the veins with the sap veins of the stem is severed, may retain its form and its glossy appearance, may even put on hues of exquisite beauty; but the curse of separateness is on it for all that; it is dead, and its entire detachment and disintegration is merely a question of time.

Now, go lower still in the scale of creation. If we pick up a stone, it seems utterly separate, and, by consequence, utterly dead, yet when we drop it, it returns too by the force of gravitation to its parent earth, showing that it too obeys a central authority, and that entire separation is wholly impossible; for by this central law at all events, even though there were no other at all, the whole universe and all the expanse of the starry heavens are held together.

Thus far, then, it would seem that entire separateness is impossible, that partial separateness brings pain, disease and death, and that the destruction of separateness, the final reunion, is hope and joy and peace; the Nirvana of the Buddhist, the eternal hope of the Christian; and this is worked out through all the material creation, for the higher we get in the scale, the more plainly do we see strivings after a more and more perfect and universal union. Even among animals, the union and concerted action of the higher types is well known, as in a beehive, an anthill, a rookery, for example, or in the manoeuvres of a herd of wolves circumventing some antelopes; in all these the sinking of self for the benefit of the community is most marked. Or, leaving these higher types, the union of families among animals, though resulting in the first instance from the separation of the sexes, is an effort at reunion; the pairing being, by Nature's law, an effort towards the primal masculine-feminine type, the re-attainment of which would remove all that great series of separatenesses arising from sexual causes, lust, and jealousy and

desire, among animals and among men in whom the animal nature is predominant.

Looking next at the race of men, even the very lowest are grouped in colonies, tribes, clans, nations; separateness is impossible, and the higher we get in the range of civilization, the more complex and intimate does this union become, and the clearer grows the analogy of the community to the individual man. The primitive savage has but his bow and arrows—his squaw and his children represent the group with whom his life is shared; but even he owes an obedience to his chief, a comradeship to the rest of his tribe, which he cannot lay aside without suffering and loss. The most civilized nations of the West carry on their government by an analogy wonderfully close to the life of an individual man. Like branching nerves, the electric wires radiate from the central seat of government, where various departments like brain-cells receive intelligence from remote parts, and transmit orders in accordance with the one central informing will, which may be embodied in the person of a despot, or may be vague and indefinite as the representatives of the people, but is the central will for all that; railways and steamers, like veins and arteries, take the raw material, or the manufactured product, to feed, to clothe, or to strengthen every part alike; wherever there is separateness or the action of any part against the will of the central authority, there is crime and trouble and wrong. It may be that the central authority itself is too weak to hold the outlying parts together; it may be that the central authority is itself smitten with the curse of separateness, which is the case when a despot governs with motives of self-seeking, and not for the people's good, or where the expression of the popular will means mob law and the dominion of the ignorant masses by brute force. But from whatever cause it proceeds, the part which is not subject to the central authority, which does not sacrifice self for the general good, is smitten with the curse of separateness, and unless a speedy remedy can be found, is in danger of decay and death.

What is true of a nation is true also of every other body or community, and more especially of a religious body or church. One of the leading doctrines of Theosophy is the great underlying abstract truth which is the common basis of all the great historic religions, and which all more or less imperfectly represent, the imperfection being caused by the imperfection of man, which again arises from his selfishness, his materialism, the results of his fall, in a word, his separateness. This blurs and distorts the great truths which, but for this, he would see clearly

and know perfectly. Every Church, every religion, every faith in the world is founded on this underlying basis of truth, and is in actual living connection with it, otherwise it is dead; and though the outward form of a body remains, it is as surely doomed to disintegration as a leaf that no longer draws sustenance from the parent stem. The individual members of that body are not necessarily separate; like the molecules that form the leaf, they are drawn to other connections, as gravity brings the leaf to the ground, and other natural forces reabsorb it in mother earth; but the separate existence is over, as a leaf, or as a separate religious body, and thus separateness carried on to its logical result tends always to the destruction of separateness and to the affirmation of union.

Between the different great religions of the world again, so far as they reflect or manifest the great central truth, all are true, all are similar, showing but diverse facets of the same grand whole; but when they differ (which difference is manifest, not in affirmation of apparently divergent truths, which may, nevertheless, be transcendently harmonious, but in their denial, denunciation, and intolerance of each other), then clearly the curse of separateness is on them, and both are wrong. Nothing, then, can rightly be denounced but denunciation, nothing denied but denial; we should only be intolerant of intolerance, and thus the ultimate unity may be promoted and the curse of separateness removed. The brotherhood of humanity is an aim of Theosophy, yet it is but a first step, its final results must be universal oneness—union with the universal soul, which is not a loss, but a transcendent expansion of consciousness, wherein the fetters of the self fall off.

Meantime all that hinders or obstructs the brotherhood of humanity is wrong, and tends to continue the curse of separateness. The member of one religious body who denounces or denies the doctrines or teaching of another proves thereby that he loves the community that he belongs to more than the universal brotherhood, and is accentuating the curse of separateness. What he may and should denounce is everything in the doctrines of that other, or of his own community, which is of denial, of protest, of separateness; this serpent he should kill out wherever and however he meets it. Occasionally we meet with faiths whose whole *raison d'être* is the denial of something believed or put forth by others; these have no vitality in them, save only the evil magnetism which is engendered by spite, malice, and antagonism. Destroy their denials and they will die of inanition; and such destruction is a good and holy work, for if they have any truth,

any connection with the great living body, this will not be impaired, but purified by the removal of the curse of separateness.

Finally, if any man from love of his family, or from love of his country, be tempted to deny, to denounce, or to contend, or even to lend silent support to those who do so, he is by that very action forming a group, to a greater or less extent antagonistic to the universal brotherhood, and therefore more dangerous, more hard to deal with, more thoroughly smitten with the curse of separateness than even the selfish individual. These family ties are holy and helpful, but when they take the place of devotion to the universal brotherhood and to the striving for final union, they become false and dangerous, just in proportion to their holiness. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me." The love of father and mother, of wife and children, are first helps, and almost indispensable helps to the conquest of self; but he who allows them to usurp the place of self, and to keep him from his striving after the eternal peace, which is Nirvana, has set up a false idol and fallen again more completely than before under the curse of separateness.

