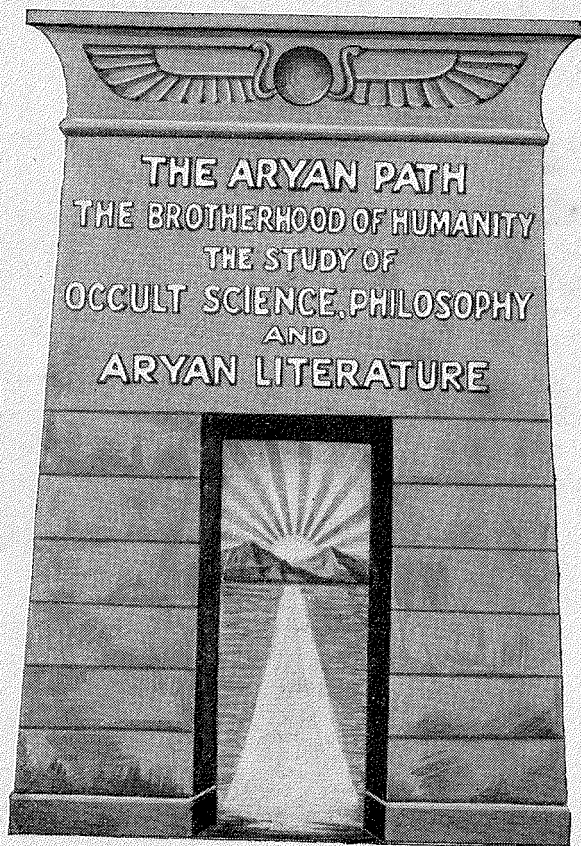




# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO



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Vol. IX No. 8

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June 17, 1939

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Unity cannot be stepped down. It ever is ; It is to be realized. Of course, it is a consideration of processes that is confusing with our present perceptions ; but it is not so difficult to have a working generalization sufficient for our present purpose. The thing to be realised is Unity—the One, not separate in its manifold appearances. “That Thou Art, O Svetaketu.”

—ROBERT CROSBIE.

## PUBLISHERS' ANNOUNCEMENT

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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 psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यान्नास्ति परो धर्मः ।



*There is no Religion Higher than Truth*

BOMBAY, 17th June, 1939

VOL. IX. No. 8.

### CONTENTS

Robert Crosbie	...	...	...	113
The Struggle for Existence—By <i>H. P. Blavatsky</i>			...	114
Questions Answered <i>Smoking</i>	...	...	...	118
The Ashrama of the Monad	...	...	...	120
The Popular Idea of Soul Survival—By <i>H. P. Blavatsky</i>			...	121
The Line of Life's Meditation	...	...	...	126
"I am doing Nothing"	...	...	...	127
Correspondence	...	...	...	128

T. M. H.

AUM

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

BOMBAY, 17th June 1939.

VOL. IX. No. 8.

## ROBERT CROSBIE

On the 25th of June 1919 Robert Crosbie, Founder of the U. L. T., passed away from the mortal world. By his efforts at self-knowledge and by his sacrifices in the service of the Truth he became an Immortal—not immortal perhaps as our civilization conceives immortality, but immortal in the real sense. One aspect of Immortality lies in the token an Immortal leaves behind him for the benefit of his fellow men. When people talk of an immortal they conceive of him as living somewhere in the infinitudes of space. That phase of Immortality may be described as personal; a mortal becomes immortal and realizes within himself that he is the Great, the *Brahman*. The impersonal aspect of Immortality is the gift made by a man in the process of uncoiling himself from the iron bonds of mortality.

In the token of his immortality Robert Crosbie reveals the Way he attained; that token consists of his teachings, now made available in the volume, *The Friendly Philosopher*. These teachings are neither new nor unique; he passed on what he had heard. All that he said and wrote was taken from H. P. B. and to an even greater extent from W. Q. Judge, whose real worth he understood because of his devotion to the colleague of H. P. B. The mark of Robert Crosbie's writing is—simplicity. His words are so simple that often students miss their profound implications. Through full assimilation of the instructions offered to the world by the Masters of Theosophy, Robert Crosbie achieved the art of simplifying the teachings, and more—of emphasising those which are really of helpful service to the earnest student of Theosophy.

The life of Robert Crosbie shows what a hard-working student he was; but he did not use his mind merely to collect information. He was an assiduous practitioner, applying what he learnt to himself to control his own personality and fashion it after the pattern of his own divine *Angoëides*. In the hints,

advice and instruction we come upon in *The Friendly Philosopher* are described the steps by which he himself climbed the ladder of Chelaship. Read, for example, these words and trace their power and message to his own practice which makes his intimate experience so great a gift for the student of to-day!

We must take the position that whatever is right will come about, and while making use and taking advantage of every opportunity, feel that if what seemed good did not come our way, it was best that way for the main object that we worked for. In this case we preserve our best energies, and are neither elated nor cast down by whatever comes to pass.

Every student who grasps the elementary principle of the Law of Karma says that we suffer for our own mistakes and that each must redeem himself. But when difficulties arise and weaknesses fight for mastery many doubt and question the position they have assumed. Even when that firm position is maintained some are depressed and whine. How few there be who cheerfully say—"This is what I desired"? Robert Crosbie stood firm on the rock of this position, when things went wrong in his own personal life and in the Theosophical Movement to which he belonged. It seems as if for him things never went wrong; more—for him things ever went right.

