

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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### THOUGHTS ON THINKING

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Strive with thy thoughts unclean before they overpower thee.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THOUGHT, any thought, is clean or unclean according to its context, *i.e.*, its source in one or another aspect of our feeling nature. One type of thought is unclean because it originates in the lower feeling nature and is focused in our mental consciousness. Usually, human consciousness is engaged in cultural development; practically it is distracted by the necessity of overcoming the constant drag of the lower emotional life. A forcefully intruding, distracting thought, charged with emotional potential and originating in the lower kamic nature, is denominated unclean, though of course the same emotional urge occurring in the animal kingdom would not be called unclean.

This type of emotion reflected in the thinking principle is out of context, is an intrusion, and therefore is unclean. Consider those strong, lurid thoughts, which seem suddenly to come from nowhere. Generally they are so vivid, and often so disturbing, that there is difficulty in believing that we are capable of harbouring such forces in any part of our nature. We assume that as human beings we have long ago left behind impulses such as are represented by these thoughts. Too much difficulty should not be

encountered in disposing of, if not permanently destroying, such thoughts. They are so forceful, so repugnant, that we immediately call up counter forces which banish them from our consciousness, and thus we maintain a degree of poise.

There are other types of unclean thoughts, however, which are only less important in relation to our problem. These have to do with the everyday or garden variety of mean, little, selfish thoughts which we entertain and direct against our neighbours and associates. These are the thoughts which form the basis for gossip, backbiting, rationalizing, and the general disagreeableness which is so prevalent. These types of unclean thoughts also call for our immediate and unremitting attention. These constitute the main body of unclean thoughts which must be slain if we are to take our rightful position as individuals attempting to evolve by self-induced efforts.

As an experiment, let us just set aside a day, or an hour of the day, and then watch, carefully, honestly, objectively, the play of these thoughts of lower emotional origin as they race across the field of our mental consciousness and struggle for attention. How morbidly pleasant it is to yield to their projection and development! The action of someone displeases us, is contrary to our comfortable conception of conformity. Now watch how the mind takes this emotional reaction and justifies our condemnation of the offending action. Note how we become offended with the person, while really the action is only incidental to our reaction. How do we think our higher mind interprets this tantrum of kamic ascendancy? Remember that these kamic thoughts are projections of our own nature. They are not primarily the result of the actions of others. Were not these qualities latent in us, no emotional response to the uncharitable actions of others would be possible.

What is the source of the questionable satisfaction the lower nature gets from indulging in this type of unclean thinking? It probably springs from the well-known fact that "misery loves company." Somehow or other, if we are physically ill, we seem to get some degree of satisfaction from learning of the illness of others. If we are less ill than others with the same affliction, then

we get a kind of satisfaction from realizing that others are worse off than ourselves. This is a negative and morbid procedure of the lower consciousness. It is from sources such as these that the kamic nature obtains sustenance and maintains virility. It is upon such a procedure, such a projection, that this portion of our nature feeds and grows. Such thoughts are contrary to the general evolutionary trend of the life forces in this cycle. They are the product of earlier cycles when the natural course was in the direction of separative existence.

The order of the day is progress toward unity, oneness, brotherhood. Hence such thoughts are out of place and time and therefore unclean. In themselves we should not regard them with aversion. We should, however, be perfectly aware of their source, and should struggle with these thoughts unclean before we are overpowered by them. They grow if allowed to attract our waking consciousness. The reason for this is that once attention is paid to them on the plane of mental consciousness, they are charged with the force of will. This comes into play whenever mental processes are directed with concentrated attention.

Notice, when we are confronted with the action of another, especially if that person is disliked by us, how the emotion of dislike clothes itself in the reasoning of the mind, how we find reasons to justify our criticism and disparagement, how our ego is inflated with the virus of rationalized criticism of others' motives. As though anyone capable of such criticism could ever understand the motive of another! Basically this indulgence springs entirely from the false self, the self which must always accentuate its importance, its existence, at the expense of others. Only in this manner can it prolong and intensify its life.

These are the unclean thoughts to which we must direct the attention of the higher mentality in an effort to neutralize or transform their effects. We must attempt to cast them out of our consciousness. But remember, we must *cast them out*, not push them back into the lower consciousness. Repression will not help us. It will complicate the situation and may lead to the worst of all possible kinds of hypocrisy. To repress a thought is to refuse to

recognize it for what it is. We refuse to admit its implications. This is the wrong procedure. That emotion which clothes itself with the lower mind is substantial and of immediate importance to us. If it has forced itself into our waking consciousness, then it has already acquired some attention from the mind and, to that extent, developed further power and potential—potential for reappearance, with increased vigour, the first time our guard is relaxed.

The only solution of lasting worth is to face the situation. Recognize these thoughts for what they are, spectres of the past. Submit them to the light of true reason and feeling, and they will be transmuted. Each principle of our nature can be changed only by a corresponding higher or lower principle. Thus the application of pure reason to the problem of eradicating unclean thoughts will not accomplish our purpose. The thought image cannot be destroyed by reason alone. Its basis of action, the source of its strength, is the feeling nature; it has to be met and conquered in terms of forces applied from a corresponding constituent of a higher Principle.

It is to be noted that the mind is said to have five constituents: thought, will, feeling, imagination and memory. The Human Soul or Manas is higher than the kamic nature, yet can be influenced by the desire principle. Conversely, whatever progress the kamic nature is to make must be made by reason of its association with the Human Soul.

Since the kamic nature is governed entirely by feeling, whatever contact for the purpose of control is made, must be made by the corresponding constituent of the Manas principle. This, of course, is the feeling aspect of the Mind, which will probably express itself as pity, forbearance, etc., but especially as sympathy and tolerance. Hence the starting-point in gaining control of these unclean thoughts is unqualified sympathy for the one who we feel is offending. We must sympathize with his attitude. This should not be difficult if we understand that when he knows better he will do better.

But let us be careful. Are we sure that what the offender does is really unjust, or mean, or petty? Do we have all the facts that will justify such an opinion? Or is it but our reaction to what he does that

is mean, unjust or petty? We can be sure that if our reaction produces the unclean and undesirable thought form, then we are victims of negative reactions and incapable of clear thinking on the subject. The motive or the method of the offending person is of secondary importance to us, if for no other reason than that we can do very little, if anything, about it. Our own motive is of prime importance, and something about which we can be positive and constructive.

Our starting point, then, is to be aware of and alert to the intrusion of these thoughts. We must be able to recognize them as the product of our own feeling in every instance. Next, it is essential that, immediately on their arising in us, we bring into play a feeling of sympathy and, above all, of tolerance for the other person. This is not to say that we necessarily regard his action as correct. Rather it is that our reaction will not be permitted to arise or at least not to remain on the kamic plane. The impulse will be transformed only to the extent we can arouse the feeling of sympathy and tolerance and understanding for the actor. In so doing, we can clearly evaluate the act and place it in its proper context. This demands that we bring into our consideration of the actor the idea that "he does good who knows how to do good," that all of us are on the same journey, that one fault is no better or worse than another. As we thus bring the memory aspect of our mind into play by recalling these truths, we arouse the tolerant, sympathetic side of our nature and this will transform the psychic, kamic thought into one worthy of the Human Soul. Thus gradually we slay the unclean thought, and in so doing make continuing progress as human beings as contrasted with animals, which also have an emotional nature. This is a broadening process because each unclean thought slain makes additional energy available for further expression of the cultural and liberating ideas which constitute the true province of Mind.