IN the history of thought, particularly scientific thought, there are moments when great, earth-shaking evolutions are produced, and decisive distances that formerly existed, disappear. These mutations are slowly and secretly prepared during anterior periods and occur with the same abruptness, frequency, and similarity that contemporary biologists have demonstrated in the evolution of living organisms.

The progressive formation and coincidence of individual efforts converging toward the same end often takes place without knowledge of those engaged in the work. Powerful currents of thought emerge simultaneously. The exact form of whole branches of science whose great features had only been vaguely seen by precursors is suddenly illumined by the work of superior minds. It is as though the chisel of an inspired artist sculpts a statue that is admired for centuries. Sometimes the effect of pre-established harmony is the discovery of more than one exceptional mind; it becomes the simultaneous flowering of ingenious savants; an ensemble of imperishable discoveries whose production a privileged generation is witness to in its lifetime. It becomes a glorious epoch of scientific thought from which all progress issues forth in ensuing years.

—LOUIS DE BROGLIE

THE ROOTS OF DEVOTION

THE *Gita* speaks of “devotion through spiritual knowledge,” and we repeat the words, often without understanding just what they mean. What actually is devotion, what is spiritual knowledge?

We may well ask ourselves: “Is not all knowledge spiritual, since all is Spirit? If not, what makes knowledge spiritual? Has such knowledge a special value in life?”

To study spiritual knowledge, the highest wisdom, we learn from Chapter IX of the *Gita*, we must have a specific attitude towards the study; otherwise we shall not learn or understand what is being taught. This specific attitude is one of finding no fault, the attitude of *listening*. We cannot learn if we are perpetually finding fault with what is taught. We can see why fault-finding stands in the way of our gaining spiritual knowledge if we realize that at present we do not even know enough to base our questions on, leave aside find fault with. We are truly, in fact, mere learners, *shravakas*, listeners, and as such must be prepared, as were the students in the School of Pythagoras, not to ask questions until in fact we know enough to ask. Spiritual knowledge pertains to that higher aspect of Nature and ourselves with which we are not familiar at this time.

Spiritual knowledge is called by Krishna “the royal knowledge, the royal mystery,” and its absorption by us makes it “the most excellent purifier.” Arjuna has become ready to receive this knowledge because his attitude is not that of finding fault with what Krishna tells him. Before this, in Chapter V, Arjuna asks Krishna for a clear answer as to which of the two is better—renunciation of action or the right performance of action, for sometimes Krishna has praised the one and sometimes advocated the other. This is the usual dilemma of the spiritual aspirant. Later, in the next chapter, he puts further questions and asks Krishna to dispel his doubt “completely”; he has realized that no one but Krishna can solve his difficulty. In the following chapter he listens, but does not question, and in Chapter VIII his question is merely a technical one. He has thus reached a different attitude of mind towards Krishna as a teacher, and therefore Krishna is able to give him the knowledge that we find in Chapters IX and X. Here he learns what Krishna is. He is the ALL. But again he asks how he should learn to know Him or think of Him. As usual, he wants precise information, and he wishes to know in full all His powers and forms of manifestation. After acquainting Arjuna with the chief of His divine manifestations, Krishna reminds him

that he need not bother with all these details. "I established this whole universe with a single portion of myself, and remain separate." Arjuna still does not realize the truth about Krishna's real nature and asks to have a "vision" of His "inexhaustible Self," His "supreme form."

Arjuna receives what he has asked for. He sees with his own eyes, opened to spiritual vision by Krishna, just what that Divine Form is. Krishna is no longer in his usual form which Arjuna had been accustomed to seeing, but has assumed a form of inexpressible glory which has neither beginning nor end. The whole hierarchy of beings, from sages and saints down to the elementals, are there. There, too, are all his friends and relations, even his enemies; and all are being absorbed by Krishna. Arjuna is overwhelmed with awe by this majesty of Krishna and by the extent of the manifested forms within the Divine Form. All this is too much for him to bear and he begs to see Him in his usual form. He cannot understand, or take in, what he sees in the Universal Form.

Arjuna is so terrified by this last vision granted him that he begs for mercy. Having glimpsed that Krishna is the ALL, he realizes for the first time that he has treated Him as a mere human being, a mere friend, and he begs for forgiveness. Here we find illumination beginning to dawn upon him. From the condition where, in Chapter II, he had asked Krishna, who was all the time standing by his side, for a description of a wise man—where he dwelt, how he acted, etc.—he has at last seen the Reality behind the personal earthly form. The vision is too much for him. It is because he is not able to stand its full glory that he begs to see no more of it and asks that he see again the familiar human form which hides the universal glory.

It is interesting to note that Arjuna says, when he sees again the human well-loved figure of his friend and teacher, "My mind is no more disturbed and I am self-possessed."

But all this has posed a further question for him. He asks in Chapter XII: "...which take the better way, those who worship the indivisible and unmanifested [which has so terrified him], or those who serve thee as thou now art?" He still wants advice, exact advice, as to what he is to do. In Chapter XIV he asks: "What are the characteristic marks by which the man may be known who hath surpassed the three qualities? What is his course of life, and what are the means by which he overcometh the qualities?" Later, in Chapter XVII, he asks a technical question, and in Chapter XVIII he comes back to his early question,

namely, what the difference is between abstaining from action and giving up the results of action. He is at last asking a personal question as to what he himself is to do here in life, and, after receiving the full answer, he says: "My delusion is destroyed, I am collected once more; I am free from doubt, firm, and will act according to thy bidding."