Now, the man who in the midst of failure keeps his gaze rivetted on success, who in the midst of depression kindles the fire which warms and cheers the heart, who in the midst of overwhelming difficulties looks upon them as avenues to growth and finds ways and means to overcome them, who in the midst of wreckage perceives the Law that ever builds order and harmony—that man sees the Self Serene at the centre of his own feelings and thoughts. Robert Crosbie made himself the calm seer of his own life—creator of its difficulties, preserver of its

efficiencies, regenerator of its weaknesses—and thus arrived close to the source of his own Being. Realizing the tremendous worth of his experience, he proceeded to show the way to others and that way is now revealed in the pages of *The Friendly Philosopher* for all who desire to read. He wrote :

The very power of Divinity—the power of choice—is in each one of us. When we begin to understand that, we get the first clue to our own *immortality*.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

[The following article was first published by Madame Blavatsky, in *Lucifer* for April, 1889, Vol. IV. p. 104.—Eds.]

The mother of life is death. Nowhere is this truth more conspicuous than in the animal kingdom; the life of the stronger is prolonged by the lives of the weaker, and the survival of the fittest is proclaimed by the shrieks of the mangled and hapless unfit. Long has the western world sought the solution of this grim riddle propounded to her lord and master, man, by Dame Nature, the sphinx of the ages.

It has, therefore, been found necessary for the continuance of average intellectual contentment to venture some guess which shall decently dispose of this obnoxious problem, and the leading representatives of the mind of the race, proceeding by the methods of the times, have carefully labelled the riddle "The Struggle for Existence", and having done so, are wisely refraining from further unnecessary explanations, knowing full well that their constituents, the public, who require their thinking done for them, will gladly accept the label as a legitimate answer to the riddle, and, by frequently repeating it with knowing looks, be charmed, and in their turn charm others, with the magic of its sound, and using it as a mantric formula, banish objectors to the limbo of unpopularity.

And yet, though the *why* of this great struggle remains as great a mystery as ever, the attempted answer is of great value from the conciseness with which it formulates the law of the Ever Becoming. Throughout all the kingdoms it obtains, and especially in Man, the crown and synthesis of all. At this point, however, a new development takes place,

and when humanity reaches the balance of its cycle of evolution, and each race and individual arrives at the turning point of Ezekiel's wheel, a new Struggle for Existence arises, and we have God and Animal fighting for existence in Man. Now, at the close of the nineteenth century, in our enormously over-populated cities and in the accentuated individualism of modern competition, we see this deadly struggle in the white heat of its fury.

Grand, indeed, and magnificent has been the childhood of the white race in which material and intellectual progress have raced on madly side by side; witness the conquest of nearly the whole world's surface by its spirit of enterprise and adventure, rejoicing as a giant in its physical prowess, the subjugation of the henchman steam, and ever fresh triumphs over the master electricity. But the child cannot be ever a child, and the race draws nigh to its manhood; the God awakes and the Struggle for Existence begins in grim earnest.

First the units of the race, some here, some there, wake dimly to the feeling that they are not apart from the whole, they sympathize with their kind, they rejoice with them. Even in the animal the faint outlines of self-sacrifice have been shadowed forth by nature, as may be seen in the mother love of the females and the formation of gregarious communities. In inferior races, man repeats this lesson of nature, and the animal being dominant, improves on her, but slowly; in races of higher type, however, fresh areas of generous impulse, containing the germ of self-sacrifice, are gradually developed. It must be remembered, however, that the races are here mentioned in this order merely for the convenience of tracing the development of self-sacrifice in a monad, and not according to their natural genesis. Thus far the white race, as a race, or in other words, the average individual of the race, has developed the subtleties of his animal nature to their limit, and now comes in contact with the divine; and it is only by extending his area of interest and sympathy that the individual can expand into the divine to be at last one with universal love, the spirit of which is self-sacrifice.

From daily life we may take examples which clearly show forth the evolution of this god-like quality. We see the purely selfish man, who cares not if all rot so he has pleasure; the same man married, and an area of generosity developed, but bounded by wife and children; in other cases, the area increased by the extension of sympathy to friends and relations; and still further increased in the case of the fanatic or bigot, religious or patriotic, who fights for sect or country, as the she-



animal for her cubs, whether the cause be good or bad. And here we may mention the instruments of national passions and cunning, necessary evils; for the race being in its youth, and very animal-like, not yet recognizing the right of self-sacrifice in the inter-relations of its constituent sub-races, requires the individual who serves his country in her wars and political schemes to reduce his moral standard to the race-level. These are types of the evolution of the animal man's affections, either in his individual development or modified by the development of the race. In most cases such types represent the mere expansion of selfishness, or, at any rate, may be traced to selfish causes, or the hope of reward. Ascending, however, in the scale of manhood, we come to those who shadow forth the latent God in man in thoughts, words, and deeds of divine self-sacrifice; the prerogative of their God-head first manifesting in acts of real charity, in pity of their suffering fellow-kind, or from an intuitional feeling of duty, the first heralding of accession to divine responsibility, and the realization of the unity of all souls. "I am my brother's keeper", is the cry of repentant Cain, and the divine summons of return to the lost Paradise. With this cry the struggle for animal existence begins to yield to the struggle for divine existence. By extending our love to all men, ay, to animals as well, we joy and sorrow with them, and expand our souls towards the One that ever both sorrows and joys with all, in an eternal bliss in which the pleasure of joy and the pain of sorrow are not.

Thus, in every man the mighty battle rages, but the fortune of the fight is not alike in all—in some the animal hosts rage madly in their triumph, in a few the glorious army of the god have gained a silent victory, but in the vast majority, and especially now, at the balance of the race cycle, the battle rages fiercely, the issue still in doubt. Now, therefore, is the time to strike, and show that the battle is not fought in men alone, but in Man, and that the issue of each individual fight is inextricably bound up in that of the great battle in which the issue cannot be doubtful, for the divine is in its nature union and love, the animal discord and hate. Strike, therefore, and strike boldly! These are no idle words, nor the utopian imaginings of a dreamer, but practical truths. For in what does man differ from the natural animal? Is it not in his power of association and combination? Therefore does he live in communities, and develop responsibility. From whence spring the roots of society, if not from mutual assistance and interchange of service? And if the race offers the individual the advantages of such combination, perfected by ages of bitter

experience, do not those at least who are elder sons of the race, and find themselves in the enjoyment of such organizations, owe a debt of gratitude to their parent, and in return for the fortune amassed with tears and groaning by their forbears, repay the boon, by putting the experience of the past out to interest, and distributing the income acquired among their poorer brethren, who are equally the sons of their parent. And in this race family there are many poor, paupers physical, paupers mental, and moral paupers. How, then, shall the richer brethren help? Shower gold among the masses? Compel all to study the arts and sciences? Display the naked truth to the world? Nay, then should these poor children of the race be bond, not free! Let us, therefore, enquire into the problem.