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## THE SCOPE OF THEOSOPHY

IT is sometimes asked, What has Theosophy to offer for the solution of the many problems besetting humanity in general, in various spheres of life? It needs to be understood that Theosophy deals with *causes*, and believes that mere tinkering with effects can yield no lasting benefits. Theosophy offers for our consideration the great law of Cause and Effect, and has therefore no programme for relieving the surface ills of life. Theosophy enables us to perceive life differently. Its teachings about religion, about social reforms, about the scheme of evolution, about the human individual unfolding his powers gradually, in form after form, enable us to see things and events in a manner perhaps veiled to those who are unacquainted with the immemorial traditions of ancient Asiatic philosophy and psychology, which Theosophy reiterates. The doctrines and tenets that Theosophy offers for our consideration touch intimately the life of human beings as individuals and as a collectivity—humanity as a whole.

Theosophy, dealing as it does with causes, says that if we remove one evil cause, we will remove innumerable evil effects. To cut a tree leaving the underground roots intact would result in the growth of that tree again in due season. That being so, we must begin with the individual, for individuals make humanity, races, nations, communities, organizations of every kind. These are but a playground for the evolution of the human individual. Our programme, therefore, is the reformation of the individual—*self-reformation through self-discipline, self-education, self-effort*. None else can do it for us. We believe in the divinity of human nature and hold that the law of cause and effect works in and through each one of us; that there is no God, no power, no force, outside of us; that we are the creators of our own destiny, the perpetrators of our own blunders, and the expiators of our own sins. We sin through our own ignorance and there is no one in heaven or earth who can forgive those sins. Only knowledge as it comes to us from within ourselves can save us.

What is true of one individual is true of all individuals,

therefore is true of communities, nations and races. We, therefore, need to know if there is a religion, a philosophy, a science, an art, definite and precise, which would enable us to change our course of life, to pass from the sphere of ignorance into the realm of knowledge, to come out of the darkness of night into the light of day. We must know if such a thing is possible for us, and then try to bring that knowledge and that light to the community, the nation, the race—to the whole of humanity, of which we are but a part.

Theosophy is a synthesis of religion, philosophy, science and art—complete in itself, consistent in all its parts. Theosophy is the religion of knowledge, the philosophy of the spirit, the science of the soul, and the art of living; and all four harmonize one with the other. The understanding, the intellectual recognition, of the four-fold aspect of this Divine Wisdom enables us to rule our own lives, to grow, improve and reform ourselves, and thereby also help the human race as a whole to grow, improve and reform itself.

This religion of knowledge is not *a* religion but *the* religion. Contrary to all other religions, it does not hold any belief. Theosophy offers us the religion of "no belief." Not outside orders, but orders from within the human heart have to be obeyed in terms of our understanding. The religion of knowledge asks us to live our life in terms of what we *know*, not what we believe; to transform our belief into knowledge; for living according to belief is living by proxy. The person who goes to church, temple or mosque lives a religious life by proxy, not by knowledge. He believes because he is told that such-and-such is the teaching of the prophet, or of the sacred text. While the religions of the world are made up of beliefs, the religion of Theosophy is the religion of knowledge.

In this religion of knowledge, each one holds his own place. One person's knowledge is different from another's, but to live according to one's own knowledge, one requires intellectual honesty. Those who live according to religious beliefs might not like to be told that they are intellectually dishonest, but discuss with them, cross-examine them as to their beliefs, and it will be found that these beliefs are not rational. Those who are intellectually honest needs must throw aside everything that their higher reason

cannot understand. For, what good is any belief if it cannot stand the light of reason? It immediately becomes a blind belief, and blindness begets blindness, not the religion of reason, the religion of knowledge, the religion which does not fear to question God or Devil.

Theosophy, then, is the religion of knowledge—knowledge of the nature of man himself, knowledge of the relation of man to his fellow-men and to living nature. The religion of knowledge is made up of self-evident truths; if truth depends for its acceptance by us on the word or the understanding of someone else, it is not truth for us, for we do not see it. We may know something correctly or incorrectly, but are we intellectually honest enough to follow that which we know, and do we bother to find out for ourselves if we are mistaken?

It is a self-evident truth that if nature exists side by side with man, there must be an interrelationship between the two. Theosophy is the religion of knowledge relating to man and nature and the interrelationship between them.

The philosophy of the spirit emerges naturally from the religion of knowledge. Man is spirit, nature is spirit, and the relationship between the two is spiritual. There is a common basis, a common foundation to man and nature and their interrelationship. That common feature is spirit. The philosophy of Theosophy explains that there is the common substratum of spirit in the world of differentiation, and the latter can be seen in its true perspective with the help of the study of the philosophy of Theosophy.

To understand the relationship between the different kingdoms of nature, to understand our relationship with other minds, with other organisms, we must enter the domain of science, and Theosophy is a science besides being a religion and a philosophy. It is the science of the soul, the science which teaches that we are one with nature, yet different, that nature is a unified spiritual whole, though it appears divided. Each individual entity is different from every other entity, and that difference causes the process of growth, of evolution, of unfoldment. Theosophy is the science of the soul, the science of soul-unfoldment, which teaches how human souls

evolve, which explains the varied faculties of the soul. This science of the soul is as precise and as definite a science as is chemistry, physics, or biology. Its method is that of experimentation. While the philosophy of Theosophy deals with the fundamental proposition of a unified universe, the science of the soul deals with a differentiated universe and tries to understand its soul phenomena. From it springs the true science of psychology, which deals with the divine nature of man.

The science of the soul ultimately leads to the art of living. The latter is that branch of Theosophy which teaches us how to live as spiritual beings in this evanescent universe of matter. The task is fourfold—living the religion of knowledge, living the philosophy of the spirit, living according to the tenets of the science of the soul, and living an active life by a regular code, which is the highest form of art.

Thus, Theosophy is the synthesis of religion, philosophy, science, art. Leave out a single one of the four, and it becomes a creed. But Theosophy is not a creed. How can it be when we live and act in terms of *our* knowledge, not somebody else's? And knowledge and life, the two extreme ends, are bridged by a philosophy which reveals the universe of unity, and a science which unifies the worlds of myriad differentiations.

If Theosophy is the religion of knowledge, the philosophy of the spirit, the science of the soul and the art of living for the individual, what can it offer for the betterment of humanity as a whole?

First, it offers to legislators and administrators the art of government in terms of the collected and collated knowledge of the great law-givers of the race, such as Vaivasvat, Moses, Confucius. Substituting one class of politicians for another class of politicians can do little good. Unless we have the perfect politician spoken of by Plato in *The Republic*, we must be prepared to face disaster.