It is now that true devotion can arise in him, for it is the utter giving of oneself to that which one is devoted to, not emotionally, but in action. Here we can see the root of true devotion in action. It is only when we have *seen*, that is, understood, the Vision of the Divine Form as including all forms that we can begin to see that Krishna is present in the wrongdoer and in the "things which deceive" as much as in the good and the wise. The full value of the study of books such as *The Secret Doctrine* and the *Gita* lies in our appreciation of the presence of the Divine in all forms. As *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 33-34) tells us:

"...The nuclei are the light of eternity...." "It is that LIGHT which condenses into the forms of the 'Lords of Being.'... From these downwards—formed from the ever-consolidating waves of that light, which becomes on the objective plane gross matter—proceed the numerous hierarchies of the Creative Forces, some formless, others having their own distinctive form, others, again, the lowest (Elementals), having no form of their own, but assuming every form according to the surrounding conditions."

It is by dwelling upon this that true devotion will awaken in us, and in no other way, for we can only know the Great as we know the small; we can sense the metaphysical when we see the physical as the covering of that metaphysical. All the world makes one body, one intelligence, one Spirit, all linked together, all reflecting some aspect of the Reality, all learning to uncover that Reality within themselves and, through love and devotion, to sacrifice themselves for the ALL under whatever guise—the animal for its young, the human parents for their children, the children for their parents, the husband for the wife, the wife for the husband, the friend for the friend, oneself for the country, for the race, for the whole of humanity, for the whole assemblage of manifested beings. Becoming one with the Real in the lowest forms will lead to becoming one with the highest of Beings; as one turns downwards to help the lower, one rises upward to become one with the highest. None can be left out. Therefore, utter devotion to Krishna as embodying the Highest shows itself in our day-to-day existence when all actions are done in His Name, are dedicated to Him; when all feelings are rooted in love and

compassion, always keeping in mind that the Krishna within others has to be treated with respect; and when all thoughts are for the sake of Krishna, for the fulfilment of Him in and through all that is.

Krishna Himself is the "supreme Master of devotion." He is present in all grades of matter and beings, working for their welfare, piercing slowly through the darkness of the lowest forms to shine in full glory through the highest. And yet He "remains separate." It is necessary to understand that He dwells "in the heart of every creature." The heart of the Universe is one. There is none but He in reality.

It is pride and selfishness which are responsible for the sin of separateness and which hinder true devotion or at-one-ment; it is fear which refuses to open the heart to the ALL. Therefore, to cultivate devotion, pride and selfishness and fear must be banished from the heart.

Devotion is not just a feeling: it is action *for* the object of devotion, not for oneself. Mere professions of love for humanity, or love for the Great Teachers, or for H.P.B. and W.Q.J. will not bloom into sacrifice for them. Practical action *for* them will, for we cannot act for ourselves *and* for others at the same time. Hence the two, ourselves and they, *must* become one.

It seems to me that books are subject to the same process as souls: they migrate from one body to another. Not by chance are son and book designated in Latin by the same term, *liber*. And so it is in the case of scholarly books that are translated from one language into another, in a different style, in other words, and in changed order. The language becomes different but the matter remains exactly the same except that it has been poured from one receptacle into another. Ecclesiastes has taught us all this in these his words: "That which hath been is that which shall be, and that which hath been done is that which shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing whereof it is said: 'See, this is new'?—it hath been already, in the ages which were before us. There is no remembrance of them of former times; neither shall there be any remembrance of them of latter times that are to come, among those that shall come after." He also said: "Seeing that in the days to come all will long ago have been forgotten."

—JOSEPH SOLOMON DELMEDIGO (1591-1655)

TRUSTWORTHINESS

MAN'S dependability depends to a considerable extent on his own sense of responsibility. Robert Crosbie has called the feeling of responsibility the first step towards selflessness.

The smooth working of any human relationship and of human society itself depends to a very great extent upon this sense of responsibility. Where one's word is, as the saying goes, "as good as his bond," one of the primary conditions of the smooth functioning of society as well as of business relations is met.

Dependability is not always—and certainly not exclusively—to be found in the higher levels of society. Faithfulness to a trust is often movingly exhibited by the humblest. One such was the peasant woman of an old tale, who, carrying two small children and meeting some strange soldiers, tried to run away with the children. Finding them too heavy to permit speed, she set one down and ran on with the other. The soldiers picked up the child left crying in the field and gave chase. When they caught up with her they questioned why she had left that child behind and were told it was her own child; the one she had run on with was her sister's child, entrusted to her care, hence "a public trust." When the reconnaissance party returned with this report to their General, he gave up his project of a marauding invasion of that province. If a peasant woman there put her sense of responsibility even before her mother's instinct, what opposition might invaders not anticipate from her countrymen!

The motor driver's licence is a guarantee of his ability to drive carefully, and such is the common trust in his will to do so that few have qualms on entering a taxicab.

Another term for dependability is trustworthiness, than which, rightly, few qualities rank higher and which, under whatever name called, is a *sine qua non* for right service of one's fellows. Accuracy, punctuality and purity of motive all make their contributions to it. The attaining of trustworthiness is a matter of individual determination and the practice of the "remorseless self-discipline" which the great Leonardo da Vinci took as his motto. Another way of putting it was that of Bishop Wilson, one of whose maxims, quoted by Matthew Arnold in his Notebooks, was: "He can never be good that is not *obstinate* in doing what he knows he ought to do."

Becoming and remaining worthy of trust calls for exercise of the Will, defined in *The Ocean of Theosophy* as "the force of Spirit in action," and listening for the promptings of the Real Self and

faithfully obeying them.

The English poet and playwright John Drinkwater wrote:

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent,
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need.
Give us to build above the deep intent
The deed, the deed.

The will is there in each of us, but each has to call upon the will which is of the Spirit, looking for our strength not to an outside God but to the Higher Self, the God within ourselves.