In the evolution of all human societies we find the factor of caste; in the childhood of the race caste is regulated by birth, an heirloom from the past civilizations of older stocks. Gradually, however, the birth caste wanes before the rising money caste, and hence material possessions become the standard of worth in the individual, in that the race is then plunged most deeply in material interests and has reached its highest point of development on the material plane. But the zenith of the material is the nadir of the spiritual; the law of progress moves calmly onward with the wheel of time, and nature, who never leaps, develops a new standard of worth, the intellectual, which we see even now asserting itself in proportion to its adaptability to average comprehension and the material standard of the times, and pointing to the development of a new caste standard, to be in its turn superseded by the caste of true worth in which the spiritual development of the race will be completely established. This, however, will be the work of ages and for humanity as a whole cannot easily be quickened, for it is impossible to change the natural law of evolution, which proceeds spirally in curves that never re-enter into themselves, but ever ascend to so-called higher planes. At certain periods, however, of these cycles, a forecast or antetype is offered of the consummation, whereby an example of humanity in its perfect state is dimly shadowed forth. Such a period the white race is now entering upon, and the earnest of perfect type humanity will be given by those, whether of the money or mind caste, who, realizing the goal of evolution and capable of destroying the illusion of time, by translating the future into the present, freely extend the benefits of their caste to the pariahs of the race, and approaching them in friendship, gain a practical knowledge of their wretchedness and endeavour to awaken the latent divinity that slumbers within.

With the sword of self-sacrifice, the rightful possession of the God-man, and with the good of humanity as their watchword, they should march against the forces of individualism and self, and, with this watchword, prove all institutions of the race, especially those fresh from the womb of time, and comparing them with this one ideal, ever asking: "Does this or this tend to the realization of universal brotherhood?" If it is not so, the effort should be to turn such forces as act against the stream of right progress, gently and silently into their proper course; but if the thing makes for the common good, they should by all means and at all hazards foster the weakling and watch round its cradle with loving care. Now the path of right progress should include the amelioration of the individual, the nation, the race and humanity; and ever keeping in view the last and grandest object, the perfecting of man, should reject all apparent bettering of the individual at the expense of his neighbour. In actual life the evolution of these factors, individual, race and nation, are so intimately interblended that it would be wrong to assume any progression from one to the other; but since it is only possible to see one face of an object at a time, so is it necessary to trace the course of progress along some particular line, both for its simplification and general comprehension. With regard, then, to the individual, the great sanitary improvements which the money caste enjoys, should be extended to all; public baths and recreation grounds, free concerts and lectures provided; the museums and picture galleries thrown open at times when the worker can visit them; the formation of athletic and mutual improvement clubs among the poor encouraged. All of which reforms were easy of accomplishment if only a small portion of the enormous wealth of the country, now lying idle, were generously and self-sacrificingly expended. Unfortunately, there are few of the money caste who yet realise the latent unity of man, and the promotion of such schemes is left to those who, lacking the most potent power of the times, are unsupported, because there is no "money" in the enterprise. But could such men be found and the superfluous wealth of the country turned in such directions, how great would be the progress of the individual! Health would improve and taste develop; healthy surroundings would favour healthy thought; the sight of monuments of art and science would bring refinement and both engender self-respect.

But it may be said, if wealth is withdrawn for such purposes, work would be taken from other labour, and so the misery of the workers increased,

while the advantages offered to the masses would only increase their demand for greater pleasures, and render them still more dissatisfied. It will, however, be seen that not only the same amount of labour would be required in works and institutions for the public good, but even that such undertakings, being of a plain and sober nature, would give employment to larger numbers, than money spent in finer or more luxurious labour. Nor would dissatisfaction arise among the masses as anticipated; for men large hearted and minded enough to inaugurate such reforms would display the same spirit in all things and offer an example in private life of sober and abstemious conduct; extravagance and display would cease, so that the brilliant toilettes and luxurious habits of the money caste would no longer provoke the miserable emulation of tawdry finery and debasing vices among the pariahs; for the poor copy the rich, and if the fashionable bars of the West End lacked patrons, the gin palaces of the slums would not drive so roaring a trade. It is the debased taste of the rich which has rendered a surfeit of meat necessary for the maintenance of his powers in the eyes of the artisan, and so, at a price far beyond his slender resources, he adopts a diet which wastes the tissues and disquiets the system. And if the advisability of a sudden change of diet is contested, at least moderation in flesh eating should be recommended, and a proof of the possibility of maintaining one's full powers given by those who desire the physical and moral sanity of the race. Setting aside all argument drawn from not generally accredited sources, such as the codes of the great teachers of the past, and the synthesis of all experience, physical, psychic, and spiritual, we may bring into court the medical faculty who are unanimously of the opinion that a reduced quantity of meat would improve the general health, and that many of the common ailments are due solely to excess in the use of animal food in particular, and to overfeeding in general; while chemical analysis proves conclusively that vegetable food, especially cereals, contain nutritive qualities vastly in excess of animal.