Just as the art of living is based on the science of the soul in the case of the human individual, so the art of government is rooted in the science of sociology for collective humanity. As there are many wrong forms of government and only one right form which

Theosophy inculcates, so there are many wrong sciences of sociology and the one true system—that which deals with a society composed of evolving souls, immortal and divine.

Again, if Theosophy's contribution for the individual is the philosophy of the spirit, its contribution to humanity is the philosophy of education. Theosophy teaches humanity how to become social beings in the true sense, how to build the right society of spirit-men. And if it produces true legislators and administrators and social servants, so through its philosophy it produces true educators and teachers.

Lastly, if for the individual Theosophy contributes the religion of knowledge, for humanity as a whole it contributes the religion of service. Knowledge makes man free, and in the service of humanity lies perfect freedom. It is the religion of service which produced the great Saviours of the race. These mighty Free Men are liberated spirits who have mastered the message of Theosophy. Perfect embodiments of the religion of knowledge, they live the religion of service.

And now let us look at the message of these Saviours who serve by knowledge. First, it is the message of immortality; man dies not; the soul lives on and on. From among the body of the Saviours come the great educators of the race whose philosophy of spirit-education adds to the message of immortality that of brotherhood. If all human beings are immortal, their immortality makes them brothers. The spiritual brotherhood of the race—that is the second great message of Theosophy.

What is the third? The science of the soul, the science of sociology, proclaims the truth of evolution. Though all are spiritual brothers, yet mentally, morally, ethically, psychically, we are different. This difference is the result of evolution. Immortality, brotherhood, evolution, is the message of the religion, philosophy and science of Theosophy.

The fourth factor, the art of living and government, reveals the stupendous fact of the existence of immortal, fully evolved Perfected Men, who are the Elder Brothers in the human family. The art of government which the Masters have perfected, results from

the science of sociology, which is the science of the soul; that science is founded on the philosophy of the spirit which provides for the philosophy of true spirit-education; and that philosophy in turn springs from the religion of service. Masters are Brothers of Immortality. In Them, man and nature come together. They teach the art of self-government, whereby immortality is attained. They are the servants of society, of souls, and help the evolution of the races of souls. This They do through the philosophy of spiritual education which destroys all differences of matter and reveals a unified state of spirit which is realized through the religion of knowledge and the service of humanity.

Thus we see Theosophy unveiling a compact whole—the most practical religion, the most practical philosophy, the most practical science and art. It brings to the modern world with all its problems the lesson that the present is but an unfolded past and an unfolding future; that the future is latent in the present. Cause and effect are no more separated, but unfold one from the other. Knowledge if applied to the causes can remove the limitations of the circumscribing effects. Thus a compact and consistent body of knowledge is unveiled before our vision.

Theosophy, like Truth, has always existed. No one invented it. It gets obliterated from people's memory from time to time, and has to be rediscovered. It is constant throughout eternity and consistent in all its parts. It is a religion which does not require the authority of prophets and priests, a philosophy which needs no speculations, a science which does away with doubt, an art which has no room for special creations. Theosophy provides a religion which deals with all the problems of life; a philosophy which is not speculative and theoretical, but practical; a science which does not deal with dead matter but with the living affairs of the soul; an art which produces the joy and bliss of creation, not for the few but for all, not in some special department of life, but in all life. Theosophy brings to us that sure consolation that there is a purpose in the small events of our lives as in the life of nations and of humanity as a whole. No event takes place in our life which has not its cause in us; the distress and the suffering as well as the joys and the pleasures are

of our own begetting; there is a divine purpose and we, being divine, *willed* that purpose, each one according to his capacities and his limitations.

Study of that art, science, philosophy and religion implies understanding these propositions intellectually and then applying them in daily life, thus breaking down that dividing wall which exists in all religions between the spiritual and the secular; in modern philosophy, between speculation and practicality; in modern science, between that which can be sensed and that which is incognizable by the senses; and finally in modern art of form and technique, the possession of the few, who alone can revel in the joy of creation. Theosophy unifies all departments of life, shows the universal fact of the religion of life that makes life not only joyous but useful for each one, that explains the purpose of pain as well as of pleasure, that brings the confidence that there is a power in each of us—the power of the hands to reshape the earth, the power of the heart to reach Heaven, the power which belongs to us, the power which *is* us.

If the power resides in the hands and hearts of each of us, then can it not be that there are those who are perfect embodiments of that power? Theosophy teaches that there exist those great Elder Brothers of the race, Men of perfect activity, perfect compassion, perfect knowledge, who proclaim the same ageless wisdom age after age and in many climes, who speak the same universal and consistent Truth through many tongues. These Masters, those who embody Theosophy in their own being and life, exist even today, to proclaim that message once again. Many philosophies, religions, sciences and arts have come and gone. Immemorial philosophy, religion, science and art ever exists. Study of that living body of Truth, and treading of the "strait path" of the Christs, the Buddhas, the Sages and Rishis, has been made possible for us today, for that ancient Message was proclaimed just a century ago by that Master-Theosophist, H. P. Blavatsky. To study that message, to apply it in our lives and so change ourselves—that is the task before us.

There can be no world improvement without individual im-

provement; there is no world problem, there is only the individual problem. It is only through the self-reform of individual units that humanity *en masse* can be uplifted and made whole. That is why Theosophy emphasizes the education of the individual, making him aware of his own responsibility. Neither in modern science, nor in sectarian religion, nor in political and social programmes is there any remedy. Only in Theosophy will men and women find a sure and permanent foundation for a new World Order and for peace and happiness. For Theosophy is not only more scientific than science and more religious than religion, but is the continuation of the selfless efforts of the Great Sacrificers, who are also the mental and moral Pioneers of human progress.

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As a body, the Theosophical Society holds that all original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature, whether materialists—those who find matter "the promise and potency of all terrestrial life," or spiritualists—that is, those who discover in spirit the source of all energy and of matter as well, were and are, properly, Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature, and try to identify oneself with it. To revere that *Presence*, the invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there, and everywhere and nowhere; is ALL, and NOTHING; ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything; contained in all. It will, we think, be seen now, that whether classed as Theists, Pantheists or Atheists, such men are near kinsmen to the rest. Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought—Godward—he is a Theosophist; an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth, with "an inspiration of his own" to solve the universal problems.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## "GOOD" AND "BAD" KARMA

THE basic question, "What is good Karma and what bad?" is one which, in varying terms, most of us have asked at some time. "Why should this happen to *me*?" "Why is my place in life what it is?" "Why am I not like so-and-so?" A few may even ask, "Why have I got so much to be thankful for?" To all such questions Mr. Judge gives an unhesitating answer: "Each person is the concentration and result of Karma." To which, by way of further explanation, he might add, "Nothing is left to chance, favour, or partiality, but all is under the governance of law." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 5*, p. 5)

Law, like duty, and motive, is a word of power with Mr. Judge. He keeps it to the forefront in all he writes, because, so often, it alone explains so much. His response to any of us bemoaning our Karma would be to say quietly, "Each event is an effect of the Law" (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Indian ed., p. 119), and to point out how mistaken we are in being "too much given to supposing that events are chances, or have no connection with ourselves" (*Letters*, p. 119). He would remind us that "Karma brings everything about." (*Letters*, p. 25)

Is this actually so? It needs must be, if we believe that we are more than a mere body, a temporary grouping together of atoms which must some day disperse, so that that particular body is seen no more. If we are not so wrapped up in material life that we do not admit that "the real experiencer and knower is the soul" (Preface to *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, p. xi), then we must accept the fact that our soul has had a past and is going to have a future, and that what it is experiencing in the present is irrevocably linked with both of these.