No convinced student of Theosophy can in honesty to himself brush aside or evade the obligation which Madame Blavatsky laid, in the last weeks of her life, upon Theosophists of her day, in her Fourth Message to the 1891 Convention of the American Theosophists, or disclaim its application to himself on the plea that then he was not yet born. Is he not an heir to the Teachings also given out by her before his time, and has he not so immeasurably benefited from them that he could not conceive of returning to the narrow confines of his former ways of thinking?

In that Message she wrote of what the *practical* realization of Theosophy could mean to humanity and begged her students to strengthen the Cause by the triumph of which the True Light of which they had caught a glimpse, made still brighter and more glorious through their individual and collective efforts, would lighten the World.

In your hands, brothers, is placed in trust the welfare of the coming century; and great as is the trust, so great is also the responsibility.

If the Theosophical stress on universal brotherhood has made its contribution to the founding of the United Nations and its subsidiary organizations as well as to the greater tolerance among the followers of different religions, as seems indubitable, it must also sadly be confessed that the world has since 1891 gone through two World Wars and other dreadful conflicts between nations and is even today experiencing such and dreading others. It is not enough to say that many of our predecessors had betrayed their trust. We may have learned something from their mistakes, but what are we, students of Theosophy of the present day, doing to convince humanity of the transformation which Theosophy can work in human lives and of the uttermost dependability of Theosophists by nature and *in actu*, and not only in name?

W. Q. Judge's story, "A Curious Tale" (*The Theosophical Movement*, July 1973), written under the pen-name "Bryan

Kinnavan," contains a vivid illustration of the vital importance of dependability, dramatically showing, as it does, the dire results of a young disciple's momentary lapse from dependability, failing to keep alive the fire entrusted to his care when he allowed himself to be diverted from his trust at the crucial moment by news that fires on other watchtowers in ancient Ireland were going out. He rushed to the parapet to see for himself if this was true, and his own fire died.

That dependability is not to be measured by professions or promises but by performance can be seen from the questions put by Jesus to the chief priests and elders of the Jews who had come demanding the authority by which he acted:

A certain man had two sons: and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard.

He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented and went.

And he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, Sir: and went not.

Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first.

IF a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties.

A man must make his opportunity, as oft as find it.

All rising to Great Place is by a winding stair.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.

A tortoise on the right path will beat a racer on the wrong path.

Discretion in speech is more than eloquence.

—FRANCIS BACON

THE DOORWAY CALLED DEATH

AS death draws near, both the living and the dying need the sustaining power of sure knowledge, or of profound conviction, as to the essentials of Karma and considerations implicit in the fact of death. The Sacred Science is sure balm to the wayfarer, as it indicates the steps whereby the aspirant may gain control of his Kamic and personal nature. That which occurs *involuntarily* after the death of the body, may be accomplished voluntarily during bodily existence.

Perhaps the first consideration is that implied in the statement in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Chapter VIII: "Whoso in consequence of constant meditation on any particular form thinketh upon it when quitting his mortal shape, even to that doth he go." This must mean, among other things, that death is a moment of concentration, where the Ego becomes the Spectator, and the Spectator *only*, of the panorama of the life now ended, down to its most fleeting and trivial impression; or, as one of the Masters stated in a letter quoted by H. P. Blavatsky in her article "Memory in the Dying":

At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong, supreme impulse; and memory restores faithfully every impression that has been entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest, naturally becomes the most vivid, and survives, so to say, all the rest, which now vanish and disappear forever, but to reappear in Devachan. No man dies insane or unconscious, as some physiologists assert. Even a madman or one in a fit of *delirium tremens* will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, *the brain thinks* and the EGO lives, in these few brief seconds, his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have ye to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers, I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the veil of the Future. (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 25, p. 1*)

The force and validity of these statements can be better appre-

ciated if we remember that death is the precise analogue of birth as observable from this side. In both cases the incoming and departing Ego, when not an Initiate, is at a crisis or culminating point in which it has no power over the environment, internal or external. The attendants can therefore in degree facilitate the incidence of transit by their knowledge, their self-control, their "good offices"—or the reverse; and this, whether from the physiological or the psychological point of view.

Does the conduct of the living affect the next succeeding incarnation of the parting Ego, or only its after-death states? To gain more basis to reflect on this, we should consider the essential nature of the states *between* death and rebirth—called "Bardo" in the Tibetan teachings. Each of the many states or environments composing "Bardo" is an *unmixed* condition, hence devoid of conscious contact with the others. This is the exact antithesis of waking human life, where contrasts and "opposites" are encountered at every instant, "internally, externally, and eternally." Hence, between births, the Ego is in a condition where his will, his conscience and his reason are alike dormant, because without "whereon to stand" in respect of these three "principles" in the constitution of the waking human being—unless he knows what he is about in these planes; "knows" in the same sense that one "knows his way about" in waking physical existence. Only the Adepts have this knowledge.

Ordinary dreams afford ample analogy both of the Ego's lack of control and lack of "fulcrum." *All* the senses and powers of the waking man are then and there "merged into one"—as the Upanishads tell us. Briefly: the Soul or Self ceases to be the Trinity of *Perceiver, Creator* and *Creature*, and becomes the Seer only, of the Images it has created for itself out of the experiences of its earthly career. What, during earthly existence, were memories, beliefs, hopes, ideals, aspirations, whether "spiritual" or "material," now *come to life on their own account*. Thus, these "elementals" determine both what is seen and the Soul's reaction to the sights. So, while these states are, from our point of view, "unreal," to the unenlightened Ego they become *his only reality*. This, in the same sense that a "dream" is our *only reality* while in it.