Moreover, if the false feeling of degradation in the performance of so-called menial offices were removed by the example of the money and mind castes performing such offices themselves, or at least encouraging every invention and supporting every effort for minimizing such labour, many of the troubles which are daily taxing the resources of our housekeepers to the utmost, would be removed, and a solution to the difficult problem of the servant question arrived at; the present absurdity of domestic service would find no place, and instead

of one thousand little backs bent over one thousand little kitchen ranges preparing one thousand little dinners, we should have a sane co-operative system whereby the small worries of domesticity which destroy the harmony of so many homes, would be banished.

If such sanitary measures, therefore, were adopted, we should have physical and mental powers continuing into old age, instead of a general belief that fifty or sixty years terminate the average man's usefulness and there then remains nothing for him but a life of inactivity and general feebleness. Of course this applies to the average individual; for we have sufficient instances of mental giants who continue their labours till the closing hours of life; these, however, intuitively or naturally practise moderation and plainness in eating, and often give striking proofs of extraordinary abstemiousness.

If, then, such moderation of private life was practised by the accredited leaders of society, no inducement to excess would offer itself to their followers; or even if the animal still rioted in the masses, it would not be shamefully encouraged in its madness by the excesses of respectability.

Thus the necessary physical requirements of all classes would be reduced to a level, and a basis obtained on which to build a firm fabric of national progress towards the realization of human unity. Meantime the mental evolution of all classes would also make vast strides, and the impulses given to study and the development of artistic tastes, would bring the real genius of the nation to the front and not confine the recruiting of professions to the money caste, irrespective of individual capacity. The present false standard of taste would fall out of date as completely as the wonderful cottage ornaments of the near past, and neatness in private decoration would, by harmonious surroundings, induce a harmony of thought and feeling. Who, for instance, could indite a poem or work of inspiration in an over-ornamented drawing-room of the modern style, with its heterogeneous and multi-coloured collection of *bric-à-brac* and trifles? But with harmonious surroundings and following such a mode of life, the individual would develop within him the larger instincts of his nature, and the flower of self-sacrifice, then finding a congenial soil, would blossom in the hearts of the many and thus, destroying all narrowness of judgment and begetting an ever-widening interest in the general welfare, would develop new social organizations and institutions; the tone of the nation would be elevated and

true worth become the standard of judgment among its citizens.

Moreover, seeing that we have already proof of such an ideal being dimly sensed in all nations of the white race in the increasing discontent of nearly all classes with the existing state of affairs, no nation would stand alone in this, but the wave of progress would sweep simultaneously through all the sub-races of the race and beget a general desire to establish healthy relationships between nations and to foster every effort to unite the larger units of the race into one harmonious whole. Further, a belief in the essential unity of all souls would create stronger dissatisfaction with the existing state of social relations between the sexes, the potentialities of woman would be studied and opportunity given for that development which has previously been denied to womankind. Plain justice would demand the same ostracism of male harlots which is now meted out with so much severity to the female sex alone, and either the same leniency extended to women as is now given to men, or the higher moral standard and wisdom of awakened humanity, would compel the supply in harlotry to cease by the extinction of the demand. To prepare, therefore, a ground in which this consummation could be achieved, it would be necessary to extend the full benefits of intellectual training to women; to encourage and advocate the necessity of athletic exercises for girls and to provide for the same in the schools of the state; to jealously guard the health of the women working classes by sanitary improvements in all manufactories and labour establishments, and to kill out the evil of over long hours of sedentary occupation in vitiated atmospheres. Moreover, it should be made possible for women in the position of the present daughters of the lower middle classes and of parents with limited incomes to follow a calling in life, instead of being forced, against their wills and finer instincts, into the matrimonial market, to gain their bread and cheese at the price of discontented motherhood.

No doubt the establishment of international leagues for mutual help and on a basis other than that of self-interest will, at the present time, appear to the majority the acme of folly; but when the race has, in its social institutions, given valid proof of the efficacy of the method, the change of base becomes a possibility. The spread of education and the ability to study original authorities and to get at facts at first hand would rapidly clear away the clouds of national and sectarian prejudice, and the birth of the God within would render it impossible to poison the young minds of the race by inoculating them with the virus of dogmatism and of past

national pride and passion as treasured in the orthodox theological and historical text-books of the times; the past triumphs of the animal in individual nations would be regarded merely as the obscuratization of the spiritual and yet so ordered in the economy of nature that the sun of humanity should finally shine forth more gloriously in contrast to the darkness of the past. Thus the necessity for keeping up large armies and fleets would cease, and the enormous wealth so saved could be turned into channels of national improvement, thus pointing the way for the desertion of national forces from the ranks of the animal to the standard of the divine.

It would be long to trace, even roughly, the possibilities of international co-operation which, in its turn, would be extended to racial co-operation of which the potentialities almost surpass description and reach that consummation of which the Theosophical Society has planted the first openly conscious germ, in endeavouring to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour; what the potentialities of this glorious humanity may be, none but the student of the Science of Life can dream, as he alone can sense the labours of the Eldest Brothers of the Race for their poorer brethren.

Let us then, aspiring to the divine, now and within, fight down the animal, that so we may be enabled to tell friend from foe in the greater battle, and, awakened by the cry, "Thou art thy brother's keeper", gird on shield and buckler for the cause of the divine Unity of Humanity in the struggle for existence.

PHILANTHROPOS

## QUESTIONS ANSWERED

"Let us compare all things, and, putting aside emotionalism as unworthy of the logician and the experimentalist, hold fast only to that which passes the ordeal of ultimate analysis."—H.P.B.

चित्रं वटतरोर्मूले वृद्धाः शिष्या गुरुयुवा ।

गुरोस्तु मौनं व्याख्यानं शिष्यास्तु चिह्नसंशयाः ॥

"Ah! the wonder of the Banyan Tree. There sits the Guru Deva, a youth, and the disciples are elders; the teaching is silence, and still the disciples' doubts are dispelled."