"The past cannot be changed or amended," says Mr. Judge; "that which belongs to the experiences of the present cannot, and should not, be shunned; but alike to be shunned are disturbing anticipations or fears of the future, and every act or impulse that may cause present or future pain to ourselves or others" (*Yoga Aphorisms*, p. 24). If we found ourselves able to obey that last injunction perfectly, all our lifetime, we might truly call our Karma

"good," even if it had been accompanied by bodily ills and seemingly unjustified trials and losses.

Accepting, then, that it is "the *real* part of us in which Karma inheres" (*Letters*, p. 25)—not any temporary personality, but "the Ego...guided and controlled by law, by justice, by the necessities of upward evolution" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 8)—we must see that, inevitably, on the outer plane, "Karma—from other lives—determines where, how, and when we shall be born" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No.10*, p.13), and, on the inner, that "each man's life and character are the outcome of his previous lives and thoughts" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 5*, p. 6). It is the necessity for the ripening of whatever seeds (of good or ill) lie dormant in us that places us in the circumstances that we in time will call our good or bad Karma. Like wise gardeners, the chance will be open to us to root out weeds and cultivate fruits, and the soil will be precisely what we need. Says Mr. Judge in his Preface to *The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*: "The manifestation, in any incarnation, of the effects of mental deposits made in previous lives, is declared to ensue upon the obtaining of just the kind of bodily and mental frame, constitution and environment as will bring them out" (p. x). But never misunderstand; this is a process of *law*, not fate. "Man...set in motion the causes which will inevitably have certain results. Just as easily he could have made different causes and thus brought about different results." (*Echoes*, p. 45)

Here we are, then, in the present, working out old Karma and making new. Do we dislike our place of birth? Mr. Judge would have us think again. "The truth of the soul's life is in no special quarter of the compass" (*Letters*, p. 82). Does it dismay us that ours is the Black Age, Kali Yuga? We can do "nothing *against* it but a great deal *in* it" (*Letters*, p. 103). All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 21). "A very slight cause produces gigantic effects. To aspire ever so little now will bring about greater and more lasting effects for good than at any other time" (*Letters*, p. 103). Are we too insignificant to do anything in this way? "No individual theosophist can be regarded as without significance and influence, nor is

any member justified in supposing that he or she is too obscure, too unprogressed, to be of any benefit to the movement and thus to mankind at large" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 71). Do things seem to go "all wrong" for us personally? "There is only evil when you rebel against immutable decrees that must be worked out. You know that there must be these balancings which we call Good and Evil....Experience we must have....We have to exhaust all Karma." (*Letters*, pp. 26 and 119)

Having reached the point of accepting Mr. Judge's pronouncement that "each and every one is here for a good and wise reason" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*, p. 2), and further agreeing with him that "there must always be kept in view the doctrine of the philosophy that each life leaves in the Ego mental deposits which form the basis upon which subsequent vicissitudes follow in other lives" (*Yoga Aphorisms*, p. 64), we have still to learn his answer to our opening question, "What is good Karma and what bad?"

Let us sum it up thus: Good Karma is having the opportunity and the will to use the present aright. "If the present is full of doubt or vacillation, so will be the future; if full of confidence, calmness, hope, courage and intelligence, thus also will be the future" (*Letters*, p. 76). Yet even this is not quite enough, for Mr. Judge always inculcates altruism. "It is not the study of ourselves so much as the thought for others that opens the door" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*, p. 2), and he would have us concentrate on "performing our duty unselfishly in the station in which we are placed, for thereby we convert lower nature into higher, following Dharma—our whole duty." (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 106)

Mr. Judge looks on life as a state of "generating causes"—an arresting phrase—(*Echoes*, p. 37), and bids us mark well the law that "causes once put in motion eternally produce their natural results." Inevitably, "the future, then, for each, will come from each present moment. As we use the moment so we shift the future up or down for good or ill" (*Letters*, p. 75). Says Mr. Judge, speaking of himself, "I only look for what I am each moment" (*Letters*, p. 21). Yes, the present moment is vital, not to be wasted on might-have-beens or on forebodings or forecastings of the

future. As a wise and experienced teacher, he bids us learn "the lesson intended by the Karma of your present life" (*Letters*, p. 21). And to all of us who have learnt something at least of the great Karmic doctrine he puts this pointed question: "Is any Theosophist...so foolish as to continue now, if he has the power to alter himself, a course that will breed a crop of thorns for his next life's reaping?" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 14)

So, surely there is *one* answer we can give promptly to the question we have been considering. Surely it is good Karma to have been led to the study of Theosophy and to have had its great doctrines opened up to us. "The light," says Mr. Judge, "is good Karma and the darkness is bad" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 72), and in darkness many of us might have remained but for Theosophy. It is grand, too, to have his assurance that "we have not only been here before, but beyond doubt those of us who are inwardly and outwardly engaged in the Theosophical movement for the good of others have been in a similar movement before this life" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 50). That in itself is a testimony to Karmic continuity, as well as a happy reassurance of companionship.

"No one," writes Mr. Judge, "was ever converted into Theosophy. Each one who *really* comes into it does so because it is only 'an extension of previous beliefs.' This will show you that Karma is a true thing. For, no idea we get is any more than an extension of previous ones. That is, they are cause and effect in endless succession. Each one is the producer of the next and inheres in that successor." (*Letters*, p. 23)

Mr. Judge is speaking of "ideas," but he gives a perfect illustration of the Karmic progress of the Ego, the pilgrim-soul. Some conclusive words of his can finally dispose of the question we have been pondering under his guidance: "Good Karma is that kind which the Ego desires and requires; bad, that which the Ego neither desires nor requires." (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 8)

Beyond that, what more is there to say?

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## THE BASIS OF ACTION

Theosophy stands for brotherhood, not only in thought but also in action.

Theosophy stands for restrictive, but never for punitive, action.

Theosophy stands for the sacredness of a resolve, a vow, a promise.

Theosophy stands for integrity, for action in harmony with thought and feeling.

Theosophy stands for the death of prejudice and preconceptions.

Theosophy stands for the full recognition of equal rights and privileges for all, without distinction of race, colour or social position.

Theosophy stands for helping those who suffer, especially those who suffer unjustly.

The present world situation is not only the outcome of party politics and international intrigues. It results from the tendencies of thought, the lines of inclinations of peoples, of those who are led. In every country there are blind leaders of the blind, fancying that they see and make their followers see. Each citizen gains or loses, depending on his capacity to see aright and evaluate the programmes and policies of his own government.