Thus the "disembodied" states of the Soul, whether Kamalokic or Devachanic, are merely effects—the exhaustion of the results of causes set up during the earthly existence now closed. These results might have been and should have been experienced in their entirety while the Ego was in the body. The after-death

states therefore represent only "unfinished business" of the life last lived. So do Avitchi and Nirvana for the matter of that, in that they are the exhaustion of causes set up during the Cycle of Egoic Incarnations. At each new Manvantara the Reincarnating Ego re-enters the stream with a "clean slate," just as is the case in each birth into earth-life. In the one and the other it is as if the Ego had no Past and no Future, hence neither memory nor imagination. Only Self and Self-knowledge survive: *Atma-Buddhi*. Incarnation, or *conscious* contact with Matter, makes of the Duad a Trinity for the "Cycle of Necessity" or Karma.

How long should the body be left absolutely undisturbed? Twelve hours, *at least*, as H.P.B. indicates. The reason is physiological as well as psychological, as may be seen by recalling that brain activity does not cease with the cessation of breathing. With no change in the bodily temperature or position for twelve hours, indices of decomposition become discernible.

Another recurrent question concerns the disposition of the body. From every point of view other than inherited or acquired sentiment, cremation is best because most sanitary for the living. No method of disposal can affect the Ego that has had time to cast off the psychic umbilical nexus with the body. But, from the "other side," again, there is an important consideration: The "elementals" of the four kingdoms which constitute the "body" as an entirety have their own Karma. Just as the Ego has to *ascend* through these four kingdoms after death before it reaches its own sphere, so also with the elementals—they have to separate and *descend*, each to its own plane. So far as relates to the joint "body," both Ego and elementals are powerless on their own account, but the natural transit of the one as of the other may be facilitated by the intelligence of the living. Remember that what we call "decomposition," as well as "metabolism," is a process of combustion. Cremation, therefore, is but hastening the process, as seen from this side. It has also an Occult value through "purification by fire."

ANYTHING which is at variance and enmity with itself is not likely to be in union or harmony with any other thing.

—PLATO

STUDIES IN SHELLEY

III.—His Prose

[This is the last of a series of three articles; the first, dealing with the poet's background, was published in May, and the second, on his poetry, in June.—EDS.]

POET—prophet—philosopher—the three are one; each is religious, ethical, compassionate; the faculties and the powers are the same in all, though differing in ratio. If this unity can be a fact when the qualities are exhibited in separate men, it is even more true when they combine to make one being such as Shelley. Though manifesting variety, they are then blended into a rich harmony. No surprise can be felt, therefore, that the thought-content in Shelley's poetry is expressed also in philosophical prose essays¹ and prefaces.

One of the most important—*A Philosophical View of Reform*—suggests the philosopher-quality by its mere name; and the Essay justifies its title. Yet the prophet-quality exists also, and is practically proved by the early coming into operation of some of the reforms most earnestly advocated. This Essay especially might cause us to regret that he did not live longer, to an age of greater maturity. Though few opinions of his could have won approval from the conservative or the timid, yet the dignity, the analytical power, the positive political wisdom and the comprehensive outlook here shown give strong indication of where an added score of years might have placed him as a philosophical, political, humanitarian thinker. But, on the other hand, it seems more likely that the work he came back to do was indeed done when he died.

For, if he is viewed as one of the pre-eminent contributors to the Theosophical Movement, it becomes clear that his life was long enough to have performed his particular function—that of stating in expansive, beautiful, heart-reaching poetry those lines of thought sent out and fostered by the Great Lodge in the time immediately preceding his own life-period. The placing, too, of that life-period gave him an added function—of living on into the darkness of disappointment that came on men with the apparent failure of their hopes and ideals. Though suffering keenly these same pangs himself, he yet fulfilled his mission of maintaining

¹ Cf. Salt, *Selected Prose Works of Shelley*, 1922. And *A Philosophical View of Reform*, edited by Rolleston, 1920.

faith in the ideals, of encouraging and even of guiding the strugglers possessed of lower spiritual vitality than he.

These statements may suggest a hidden reason why he produced little prose. The embodiment in prose of the great Adept ideas of the eighteenth century had been amply carried out before him. No other man, however, equalled the embodiment made through him as poet in English. And it was important that a poet in English should arise; because in the next century the operations of the Great Lodge were to be especially among English-speaking people in both West and East; Its nineteenth-century Messages, unexampled previously in fullness and directness, were to be recorded in the English language—pitifully limited for such concepts though it be. Important, too, it was that that poet should be a singer—one whose lyrical flights, while springing from a profound philosophical base, should, like those of his own loved bird, carry his listeners with them through their longing, striving hearts. Other poets only now and then showed the skylark nature. Shelley *was* that nature.

Prose, accordingly and spiritually, could not be his proper medium. As servitor of the world, both his dharma and his karma demanded otherwise. Enough prose was produced to prove his easy power over the purely philosophical form of expression. Yet it is most significant that the only prose Essay, as such, which he finished, concerns poetry; defends poetry from an unjust attack, and poetry of just the philosophical and exalted type which he himself aspired to write. That Essay, too, with entire spontaneity, often reveals in style and feeling much of the lyrical quality of his own verse.

True, as one of the world's servitors, he would have reached his dharma more quickly if in youth he had avoided the acts that called out the world's calumny. But slowly the calumny has ceased, the beneficent Adept ideas and the spokesmen of those ideas were and are as much needed as ever, and the value of Shelley's work has in consequence been more and more recognized.

Nor do his prose writings present a different range of subjects—if his youthful romantic fiction be excepted. This was of value mainly as a training-ground and a relief of boyish effervescence. It cannot claim serious attention. In prose and verse the important topics are identical—topics that in essence belong either to the time preceding him or to his own time of general disillusionment. All his worthier writings, though so broad in allusiveness and background, bend their wealth to what is involved in his great primary humanitarian aim—the progression, the freedom, the

spiritual exaltation even through suffering, and the final perfection of Man.

His Prefaces and Notes to his poems, besides their great expository value, at times stretch out into the wholly unexpected; as in the Note on *Queen Mab*, VI, 45, which indicates some perception of ethical meanings in the shifting of the earth's axis. He says: "The progress of the perpendicularity of the poles may be as rapid as the progress of intellect," and there may be "a perfect identity between the moral and the physical improvement of the human species."