Q. Should a Theosophical student give up smoking?

Ans. Theosophy does not dictate on questions of personal conduct in the arbitrary and peremptory way implied in the question. Theosophy sets forth certain facts and then, like Krishna to Arjuna, it says to us: "Now act as seemeth best to thee." Whether or not a person who smokes should give up the habit depends on a number of personal circumstances, which can be judged only by the person in question. This particular question is often asked—usually by non-smokers. As a matter of fact, Theosophy has a much more definite message in this connection to those who do not smoke than to those who do. Non-smokers are frequently very fanatical in their attitude towards those who indulge in the habit. "Why don't they exercise a little self-control and give it up?" these critics ask. A truly Theosophical conscience would turn upon the critic himself with the question: "Why don't I exercise a little more self-control and stop criticising?" One of the worst habits we have from the Theosophical point of view is that of endlessly judging others and deciding for them what they ought to do. We can hardly remind ourselves too often of that fact. What happens in the invisible world to pollute the superphysical atmosphere to the detriment of oneself and others when one indulges in continual irritation and criticism is much more far-reaching in its ill-effects than the pollution of the physical atmosphere by tobacco smoke. It is easier to open the windows and clean the air of the latter than it is to free the psychic atmosphere of the traces of bad moods.

Q. In one of his letters (see *The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 134) Mr. Crosbie quotes the well-known verse from the *Gita*, Chap. II: "Make pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same to thee, and then prepare for battle", and he italicizes the word "then". Why?

Ans. Perhaps because the general tendency is to put the cart before the horse in this matter. We act first and then try to pretend we are indifferent to the outcome, whether it is pleasant or painful. Sometimes we are driven to make the effort by the fact that the fruit is bitter; in which case to follow the advice of the *Gita* is really nothing other than to give a kind of indirect comfort to ourselves, saying as it were on the best possible authority, "Never mind; I did my best and now I may leave the result to the Law." At other times we are reminded of the need to renounce the fruit of action by the exultation we feel at the success we have achieved. Then we say: "Let me not be elated. My interest must be in the act and not in what I get out of it." Now



by underlining the word "then" Mr. Crosbie pulls us up sharp and reminds us that in both the above quoted cases the renunciation is unreal and will always be unreal unless the mind is cleared of all personal considerations of loss or gain, joy or pain *before*, and not *after*, the act is performed. In the passage cited three stages are distinguished, namely, renunciation, preparation and action. If the one who does the deed is to "still remain free from sin" and display skill in action, these steps must be taken in the order given. For if plans are made while the mind and heart are clouded by personal prejudice and desire, the subsequent action will, in part at least, be determined by the latter, and when the deed is done it will be too late to talk of renunciation in any real sense. First we should cleanse the mind of hopes and fears, then survey the situation, and then act.

Q. "The personal nature is extremely sensitive because its constitution is such that it is easily deranged, being made up of separative ideas." How are we to understand this?

Ans. The personal nature is made up of a conglomeration of motives, ideas, desires and conceptions of itself that form anything but a consistent whole. To satisfy one aspect of the personality as likely as not causes some other aspect to feel disturbed or robbed of its due. The business man's interests contravene those of the husband and father, and perhaps a third stream of wishes and aims mingles with those that animate the personality in the office and the home, because of certain artistic or philanthropic ambitions that now and then capture the attention—not to mention the emotional conflicts and mental uncertainties that may afflict the lower nature. The result of this lack of coherence means that we are easily upset. It is almost impossible for so complicated a being as the man centred in his own personality to be thoroughly happy or at rest. He is, in fact, the man of uncertain mind for whom there is no happiness in this world or any other. He does not really know what he wants and is not at home anywhere. This means not only that he is composed of elements that draw apart from instead of mutually supporting each other, but further that he feels himself a misfit in his environment. As he is pulling in different directions at the same time there is no conceivable set of circumstances with which he could feel at one. He is constantly dissatisfied and upset.

The truly concentrated man, all of whose energies tend towards the same goal because he knows what he really wants and has successfully per-

sued all the elements within him that this is the goal, feels at home everywhere. All is grist that comes to his mill.

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Shri C. Rajagopalachariar, Prime Minister of Madras, addressing a Muslim audience on the Prophet's Day said:—"People of India were often told that they had many religions, many languages and many customs and were therefore an unfortunate people on the whole. But it might not be so in truth. It might be that there was a great ambition also to be achieved, that in the midst of all the variety, they might see the universal truth and the beauty of life. That, if attained, would be a very great thing. A very highly civilised people realising the unity of all religions was a great ambition which they had still before them and for which they should work hard and with pleasure. All the trouble might perhaps be leading towards the fulfilment of a great and unique glory in their own country. . . . Everything in this world could be misunderstood but it was very difficult for people in one country to understand aright things that happened in a distant country, and in a distant clime and time. They could not have the due sense of proportion of those things and were apt to run away with the impression that they were better than the other people. That was because of the difference in time, place and environments."

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"Theosophy is not a Religion, but RELIGION itself, the one bond of unity, which is so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck—from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and atom—can be outside of its light. Therefore, any organization or body of that name must necessarily be a UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD. . . .

"It is perhaps desirable to state unequivocally that the teachings, however fragmentary and incomplete, contained in these volumes, [*The Secret Doctrine*] belong neither to the Hindu, the Zoroastrian, the Chaldean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these.

Sprung from it in their origins, the various religious schemes are now made to merge back into their original element, out of which every mystery and dogma has grown, developed and become materialised."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## THE ASHRAMA OF THE MONAD

Out of the mire of terrestrial actions the lotus of celestial beauty can never grow. But let the magic seed fall in waters however murky, because of its potency the lotus of beauty does arise. If the Soul in man is activated, however evil the past Karma surrounding it, the potency of that soul will sprout, and leaving behind the murky past, shoot upwards towards the sun, the giver of life physical and the symbol of Atman, life spiritual.