Our principles determine our actions. Actions result from thought-will-feeling. If these are not based on right principles, then the actions will result in failure. Karma will judge, today or tomorrow. Only by clear and earnest thinking can we free ourselves from the maelstrom of events.

Why should we act in terms of principles instead of expediency? One of the greatest lessons of the teaching of Karma, as we sow so shall we reap, compels us to assume responsibility for our actions, and so we seek principles.

There is not only the act performed, but there is the effect of that act on ourselves and on others, and our thought-will-feeling connected with it. With our limited vision we are not able to see the real effects of an act before we perform it. We think of what we

expect the act to bring forth, but we are not able to gauge just what the act will stir up once it is performed. Every act has its own energy and life, and arouses certain forces in the environment.

The people of the world are being given chance after chance to decide whether they will choose the right or the wrong. Death does not matter, trouble and suffering do not matter, but moral integrity, an ever-growing capacity to choose that which makes for law and order as against the selfish use of force, will fit us to follow the path of the Right in times of greater stress in the future.

Let every citizen apply the principles named at the beginning of the article; he will save himself much trouble and help his country to go aright.

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It is well said, in every sense, that a man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him. A man's or a nation of men's. By religion I do not mean here the church-creed which he professes, the articles of faith which he will sign and, in words or otherwise, assert; not this wholly, in many cases not this at all. We see men of all kinds of professed creeds attain to almost all degrees of worth or worthlessness under each or any of them. This is not what I call religion, this profession and assertion; which is often only a profession and assertion from the outworks of the man, from the mere argumentative region of him, if even so deep as that. But the thing a man does practically believe (and this is often enough *without* asserting it even to himself, much less to others); the thing a man does practically lay to heart, and know for certain, concerning his vital relations to this mysterious Universe, and his duty and destiny there, that is in all cases the primary thing for him, and creatively determines all the rest. That is his *religion*; or, it may be, his mere scepticism and *no-religion*: the manner in which he feels himself to be spiritually related to the Unseen World or No-World; and I say, if you tell me what that is, you tell me to a very great extent what the man is, what the kind of things he will do is. Of a man or of a nation we inquire, therefore, What religion they had.

—THOMAS CARLYLE

## "BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT"

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

THIS may sound puzzling to the modern ear, for the adjective "poor-spirited" is commonly used as a term of contempt. Deservedly, if its connotation is understood to be not only patient acquiescence in or endurance of what Karma brings to oneself which does not admit of overcoming without neglect of duty or injury to others, and extends to lack of courage to live up to one's principles, or to defend victims of injustice or of slander.

In what sense could being "poor in spirit" merit praise from a great Teacher? Certainly not in that of the loathsome, ostentatious and ambition-cloaking 'umbleness of a Uriah Heep! Mock modesty that tacitly begs for contradiction is poles apart from true humility. The latter calls for not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, and abstaining from drawing attention to ourselves or our achievements. Impersonality is a natural expression of such humility.

This calls for honesty in self-examination, for recognizing our weaknesses and also our strong points, neither grovelling in self-abasement over the former nor resting satisfied with our redeeming qualities, which also can almost certainly be strengthened by present effort.

Paul, the wise Apostle, wrote to the Galatians: "...if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." May we not be inviting that judgment on ourselves when we flatter ourselves prematurely on being free of a weakness which we see in a brother? Surely the honest recognition of how far short we fall of our ideal of character and of the fitness for self-forgetting service which is our goal should save us from sitting in judgment on our fellows who, however patent may seem to us their shortcomings, alone can know how hard they may be trying and what difficulties they may be encountering in attempting to bring their lower nature into harmony with their aspirations.

The proud and the ambitious are far indeed from being "poor

in spirit," and, in the first note on the rules with which *Light on the Path* opens, ambition, which we are enjoined to kill out, is called "the first curse: the great tempter of the man who is rising above his fellows," continually leading men of intelligence and power away from their higher possibilities. Closely related as ambition is to personal pride, the ambitious individual who is also an aspirant to chelaship will do well to remind himself again and again that "praise leads to self-delusion," as *The Voice of the Silence* warns.

Thy body is not Self, thy SELF is in itself without a body, and either praise or blame affects it not.

Self-gratulation, O Disciple, is like unto a lofty tower, up which a haughty fool has climbed. Thereon he sits in prideful solitude and unperceived by any but himself.

Its corrective is dwelling in thought upon the truly great, upon the Masters, and on H.P.B. who so far excelled us in wisdom and compassion as well as in humility, as when she, in concluding her second message to the American Theosophists at their Convention in April 1889, signed herself "most sincerely the devoted sister *and servant* of every true follower of the Masters of Theosophy."

We have also positive warnings against slipping into a "holier than thou" attitude. Among the conditions named in "Practical Occultism" as indispensable to the safe pursuit of the study of Divine Wisdom is the following:

None can feel the difference between himself and his fellow-students, such as "I am the wisest," "I am more holy and pleasing to the teacher, or in my community, than my brother," etc.—and remain an upasaka. His thoughts must be predominantly fixed upon his heart, chasing therefrom every hostile thought to any living being. It (the heart) must be full of the feeling of its non-separateness from the rest of beings as from all in Nature; otherwise no success can follow.

Again, in "Musings on the True Theosophist's Path" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 36*), we are warned that "giving thought to self will most truly prevent and overthrow our aims and objects, particu-

larly when directed toward the occult."

Again there arises the thought, "I am a student, a holder of a portion of the mystic lore." Insidiously there steals in the thought "Behold I am a little more than other men, who have not penetrated so far." Know then, oh man, that you are not as great even as they. He who thinks he is wise is the most ignorant of men, and he who begins to *believe* he is wise is in greater danger than any other man who lives.

Is not such an individual in grave peril of joining the ranks of the false prophets of bewildered soul who, in misleading others, even unwittingly, assume an unenviable Karmic responsibility for the future course of those who put their faith in them?

Are there none today to whom Verses 15 and 17 of the third chapter of the *Book of Revelation* could apply no less than to the angel of the Church of the Laodiceans, to whom they were addressed? Could they perhaps apply to you, to me?

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot....

...thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

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WOULDST thou be a student of human nature? Place but a feeble faith in the records of the learned, in the volumes of the uninspired, but go into the kingdom of thine own heart. There is the library that never misinterpreteth. There is truth in its heavenly purity set forth in thine own mother tongue, even in the sense of thine own veins.... All other volumes are valuable as thou readest this aright; for by this dost thou interpret all—even the Sacred Volume itself.

—BRONSON ALCOTT

## WHAT IS MAN?

IS man an animal or a soul? Has he evolved from the apes, as science would have us believe? We talk glibly of the "missing link" and think that this will turn up in time and put a seal to the theory. Some have even claimed that they have found this link!

Enough proof has been gathered by science to show the evolution of form and of sensation, from the mineral to the plant, from the plant to the animal, from animal to man. The human embryo goes through all these phases in the pre-natal stage.