The Necessity of Atheism, *A Refutation of Deism*, and the *Essay on Christianity* form a distinct group. In them all "atheism" means a rejection of the Christian theology with its one personal God. Both reason and honesty led him to this rejection as a "necessity." The two earlier papers are attempts to reach the mathematics of the soul (including God) by merely external material reason. They evidence the influence on Shelley's young mind of Locke, Hobbes, and other rationalist thinkers. He himself, however, soon repudiated this influence, and found among modern philosophers much inner satisfaction and confirmation in the idealistic writings of Berkeley.

The *Essay on Christianity* is far richer, maturer, less materialistic. Here he delineates with some fullness the character of Jesus as a great heroic figure. Yet the fact is noted also that the records are questionable. "He has left no written record of himself—his biographers (our only guides) transmitted imperfect and obscure information—where contradictions occur." The picture of Jesus is partly made by enlarging with praise on his teaching itself, including his concept of God. Jesus means that God is "the overruling Spirit of all the energy and wisdom—of the collective energy of the moral and material world—something mysteriously and illimitably pervading the frame of things—the Benignant Principle—the Universal Cause." This *Essay* seems to have had a rather wide appeal. Its unequivocal praises of the nature and teaching of Jesus were certain to lessen the hysterical opposition to both the poet and his work in general.

The *Letter to Lord Ellenborough* has a special interest for theosophists. The printer of Part III of Paine's *Age of Reason* was sentenced by Lord Ellenborough to eighteen months' imprisonment and one hour in the pillory. Here was a concrete instance of persecution, and Shelley's rebuke was as pointed and caustic as Voltaire's charges against similar persecutions. It proved Shelley's virility in handling an important public personage and

event. Difference of religious opinion, masking itself as defence of morality, Shelley found to be the real basis of the judge's action. The direct forceful questions he addressed to the judge—unanswerable in fact, except by admitting guilt—revealed the skill of his reasoning, the keenness of his serious wit, the temperateness yet the extraordinary courage of his mingled defence and attack. Besides, the *Letter* was a purely disinterested work for a cause, a bit of altruistic practice instead of theory. And it was wholly impersonal—even though it might involve a personal danger. For, if offended Legality had turned its engines in another direction, nobody would have been hurt but Shelley.

The *Defence of Poetry* is indeed a notable piece of writing and has become a classic in literary criticism. His remarks on poets as ethical teachers; on the imagination as an "imperial faculty, the great instrument of moral good"; on love as "the secret of morals" and as the altruistic feeling that "makes the pains and pleasures of the species one's own"—show convincingly the philosophic and theosophic nature of his thought.

His highest comment identifies poetry with nothing less than the Wisdom-Religion itself:

Poetry is indeed something divine. It is at once the centre and circumference of knowledge; it is that which comprehends all science, and that to which all science must be referred. It is at the same time the root and blossom of all other systems of thought; it is that from which all spring.

Shelley's calling this "poetry" was accidental rather than essential. He was describing the highest he knew, and gave it the name that meant the most to him and was the least tainted by false religious thinking.

The deepest, most theosophic Shelley appears too in the short sketch called *On Life*. In this he forgets argument and becomes just a Thinker and Perceiver, observant of self, other selves, and Nature. The great Pulsation flows through him, absorbing and unifying. What he depicted at the close of *Adonais* with such exalted synthetic feeling and imagery, he here states with quiet observation issuing from a profound outreach of soul into its own experiences. A child, he says, does not

distinguish between itself and what surrounds it. All is one. Some persons are always children. Those who are subject to the state called reverie, feel as if their nature were dissolved into the surrounding universe, or as if the surrounding universe were absorbed into their being. They are conscious of no distinction. And these are states which accompany an unusually intense and vivid

apprehension of life.

Says *The Voice of the Silence*, "The pupil must regain *the child-state he has lost*." Shelley had natural experiences of the state of Dharana. "The light from the One Master" entered into him easily, for he was not one of those encased in worldliness.

William Q. Judge tells of Beings

who have passed through many occult initiations in previous lives, but are now . . . living in circumstances and in bodies that hem them in, as well as for a time make them forget the glorious past. . . . These *obscured adepts* . . . can be more easily used for the spreading of influences and the carrying out of effects necessary for the preservation of spirituality in this age of darkness.

May not the man called Shelley—misunderstood, reviled, struggling under a load of blunders and sorrows, as a poet too little self-critical and too exuberant, never becoming full master of his excessively fertile mind, yet through all errors ever burning with an unquenched fire of altruism—may he not have been such an Obscured Adept?

The range of adeptship this Being must have reached in previous lives cannot even be guessed; though perhaps the thick obscurity he laboured through is an indication. For only a high Being could have penetrated such karmic darkness as enveloped Shelley—which must have originated both in past lives and in the present—and yet have brought out into light such a treasury of spiritual knowledge as was his.

It may well be time for us, as users of English and as recipients of the less veiled benefactions of Theosophy, to include, with modesty, in our "vindication of calumniated but glorious reputations," that Being named Shelley.

COSMIC Ideation focused in a principle or *upadhi* (basis) results as the consciousness of the individual Ego. Its manifestation varies with the degree of *upadhi*, e.g., through that known as Manas it wells up as Mind-Consciousness; through the more finely differentiated fabric (sixth state of matter) of the *Buddhi* resting on the experience of Manas as its basis—as a stream of spiritual INTUITION.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

L. M. Singhvi's article, "Shining Symbol of Human Rights" (*The Times of India*, May 28), on the occasion of the silver jubilee of Amnesty International, depicts this organization and movement as a force to be reckoned with. It is the force of public opinion based on reason and compassion. Twenty-five years ago, it was an article by Peter Benenson in *The Observer* of May 28, 1961, that really led to the launching of Amnesty International. The article quite simply but passionately and persuasively called on people of all walks of life to begin working impartially and peacefully for the release of thousands of men and women in prisons throughout the world for their political and religious beliefs. Within a month, a thousand people sent in offers of practical help. Six months later, Peter Benenson declared, "We believe that in an increasingly cynical world there is a great latent reservoir of idealism to be tapped."