Many are the men and women whose awakening to spiritual truth is frightening to them, aware as they are of the mass of errors and sins which they have committed in the past. Self-purification and self-discipline seem very hard, and repeated failures discourage them and damp their ardour. Control of the senses looks very difficult; control of the mind impossible. Engaging themselves in the task of handling the lower, with their good impulses they hope to curb and kill the evil in themselves. This is a wrong method and must prove futile.

The neophyte has to learn that unless he seeks the soul not directly enmeshed in the senses and the brain, but that Soul which overbroods the personality, there is no hope of success for him. Not by continuous endeavour to kill the devil, but by removing himself from evil company and remaining, at least for a while, in that of the Spirit will success come. We have to overpower the evil, but we give it exercise and therefore strength by paying attention to its existence; to forget it is to starve it and that is best done—in fact cannot be done in any other way than—by taking refuge in the Over-Soul, the triple Monad. A *daily* retreat to the Ashrama of the Monad is essential. The way thereto lies through the brain which, quitting the senses, becomes quiet so that the Monadic light may get an opportunity to focus itself on its spiritual organs. Mr. Judge advises "leaning back on the great ocean of the Self which is never moved".

Lean back and look on at the ebb and flow of life that washes to our feet and away again many things that are not easy to lose or pleasant to welcome. Yet they all belong to Life, to the Self. The wise man has no personal possessions.

People often think of personal possessions as objects—properties, stocks and shares, cash balance at the bank. These are but shadows, weak and distorted shadows of personal possessions. Possessions of the personal self are qualities which enmesh the Soul—the contacts with the objects born of those qualities. Comparatively it is easy to part with outer possessions—but to separate ourselves from the qualities through which attachments take place, to gaze upon them, not to be worried by them nor

to be anxious about them, is most difficult—but not really difficult if we acquire the art of retreating to the Ashrama of the Monad. Our study is a great aid, but in reality it is only in our meditation that we can lean back on the Self.

As we lean back we see two worlds quivering before the Soul's vision—the world of things and the world of images. The former falls away more easily and we see it as ephemeral; but the world of images does not fall away so quickly. To extricate ourselves from that world we need soul-strength and not only mind-strength. The world of objects falls away from the personality in three-score years and ten, but the world of images entwines the man for a millennium and a half. Between objective earth-life and Devachan this time difference exists, and it is caused by the power of attachment which creates the images, and the power of cohesion which sustains them.

The outer world of objects loses its hold on us when we perform our duties without any concern in the ensuing results, and instead of running away from it, adapt ourselves to it from the Soul's point of view. *Buddhi-yoga* of the *Gita's* second chapter is the prescription.

The inner world of images exerts a far more powerful influence because it affects more the mind than the senses, and a proper practice of *Dhyana-yoga* of the sixth *Gita* is the remedy against its snares. Extricating ourselves from our self-made images, we have to withdraw, and joining the Inner Ruler, sit in his company and perceive the play, the *Lila*, of the universe. Ere we recognize the Maya—Illusion of Matter, we have to discern the *Lila*—the Play of Forms of Matter. Sinking our chain of thought in the pure waters of the Supreme Spirit, we have to come across the Lotus of our Higher Self which grows there, and rest therein. As we bathe in the beauty and the purity which surrounds us, we perceive from a distance that the two lower worlds of objects and images are created and preserved by us, that it is we who have spread them abroad, and that by using our third power of destruction-regeneration, we can shape the destiny of the universe, fashioning it after a more spiritual pattern.

How distant such an experience seems to the struggling neophyte. Yet, it comes to each in the process of endeavour. Learn to retreat to the Ashrama of the Monad every day and see the small events of hourly life joined to the big events of incarnated existence; thus the glorious experience will come when ripeness of discrimination is attained.

## THE POPULAR IDEA OF SOUL SURVIVAL.

[We reprint the following article from *The Theosophist*, Vol. I, p. 60 for December 1879—Eds.]

At what epoch the dawning intellect of man first accepted the idea of future life, none can tell. But we know that, from the very first, its roots struck so deeply, so entwined about human instincts, that the belief has endured through all generations, and is imbedded in the consciousness of every nation and tribe, civilized, semi-civilized or savage. The greatest minds have speculated upon it; and the rudest savages, though having no name for the Deity, have yet believed in the existence of spirits and worshipped them. If, in Christian Russia, Wallachia, Bulgaria and Greece, the Oriental Church enjoins that upon All-Saints day offerings of rice and drink shall be placed upon the graves; and in "heathen" India, the same propitiatory gifts of rice are made to the departed; so, likewise, the poor savage of New Caledonia makes his sacrifice of food to the skulls of his beloved dead.

According to Herbert Spencer, the worship of souls and relics is to be attributed to "the primitive idea that any property characterizing an aggregate, inheres in all parts of it. . . . The soul, present in the body of the dead man preserved entire, is also present in the preserved parts of his body. Hence, the faith in relics". This definition, though in logic equally applicable to the gold-enshrined and bejewelled relic of the cultured Roman Catholic devotee, and to the dusty, time-worn skull of the fetish worshipper, might yet be objected to by the former, since he would say that he does not believe the soul to be present in either the whole cadaver, skeleton, or part, nor does he, strictly speaking, worship it. He but honours the relic as something which, having belonged to one whom he deems saintly, has by the contact acquired a sort of miraculous virtue. Mr. Spencer's definition, therefore, does not seem to cover the whole ground. So also Professor Max Müller, in his *Science of Religion*, after having shown to us by citing numerous instances, that the human mind had, from the beginning, a "vague hope of a future life", explains no more than Herbert Spencer whence or how came originally such a hope, but merely points to an inherent faculty in *uncultivated* nations of changing the forces of nature into gods and demons. He closes his lecture upon the Turanian legends and the universality of this belief in ghosts and spirits, by simply remarking that the worship of the spirits of the departed is the most widely spread form of *superstition* all over the world.