The growth of the personality brings up an illuminating factor. A helpless, speechless babe slowly becomes a thinking, self-conscious individual. What makes this change? An animal never grows to the stage of self-consciousness. Man alone reaches the stature of a thinker, with the conscious power of choice, knowing the difference between right and wrong *for him*, and with the capacity to aspire to unknown heights and bring down to the plane of action that which in his inspirational moments he has glimpsed. He has a sense of freedom, but often feels balked by outer circumstances which prevent the fulfilment of his inner urge for betterment. Man's form may have been at one period different from what it is today. Is it possible that there is truth in the teaching that the present anthropoids came from man and were not his forebears? Each one needs to apply his own mind to the question, "Am I an animal or a soul?" for we all live in terms of our beliefs and understanding. Emerson well brought out the truth that our attitude changes according to what we believe we are:

What we commonly call man, the eating, drinking, planning country man, does not represent himself, but misrepresents himself. Him we do not respect, but the soul, whose organ he is, would he let it appear through his action, would make our knee bend.

Are we then souls? To answer this question we must put aside present-day scientific methods of gaining knowledge, for we are dealing with abstractions, or ideas, and the laboratory is man

himself. We must also discard the theories on this subject put forward by the Church during the past two thousand years, for it has relegated to obscurity the idea of soul or spirit as *the* living reality in life. It has taught that God is omnipotent, and yet, that he is at the mercy of the will of sensual beings; that for every baby born, whether black, brown, yellow or white, he has to furnish a soul. This undefined soul can be lost or saved, and the result of one short life is an eternity of hell or of heaven. The Church has further taught that belief will save us, whereas Jesus taught that we are saved by our actions, each action bearing its lawful fruit. And the important question as to what happens to the souls of all born before the year A.D. 1, or born since then but who have never heard of the name of Jesus, still remains, for it, unsolved.

It is when we turn to the philosophers that we find the soul being spoken of as *the* vital factor in life, as self-consciousness itself; and the brain, Shakespeare says, is that "which some suppose the soul's frail dwelling house." *The Way of Life is the Way of the Soul in Life.*

Here lies before us an immense field of study and inner search. The texts are available; they contain the ethics of all the Great Teachers, the teaching and experience of the great philosophers and mystics of all time. They teach the Science of the Soul. The key to the understanding of these teachings each one will find if he but searches. "Seek, and ye shall find" is the only command that has to be obeyed from first to last, for man must win *his own* "salvation"; he must himself gain knowledge and walk his own path. All that any Teacher or Philosopher can do is to point out the way.

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WHAT matters is not to add years to your life but to add life to your years.

—ALEXIS CARREL

## A FRIEND AND BROTHER

[This tribute to Mr. Judge by another of his intimate friends and colleagues, E. August Neresheimer, was published in *Theosophy* (formerly *The Path*) for May 1896. Neresheimer was described by Mr. Judge in "Faces of Friends" (*The Path*, August 1894) as "one of those strong men who give a force to those with whom they work...a strong friend, a good adviser, a liberal helper, one who is not easy to find in a walk of many days."—EDS.]

A POWERFUL genius and promoter of the Theosophical Movement in America has passed away from the gaze of the eye, but the organization of which he was the head is a living witness to the worth of him who in his last incarnation bore the name of William Quan Judge.

My acquaintance with him dates from 1888; he was the only man I ever met with whom I felt safe in all directions. The depth of his nature as it appeared to me was fathomless. His character was balanced, for he had an all-absorbing ideal; his thoughts and doings emanated from the soul and not from superficial motives. He was careless of the impressions that he might produce by anything he said or did, the personal element being mostly absent, and he was sincere always, unless it was at times when he would permit the surface man to prevail, and submitted to the frolics and idiosyncrasies of his more human nature; but even then there was mastery supreme.

He had the faculty of observing and synthesizing circumstances, persons and events; in fact here I often detected what people sometimes call occult knowledge. For instance: once during conversation, while he spoke, I thought of the time of day and was about to move my hand towards the watch-pocket but without actually doing it, when he broke in and said, "It is half-past eight," and continued the conversation.

He was an occultist; he had the power of self-control and could subdue the turbulent wanderings of the mind, sit still in the midst of his own nature, supported by his ideal, and view any and every

situation dispassionately. What wonder that he saw clearly! In matters Theosophical all his mind and soul was aglow and alive with deepest interest; whatever question or problem arose, he would view it starting with his ideal of the spiritual unity of all things, *the Self*; sublime harmony was contained in its comprehension, and a mode of adjustment for everything found in its source.

This philosophy, he claimed, is brought to view in the book of books, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and he used to say that the *Gita* and *Secret Doctrine* were quite enough for him to attempt to understand and to follow in this life.

To careful readers of Theosophical literature it cannot have failed to occur that such a remarkable depth of character as was shown in Mr. Judge's great boldness, precision and wisdom must have belonged to an old and advanced Ego. Of this there can be no doubt for those who have heard him speak in public. Whoever was in a receptive mood when he spoke, must have heard in his voice the ring of inexpressible sympathy and have felt that his words were laden with the wisdom of the ages.

He never tired of making things plain and simple, so simple that it was possible almost for poor mortals to understand the sublime truths to which he gave utterance, and I am sure that he lighted the fire of love in many a breast and awakened others from impotent slumber. I have reason to believe that his last incarnation was one of those in which the Ego takes conscious hold of a matured body whose owner had either departed by death, or sacrificed his life and his body on the altar of the great cause, for the sake of humanity, thus becoming a vehicle for the manifestation of a high occultist.

He was called by some "*The Rajah*." I wrote him once at the end of a period of prolonged anxiety, worry and trouble in my affairs, asking what was the lesson to be learned from it, as I could not make the application myself. His reply was: "The lesson is not different from anything in life. It is just Karma, and being applied to large circumstances seems larger, but is in reality no more than the small ones of others. Calmness is the best lesson to learn with an indifference to results. If all comes right it is well, and if you have been calm and detached then it is better, for you shall have

made no new Karma of attachment by it. Calmness also preserves health in all affairs more than anything else and leaves the mind free to act well."

An interesting incident, one that should provoke thoughtfulness, was this: In 1891, during a conversation between members of the Aryan Branch, the assertion was made that the proportions of the symbol "Tau," which was then worn as an emblem by many members, were not correct. I cogitated in my mind what the correct proportions might be, leaving the solution of the question to some time when I would have the chance to get the information from a work on symbolism. Three months passed without such opportunity, and the subject recurred to my mind frequently; however, I spoke to no one whatever about it. One evening, before the Branch meeting, I approached Mr. Judge as usual for a few minutes' conversation, when he drew from his pocket an envelope on which was the sign of the "Tau," drawn with pen and ink, which he handed me with the words, "These are the correct proportions." He never gave me an explanation and I never asked for one, but it led me to observe him more closely and much more attentively than before.

From him I learned to disentangle principle from condition. He viewed all questions from the standpoint of the principle or essence that each contained in itself, without reference to personality, and his quick perception of every situation, together with the application of his ideal principles, enabled him to judge correctly.

During the period of the fierce persecution carried on by members of the Society against him, he exhibited calmness supreme; he resolved to work ceaselessly and did so unmoved. He succeeded well, as the great activity of the movement now going on in this country shows; he had a strong band of helpers who never wavered for a moment in their confidence in him, or his judgment, truthfulness and aims. They still stand like a rock as then.