Amnesty International reflects that forthright idealism, pragmatic and persevering. As the article states:

Its silver jubilee is symbolically the silver lining in the dark clouds of human rights violations. . . . Firstly, it seeks the release of men and women detained anywhere for their beliefs, irrespective of colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion, *provided they have not used or advocated violence*. They are humanity's prisoners of conscience and Amnesty has espoused their cause in an exemplary manner for a quarter century throughout the world. Secondly, it advocates fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners. Thirdly, it opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners, without reservation. . . .

Today, Amnesty International has more than half a million members and subscribers in more than 150 countries and territories. Each year, it handles about 5000 individual cases of prisoners of conscience regardless of the ideology of either the victims or the governments concerned. It enjoys a reputation which could be the envy of any voluntary public organization.

Amnesty does not support or oppose any government or political system. It has simply made itself an instrument of freedom. . . . Amnesty as a movement is based on the premise that peace and human rights are indivisible, that public opinion within each country and beyond national frontiers has an important part to play in opposing persecution, torture and executions and for securing freedom and fair trials for prisoners of conscience, and

that independence and impartiality are essential to the effectiveness of a human rights organization.

Its credo is that human rights are a human responsibility; whenever they are violated the victims and their families need practical help. Amnesty has made the inspiring words of the universal declaration of human rights come alive and has striven to translate the obligations of the international covenant on civil and political rights into a worldwide public responsibility. Indeed, it has made a notable contribution to the evolution of many human right standards. . . .

Today Amnesty does not mean, as the dictionaries might tell us, forgetfulness or voluntary overlooking of an offence or an act of pardon. It means that the people throughout the world remember and care and that they have a right and duty to uphold human dignity and preserve human rights.

Twenty-five years after Amnesty took up its crusade, there are still countless prisoners of conscience, executions are reported every day, cruel and degrading punishments continue and torture has not disappeared. It is unfortunate that we *need* an organization like Amnesty, but it is fortunate that it is there.



There is a new breed of scientist, challenging the mechanistic view of the world. As in the field of physics Fritjof Capra and David Bohm have included factors beyond quantification, so in the sphere of biology Rupert Sheldrake has pointed out the limitations of the mechanistic theory of life. In the July-August *Resurgence*, Sheldrake writes:

The mechanistic view in biology, although it has been quite successful in some ways, has been rather unsuccessful in others, and there are good reasons for believing that it is not an adequate view of life, even as far as biology as a natural science is concerned. There has been a whole tradition of biologists, right from the beginnings of experimental biology onwards who have not accepted the mechanistic view, the attempt to explain living organisms in terms of the sum of their parts. Within this tradition there has been an attempt to say that the whole is more than the sum of the parts, and that there is an aspect of living things which is not explained just by the parts that make them up, and the interactions between those parts.

It has been particularly emphasized in this century within the

organicist or *holistic* tradition. One of the concepts that has been put forward in this tradition is the idea of *morphogenetic fields*, or form-shaping fields. . . . This idea has been put forward to try and explain the growth and development of organisms, the growth of the plant from the seed, or the growth of an organism from an embryo. This is most mysterious. How is it that organisms develop and take up their form? It is very difficult for most of us to realize that this is a fundamental problem. We take it for granted so easily that plants grow from seeds, and that embryos develop in a perfectly ordered way, that we forget that this really isn't understood. We can describe what happens in terms of chemical changes, but this doesn't explain the form of the organism.

The central idea of morphogenetic fields is that there are invisible fields shaping and moulding developing organisms, giving them their form and structure. . . . If living organisms are shaped or moulded by this kind of field, the fields themselves must have a structure or organization which must, in turn, be explained. The explanation, the postulate, the hypothesis, that I am putting forward, is that the structure of these fields is derived from the actual structure of similar organisms in the past. It is derived by connection through space and time, so that the fields represent a kind of cumulative memory of the species. The form of a growing cat embryo, for example, would be shaped by a cat morphogenetic field, and that morphogenetic field would derive its structure from actual forms of previous cats. So there is a connection between similar things through, or across, space and time by a process that I call "morphic resonance": the effect of like upon like. This hypothesis applies not only to form in organisms, but also to the forms of systems such as crystals. It also applies to the organizations of behaviour, such as instincts in animals. . . .

One of the implications of this theory bears on our understanding of memory. . . . It suggests that our memories, both of particular events and of habits and things that we have learned, may be given from our own past states by morphic resonance. They needn't be stored inside the brain. . . . There have been many theories of memory, and there are still quite a number. Some people think that memories are stored inside the brain as RNA molecules, as chemicals, and then somehow miraculously turn back into images, or something. Others think that memory works by reverberating electrical echoes inside the brain. Others think, and this is the most popular and perennial theory, that memories depend on modifications to the nerve endings or synapses. However, there is not much evidence for any of these theories. . . . If

memories are not stored inside the brain, then the debate on the possibility and the nature of survival takes place in a very different context from that provided by the mechanistic theory of memory and of life. . . .

One could say that there is a creativity within nature, and that this involves a kind of conscious or mind-like intelligence which is responsible for the vast numbers of forms of animals and plants, for all the kinds of behaviour we see, for instincts, for the great diversity of the things we see in the world, and indeed for human creativity expressed through human consciousness. We would say that the creativity underlying this creativity within nature has a divine source, which is the source not only of the creativity within nature, but of nature itself. In this way one would have a view of the evolutionary process, as a cumulative process, a cumulative evolution, involving creative acts, building on the habits already built up by organisms with ever new possibilities and syntheses coming about, and the forms of life we have now as reflections or echoes of that creative process, always being renewed. . . .