Thus, whichever way we turn for a philosophical solution of the mystery; whether we expect an answer from theology which is itself bound to believe in miracles, and teach supernaturalism; or ask it from the now dominant schools of modern thought—the greatest opponents of the miraculous in nature; or, again, turn for an explanation to that philosophy of extreme positivism which, from the days of Epicurus down to the modern school of James Mill, adopting for its device the glaring sciolism "*nihil in intellectu, quod non ante fuerit in sensu*", makes intellect subservient to matter—we receive a satisfactory reply from none!

If this article were intended merely for a simple collation of facts, authenticated by travellers on the spot, and concerning but "superstitions" born in the mind of the primitive man, and now lingering only among the savage tribes of humanity, then the combined works of such philosophers as Herbert Spencer might solve our difficulties. We might remain content with his explanation that in the absence of hypothesis "foreign to thought in its earliest stage . . . primitive ideas, arising out of various experiences, derived from the inorganic world"—such as the actions of wind, the echo, and man's own shadow—proving to the uneducated mind that there was "an invisible form of existence which manifests power" were all sufficient to have created a like "inevitable belief" (see Spencer's *Genesis of Superstition*.) But we are now concerned with something nearer to us, and higher than the primitive man of the stone age; the man who, totally ignored "those conceptions of physical causation which have arisen only as experiences, and have been slowly organized during civilization". We are now dealing with the beliefs of twenty millions of modern Spiritualists; our own fellow men, living in the full blaze of the enlightened 19th century. These men ignore none of the discoveries of modern science; nay, many among them are themselves ranked high among the highest of such scientific discoverers. Notwithstanding all this, are they any the less addicted to the same "form of superstition", if superstition it be, than the primitive man? At least their interpretations of the physical phenomena, whenever accompanied by those coincidences which carry to their minds the conviction of an intelligence behind the physical Force—are often precisely the same as those which presented themselves to the apprehension of the man of the early and undeveloped ages.

What is a shadow? asks Herbert Spencer. By a child and a savage "a shadow is thought of as an entity". Bastian says of the Benin negroes, that "they regard men's shadows as their souls" ... thinking "that they ... watch all their actions, and bear witness against them". According to Crantz, among the Greenlanders a man's shadow "is one of his two souls—the one which goes away from his body at night". By the Feejeeans, the shadow is called "the dark spirit, as distinguished from another which each man possesses". And the celebrated author of the "Principles of Psychology" explains that "the community of meaning, hereafter to be noted more fully, which various unallied languages betray between shade and spirit, show us the same thing".

What all this shows us the most clearly however, is that, wrong and contradicting as the conclusions may be, yet the premises on which they are based are no fictions. A thing must be, before the human mind can think or conceive of it. The very capacity to imagine the existence of something usually invisible and intangible, is itself evidence that it must have manifested itself at some time. Sketching in his usual artistic way the gradual development of the soul-idea, and pointing out at the same time how "*mythology* not only pervades the sphere of religion ... but, infects more or less the whole realm of thought", Professor Müller in his turn tells us that, when men wished for the first time to express "a distinction between the body, and something else within him distinct from the body ... the name that suggested itself was *breath*, chosen to express at first the principle of life as distinguished from the decaying body, afterwards the incorporeal ... immortal part of man—his soul, his mind, his self ... when a person dies we, too, say that he has given up the ghost, and ghost, too, meant originally spirit, and spirit meant breath". As instances of this, narratives by various missionaries and travellers are quoted. Questioned by Father F. de Bobadilla, soon after the Spanish conquest, as to their ideas concerning death, the Indians of Nicaragua told him that "when men die, there comes forth from their mouth something which resembles a person and is called *Julio* (in Aztec *yuli* 'to live'—explains M. Müller). This being is like a person, but does not die and the corpse remains here ...". In one of his numerous works, Andrew Jackson Davis, whilom considered the greatest American clairvoyant and known as the "Poughkeepsie Seer", gives us what is a perfect illustration of the belief of the Nicaraguan Indians. This book (*Death and the After Life*) contains an engraved frontispiece, representing the death-bed of

an old woman. It is called the "Formation of the Spiritual Body". Out of the head of the defunct, there issues a luminous appearance—her own rejuvenated form.<sup>1</sup>

Among some Hindus the spirit is supposed to remain for ten days seated on the eaves of the house where it parted from the body. That it may bathe and drink, two plantain leaf-cups are placed on the eaves, one full of milk and the other of water. "On the first day the dead is supposed to get his head; on the second day his ears, eyes, and nose; on the third, his hands, breast, and neck; on the fourth, his middle parts; on the fifth, his legs and feet; on the sixth, his vitals; on the seventh, his bones, marrow, veins and arteries; on the eighth, his nails, hair, and teeth; on the ninth, all the remaining limbs, organs, and manly strength; and, on the tenth, hunger and thirst for the renewed body." (*The Pātāne Prabhus*, by Krishnanāth Raghunāthji; in the Government Bombay Gazetteer, 1879.)

Mr. Davis's theory is accepted by all the Spiritualists, and, it is on this model that the clairvoyants now describe the separation of the "incorruptible from the corruptible". But here, Spiritualists and the Aztecs branch off into two paths; for, while the former maintain that the soul is in every case immortal and preserves its individuality throughout eternity, the Aztecs say that "when the deceased has lived well, the julio goes up on high with our gods; but when he has lived ill, the julio perishes with the body, and there is an end of it".