Whenever his advice was followed on the lines of his own example in any matter in or outside of the Society's work, it would invariably simplify the most complicated situation; in other words the standpoint of truth and the establishment of harmony was ever the attitude which he held towards everything that he touched. He

was non-argumentative, because he thought by argument no one could be finally convinced—"each has to hew out his own conviction"—nevertheless he was easily approachable, gentle, sympathetic, but above all strong and powerful whenever it was necessary to put in a word at the right time, or to act on the spot.

Needless to say that my association with him caused a change in my life and doings, such as to enlarge my views of existence and to help me to take up a more helpful attitude towards my fellow-men, thus binding me to him in everlasting gratitude.

—E. AUGUST NERESHEIMER

Most important of all is a deep and living feeling of harmony and brotherhood. A union in name has no force or power. Eighteen years ago we formed the union, the attempt to create a nucleus of a universal brotherhood, and since then we should have made some progress toward realizing what was then but a sound. Such an actual brotherhood is an important fact, its absence a very great obstruction and difficulty.

Too many have failed to make brotherhood a real thing in their life, leaving it merely as a motto on their shield. Our brotherhood must naturally include men and women of very various characters, each with different views of nature, having personal characteristics which may or may not grate upon others as the case may be. The first step then to take is to accept and tolerate personally all your fellows. In no other way can we begin to approach the realization of the great ideal. The absence of this acceptance of others is a moral defect. It leads to suspicion, and suspicion ruptures our union. In an assembly where harmony is absent, and brotherhood is not, the labours of those assembled are made almost *nil*, for an almost impenetrable cloud rolls out and covers the mental plane of all present. But let harmony return, and then the collective mind of all becomes the property of each, sending down into the mind of everyone a benediction which is full of knowledge.

—W. Q. JUDGE (1893)

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, racial discrimination comes at the very head of the list of main obstacles to human solidarity and brotherhood. Yet so seriously have certain ideas about race been misused for the practice of unjust discrimination and the setting up of invidious distinctions against certain groups, that even today it is difficult for many to see that skin colour is only skin deep.

A special issue of the magazine *Discover* (November 1994) has as its theme "The Science of Race." The issue tackles a host of highly charged questions that are important to the way we view the people with whom we share the planet. As stated editorially by Paul Hoffman:

Our society is obsessed with race and confused by it. But do skin colour and race matter in any fundamental, scientific way?... Is skin colour linked to other physiological characteristics? Are certain races predisposed toward certain diseases, and is that predisposition the result of genetics or of a shared environment? And what are we to make of the trendy "reverse racist" claim that the melanin that darkens skin also makes the brain run better, so that the darker your skin, the smarter you are? Why is the most common racial group in the Western world, Caucasian, named for a Russian and Georgian mountain range? Is it reasonable—or racist—to study the role biology and genetics might play in violent human behaviour?

Scientists are divided on many of these questions. In certain respects scientists are as confused as the rest of us about how race matters. Some researchers even go so far as to deny that races exist.

What is clear is that the genetic differences between the so-called races are minute. On average there's a .2 percent difference in genetic material between any two randomly chosen people on Earth. Of that diversity, 85 percent will be found within any local group of people—say, between you and your neighbour. More than half (9 percent) of the remaining 15 percent will be represented by differences between ethnic and linguistic groups

within a given race (for example, between Italians and French). Only 6 percent represents differences between races (for example, between Europeans and Asians).

Race, writes one of the contributors to the special issue, James Shreeve, "is mired in a biological, cultural, and semantic swamp"; and he goes on to give the opinions of some scientific researchers:

"Race is supposed to be a strictly biological category, equivalent to an animal subspecies," says anthropologist Jonathan Marks of Yale. "The problem is that humans also use it as a cultural category, and it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate those two things from each other."

So what is race? How important is it? Is it a notion rooted in our culture, or a reality living in our genes? Should the word be abandoned by scientists, or would banishing it simply cripple any attempt to help the public understand the true nature of human diversity, forcing us to seek our definitions on the street, in the jaundiced folklore of prejudice?

Everyone agrees that all human beings are members of a single biological species, *Homo sapiens*....Roughly speaking, then, race is the part of one person's variation on the theme of humanity created by the interplay of geography and inheritance....

The straightforward biological fact of human variation is that there are no traits that are inherently, inevitably associated with one another. Morphological features *do* vary from region to region, but they do so independently, not in packaged sets....

Indeed, despite the obvious physical differences between people from different areas, the vast majority of human genetic variation occurs *within* populations, not *between* them, with only some 6 percent accounted for by race, according to a classic study done in 1972 by geneticist Richard Lewontin of Harvard. Put another way, most of what separates me genetically from a typical African or Eskimo *also* separates me from another average American of European ancestry....

Given the layered confusion surrounding the term *race*—and its political volatility—it's no wonder that scientists struggle over its definition and question its usefulness....In the end, says

Peter Smouse, a population geneticist, no one would deny that there are genetic differences between groups of people. But in comparison with the differences between, say, chimps and humans, those dissimilarities shrink to "totally nothing." It's all a matter of perspective.

"What you make of race depends on what the question is," says Smouse, "And who wants to know!"

There are at the present time many rays of sunshine cutting through the fog of race prejudice that has hung its dreary gloom over the world for so many centuries. The Human Race is growing world-conscious. More and more, as men and women begin to understand the biological basis for brotherhood as taught by science, and the spiritual basis of brotherhood as taught by Theosophy, they will cease to hold their foolish prejudices and hatreds.

*The Secret Doctrine* observes that "nowhere does a more extraordinary variability of racial types exist, from black to almost white, from gigantic men to dwarfish races," than in Africa,

and this only because of their forced isolation. The Africans have never left their continent for several hundred thousands of years. If tomorrow the continent of Europe were to disappear and other lands to re-emerge instead; and if the African tribes were to separate and scatter on the face of the earth, it is they who, in about a hundred thousand years hence, would form the bulk of the civilized nations. And it is the descendants of those of our highly cultured nations, who might have survived on some one island, without any means of crossing the new seas, that would fall back into a state of relative savagery. Thus the reason given for dividing humanity into *superior* and *inferior* races falls to the ground and becomes a fallacy. (II, 425)

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Soka Gakkai International (SGI) President Daisaku Ikeda's public proposal for "Creating a Century Without War Through Human Solidarity" emphasizes the importance of "inner peace" in the quest for peace and security in the outside world. (*Soka Gakkai News*, March 1995). There is growing recognition in the interna-

tional community that intolerance among racial and ethnic groups and among religions is the cause of much of the conflict and fighting that has flared up in the wake of the end of the Cold War. True tolerance is not mere indifference toward others' beliefs and traditions, but is a more active concept. People are beginning to seek out and move toward a "philosophy of symbiosis," says Ikeda, and he goes on to consider the essential nature of this trend:

A positive will to constructive engagement arising out of a sense of responsibility toward others is a necessary condition for tolerance in the modern age....In dialogue that springs from a sense of responsibility toward others, discussion of matters of truth and falsehood and good and evil cannot be avoided.