I think this view that I am putting forward also changes the context in which we could think of some of the practices of religion. I think the power of prayer takes on a different meaning in the light of the idea that our consciousness is not separate from other people's consciousness, that we are connected up in invisible ways, that what we think may influence other people, even if we don't say what we think. It provides a new context for the discussion of the question of survival. Above all, I think it gives us a new way of thinking about ourselves and about living things, which is both scientific and open to the idea of the divine presence.

W. Q. Judge wrote in *The Ocean of Theosophy*: "Biologists can only say that the facts are as we know them, but can give no reason why the acorn will never grow anything but an oak except that no man ever knew it to be otherwise." Why do living organisms assume the form they do? Investigations in morphogenesis are revealing more and more of the functions of the astral body, especially the role it plays in "shaping and moulding developing organisms, giving them their form and structure." It would be more correct, and definitely clearer, to give the "morphogenetic field" the name it has had among Theosophists for a century—the "astral body." Until the existence of the astral body is recognized, and its function as the guiding model for the physical is studied, there will be no solution of the mystery of

“how it is that the seed produces its own kind and all sentient beings bring forth their like.”

For decades biologists have asked themselves whether ants and other social insects play roles in their colonies that are equivalent to the roles of cells in complex organisms like the human body. The idea so far has not been developed much, but now one of the most distinguished experts in social insects, Harvard's Edward O. Wilson, the father of sociobiology, proposes that the analogy runs far deeper than had been suspected. The results of his experiments are complex, but in general they suggest that embryogenesis and sociogenesis may both proceed according to similar rules. *Science Digest* comments on Wilson's work:

Evolution, in dealing with similar problems, appears to have converged on similar solutions. Ant colonies and human bodies, Wilson points out, both develop from a single entity—either one ant (the fertilized queen) or one cell (the fertilized egg)—as the result of formative processes that appear to be governed by similar principles.

“What I'm saying is that, for all the diversity among living organisms, there is an underlying unity,” he explains. “Natural selection has tended to favour the developmental processes—it doesn't matter whether you're talking about colonies or organisms—that operate according to the most efficient rules.” These rules, he adds, dictate the kind of specialized forms and functions that will be taken on by the progeny of both the founder of the colony and the original cell of the organism.

In making his case, Wilson notes first that social-insect colonies may be surprisingly large. A single colony of African driver ants, for example, may contain 20 million workers. The largest ant colony on record is one in Japan that included 306 million workers and more than a million queens living in 45,000 interconnected underground nests in a territory of about a square mile.

A colony is composed of queens, soldiers, workers and nonworking males whose role is solely reproductive. Workers come in many physical forms and perform different and specialized tasks. If the colony is considered a superorganism, these specialized groups, or castes, would be analogous to organs. The soldiers, sometimes called the major workers, have big heads and powerful jaws for defending the colony. There are castes that specialize in foraging for food, bringing it back to other groups that process

and store it. Still others specialize in tending the eggs, caring for the queen or preparing the food so that yet others may feed the larvae.

Like circulatory and nervous systems, there are ants that specialize in travelling throughout the various chambers, carrying food or messages. Social insects communicate by releasing odours, a process very close to the way cells communicate by releasing hormones. . . .

Underlying a colony's analogies with an organism, Wilson asserts, is a developmental process that creates the various specialized individuals in much the same way embryonic development turns one fertilized egg into an organization of muscle cells, nerve cells, liver cells, blood cells and so on. . . .

For the moment, Wilson's work fuels only philosophical speculation. But if the ideas ultimately prove correct, they could provide new ways of exploring the processes that govern embryonic development. Experiments with ant colonies may reveal rules that could pertain to animal or human embryos. It may then be easier to understand processes that too often go awry, producing many forms of human birth defects.

Analogy is the guiding law in Nature, and scientific corroboration of this eternal law is not wanting.

From *Gods to men*, from Worlds to atoms, from a star to a rush-light, from the Sun to the vital heat of the meanest organic being—the world of Form and Existence is an immense chain, whose links are all connected. The law of Analogy is the first key to the world-problem, and these links have to be studied co-ordinately in their occult relations to each other. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 604)

After centuries of ridicule, vegetarianism is now a force to be reckoned with in Britain. This is according to an investigation carried out for a television food programme, and featured in *The Listener* magazine.

Results of a recent poll showed that there are now about one and a half million vegetarians in Britain, and as many people again who no longer eat red meat, but will occasionally have fish or poultry. The growth of vegetarianism seems to be particularly marked among young people in the 16-24 year range. The survey showed that the percentage of vegetarians in that age-group may be as high as 10 per cent.

There are several reasons for this growing interest in vegetarianism. For one thing, a large number of people have been persuaded to reduce or give up their consumption of meat for health reasons. Medical research has identified excessive consumption of meat and fat as causes of heart disease and cancer, and a government-commissioned pamphlet, recently published jointly by the British Nutritional Foundation and the Health Education Council, recommends cutting down on saturated fat intake—meaning meat, among other foods—as a way to achieve a healthier heart.

There is concern, too, over food additives and the practice of giving large doses of hormones to cattle in order to improve the taste of the meat.

The discovery of an ancient library in the town of Sbar, locally known as “Abu-Habah,” some 40 kilometres south-west of Baghdad, is hailed as among the most significant finds of this century. The town of Sbar is believed to be one of the key “pre-deluge” towns. (*Indian Express*, April 15)

The library, discovered by a team of archaeologists from Baghdad University, contains more than one thousand cuneiform-written clay tablets of various sizes, placed on vertical and parallel shelves, and classified according to the topics they are about. Preliminary studies have shown that the tablets include texts on religion, linguistics, grammar, and lists of geographical sites.

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THEOSOPHY (LOS ANGELES)

The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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