At the same time, criticism that is simply an exercise in unbridled self-assertion is invariably self-righteous and exclusionist. Here, the concept of the "greater self" as explained by Mahayana Buddhism becomes the key to overcoming a dilemma that has confounded humankind throughout history.

The "greater self" is distinguished from the "lesser self" that is controlled by egoism....To base oneself on the "greater self" is to manifest the capacity to regard the sufferings of all people as one's own. When people make the "greater self" their foundation, they will be able to manifest tolerance that is based on dialogue and a new "age of symbiosis" will dawn....

Inner-motivated power deriving from people's heartfelt agreement and approval is vital for success in any area of human endeavour. Peace itself is nothing more than a "positive condition" that is sustained by the firm will of human beings. That is why the agreeability on a popular level of any settlement that is reached and the "philosophy of symbiosis" that sustains such a settlement become vitally important.

Ikeda's lecture on "Peace and Human Security" at the East-West Center in Hawaii sounded a similar note—that our main task is to establish a "firm inner world" that will not be swayed or shaken by the most trying circumstances or pressing adversity. Only when our efforts to reform society have as their point of departure "the reformation of the inner life—human revolution—will they lead us

with certainty to a world of lasting peace and true human security." A fundamental revolution in the lives of even a few individuals "can give rise to the kind of consciousness and solidarity that will free humanity from its millennial cycles of warfare and violence," the SGI President concluded.

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Even on this plane of ours there are other and various intellects, besides those of man, in creatures visible and invisible, from minds of subjective high and low Beings to objective animals and the lowest organisms; in short, "from the Deva to the elephant, from the elemental to the ant." (*Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, p. 13)

Over and above instinct, animals have varying degrees of intelligence, though it is of a different kind from human intelligence. The scientific community by and large has till lately been skeptical of animals having any native intelligence, and it was only in the 1970s, when behavioural scientist Donald Griffin wrote *The Question of Animal Awareness*, that scientific thinking began to change. More recently, James Gould and Carol Grant Gould, a husband-and-wife team, have been researching animal behaviour and publishing widely read books, their latest being *The Animal Mind*. And the examples they cite in support of the idea of animal intelligence might make even scoffers change their attitude towards nonhuman creatures.

The beaver's dam-building skills are legendary, and in many cases, the Goulds observe, they "even outsmart humans." In one instance, when researchers tried to drain the water in a beaver pond by means of a submerged pipe, the beavers figured out a way of solving the problem; they sharpened sticks into pencil-like spears and jammed them into the drainage holes, bringing the water back to the level they liked. "This is evidence," say the Goulds, "of a subtle intelligence remarkably adaptive to the conditions it is confronted with."

Among the many other instances cited is that of the common raven. In one experiment, a scrap of meat was suspended by a long

string from perches on which ravens were roosting. For some time, the birds tried futilely to crane for the meat, until one among them hit on a solution. Reaching down from the perch with its beak, it pulled the string up an inch or so and held it with its talon, then reached back down and hoisted it another inch and then another, until eventually the food was secured. Later, another raven came up with a different solution: holding the string in its beak, it stretched it horizontally along the perch, until the food finally came into reach. Within a few days, most of the subject birds were using their own methods to get the food each time it was presented. "These birds didn't merely witness a good solution and then copy it," Gould says. "They each imagined a better one."

Then there are animals and birds that have mastered the skill of deception, to ward off predators or to attain their objective—*e.g.*, the vervet monkey. On occasion, male monkeys involved in territorial disputes have been known to emit a warning cry associated with the approach of a stalking leopard or lion when no such big cat is in sight. This has the predictable effect of scattering any monkeys that heard the alarm and allowing the one that sounded it to seize the contested territory. The Goulds observe:

In these cases you could argue that deception is just a strategy hardwired into animals' brains. But hardwired strategies are not as sensitive to context as these; essentially, these animals are taking behaviours evolution gave them for one purpose and using them for another. This isn't instinct; this is improvisation....

Ever since human beings became aware of our own intelligence, we've been trying to separate ourselves from the rest of nature. But just because we have more cognitive abilities than other species doesn't mean they have none at all. Only when we look for the intelligence in the creatures around us will we really learn to appreciate them.

The animals and ourselves possess different degrees of intelligence. Comparatively speaking, we are on a higher scale of evolution than the birds and the beasts; but there is a plane above, little known to the ordinary person of our day and age, and there are

Beings belonging to that plane whose intelligence is as much beyond ours as ours exceeds that of the black beetle, as Prof. Huxley put it.

Thus, finding on our own plane—if we credit the teachings of Occultism—so many and such varied states of consciousness and intelligence, we have no right to take into consideration and account only our own human consciousness, as though no other existed outside of it. (*Transactions*, pp. 13-14)

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The spate of violent crimes in recent years, by children coming from affluent homes, has shocked Indian society. A feature in *The Sunday Observer*, May 14, investigates the reasons for this trend and gives the views of psychologists, sociologists and police officers who speak from their long experience of dealing with juvenile delinquents:

Marital discord in the family, alcoholism, drug addiction, and exposure to pornographic literature and violent movies are the major factors which lead children from middle-class and affluent families to crime. (R. K. Chopra, sociologist, Delhi University)

Children learn by imitation. That's why the two major negative influences which can turn them towards antisocial behaviour are the bad role-model presented by some parents and the violence they see on TV. Parents have to keep the remote control in their hands and see that their lifestyle doesn't lead children astray. (Dr. D. R. Singh, professor and head, department of criminology, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay)

Grossly maladjusted single parent families, physical absence of a parent, and homes where there is plenty of money are some of the factors responsible for children going on the wrong track. Those parents who are unable to give their family emotional stability, tend to compensate and over-compensate with money. (Dr. A. D. Nayyar, psychologist)

Our analysis of juvenile crimes shows that much of the

increase is in urban areas, and the major factors responsible for this are: lesser parental control; excessive money available to them; drug abuse; and changes in the value system. (L. C. Amaranathan, director, National Crime Record Bureau)

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Natural disasters have increased in both frequency and severity in the past two decades, according to the *Human Development Report, 1994*, released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Disasters—defined as events that kill or affect at least 100 people—have got more disastrous because they occur in places that have become overpopulated. In the ultimate analysis, even natural catastrophes such as earthquakes, floods and volcanic eruptions can be traced to humans and human activities affecting nature. According to the UNDP Report:

Population growth and industrial development tend to degrade the environment. Deforestation and overgrazing, for example, have increased the number and severity of droughts and floods. Only sustainable human development—which increases the security of human beings and of the planet we inhabit—can reduce the frequency and impact of natural disasters.

Geologist and science writer Jon Erickson makes a similar point in his new book, *Quakes, Eruptions, and Other Geological Cataclysms*. People, he notes, can cause their own catastrophes and make nature's cataclysms worse:

We have been called the "human volcano" because our influences on the environment are global. Major changes in the Earth's critical cycles brought on by human interference could spell catastrophe for all mankind as well as the rest of the living world.

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