Some persons might perchance find the

<sup>1</sup> "Suppose a person is dying", says the Poughkeepsie Seer: "The clairvoyant sees right over the head what may be called a magnetic halo—an ethereal emanation, in appearance golden, and throbbing as though conscious.... The person has ceased to breathe, the pulse is still, and the emanation is elongated and *fashioned in the outline of the human form!* Beneath it, is connected the brain .... owing to the brain's momentum, I have seen a dying person, even at the last feeble pulse-beat, rouse impulsively and rise up in bed to converse, but the next instant he was gone—his brain being the last to yield up the life-principles. The golden emanation .... is connected with the brain by a very fine life-thread. When it ascends, there appears something *white* and *shining* like a human head; next, a faint outline of the face *divine*; then the *fair* neck and *beautiful* shoulders; then, in rapid succession come all parts of the new body, down to the feet—a bright shining image, a little smaller than the physical body, but a perfect prototype ... in all except its disfigurements. The fine life-thread continues attached to the old brain. The next thing is the withdrawal of the electric principle. When this thread snaps, the spiritual body is free (!) and prepared to accompany its guardians to the Summer Land."

"primitive" Aztecs more consistent in their logic than our modern Spiritualists. The Laponians and Finns also maintain that while the body decays, a *new* one is given to the dead, which the Shaman can alone see.

"Though breath, or spirit, or ghost" says further on Professor Müller "are the most common names ... we yet speak of the *shades* of the departed, which meant originally their shadows... Those who first introduced this expression—and we find it in the most distant parts of the world—evidently took the shadow as the nearest approach to what they wished to express; something that should be incorporeal, yet closely connected with the body. The Greek *eidolon*, too, is not much more than the shadow ... but the curious part is this ... that people who speak of the life or soul as the shadow of the body, have brought themselves to believe that a dead body casts no shadow, because the shadow has departed from it; that it becomes, in fact, a kind of Peter Schlemihl". ("The Science of Religion").

Do the Amazulu and other tribes of South Africa only thus believe? By no means; it is a popular idea among Slavonian Christians. A corpse which is noticed to cast a shadow in the sun is deemed a sinful soul rejected by heaven itself. It is doomed henceforth to expiate its sins as an earth-bound spirit, till the Day of the Resurrection.

Both Lander and Catlin describe the savage Mandans as placing the skulls of their dead in a circle. Each wife knows the skull of her former husband or child, and there seldom passes a day that she does not visit it, with a dish of the best cooked food .... There is scarcely an hour in a pleasant day but more or less of these women may be seen sitting or lying by the skulls of their children or husbands—talking to them in the most endearing language that they can use (as they were wont to do in former days) "*and seemingly getting an answer back*". (Quoted by Herbert Spencer in *Fetish-worship*.)

What these poor, savage Mandan mothers and wives do, is performed daily by millions of civilized Spiritualists, and but the more proves the universality of the conviction that our dead hear and can answer us. From a theosophical, magnetic,—hence in a certain sense a scientific—standpoint, the former have, moreover, far better reasons to offer than the latter. The skull of the departed person, so interrogated, has surely closer magnetical affinities and relations to the defunct, than a table through the tippings of which the dead ones answer the living; a table, in most cases, which the spirit while embodied had never seen nor touched. But

the Spiritualists are not the only ones to vie with the Mandans. In every part of Russia, whether mourning over the yet fresh corpse or accompanying it to the burying ground, or during the six weeks following the death, the peasant women as well as those of the rich mercantile classes, go on the grave to shout, or in Biblical phraseology to "lift up their voices". Once there, they wail in rhythm, addressing the defunct by name, asking of him questions, pausing as if for an answer.

Not only the ancient and idolatrous Egyptian and Peruvian had the curious notion that the ghost or soul of the dead man was either present in the mummy, or that the corpse was itself conscious, but there is a similar belief now among the orthodox Christians of the Greek and the Roman churches. We reproach the Egyptians with placing their embalmed dead at the table; and the heathen Peruvians with having carried around the fields the dried-up corpse of a parent, that it might see and judge of the state of the crops. But what of the Christian Mexican of to-day, who under the guidance of his priest, dresses up his corpses in finery; bedecks them with flowers, and in case of the defunct happening to be a female—even paints its cheeks with rouge. Then seating the body in a chair placed on a large table, from which the ghastly carrion presides, as it were, over the mourners seated around the table, who eat and drink the whole night and play various games of cards and dice, consult the defunct as to their chances. On the other hand, in Russia, it is a universal custom to crown the deceased person's brow with a long slip of gilt and ornamented paper, called *Ventchik* (the crown), upon which a prayer is printed in gaudy letters. This prayer is a kind of a letter of introduction with which the parish priest furnishes the corpse to his patron Saint, recommending the defunct to the Saint's protection.<sup>1</sup> The Roman Catholic Basques write letters to their deceased friends and relatives, addressing them to either Paradise, Purgatory or—Hell, according to the instructions given by the Father confessor of the late addresses—and, placing them in the coffins of the newly departed, ask the latter to safely deliver them in the other world, promising as a fee to the messenger, more or less masses for the repose of his soul.

At a recent *séance*, held by a well-known medium in America,—(see *Banner of Light*, Boston, June 14th, 1879.)

<sup>1</sup> It runs in this wise: "St. Nicholas, (or St. Mary So-and-so) holy patron of—(follow defunct's full name and title) receive the soul of God's servant, and intercede for remission of his (or her) sins".



"Mercedes, late Queen of Spain, announced herself, and came forth in full bridal array—a magnificent profusion of lace and jewels, and spoke in several different tongues with a linguist present. Her sister, the Princess Christina, came also just after in much plainer costume, and with a timid school-girl air."

Thus, we see that not only can the dead people deliver letters, but, even returning from their celestial homes, bring back with them their "lace and jewels". As the ancient pagan Greek peopled his Olympian heaven with feasting and flirting deities; and the American red Indian has his happy hunting-grounds where the spirits of brave chiefs bestride their ghostly steeds, and chase their phantom game; and the Hindu his many superior lokas, where their numerous gods live in golden palaces, surrounded with all manner of sensual delights; and the Christian his New Jerusalem with streets of "pure gold, as it were transparent glass", and the foundations of the wall of the city "garnished ... with precious stones", where bodiless chirping cherubs and the elect, with golden harps, sing praises to Jehovah; so the modern Spiritualist has his "Summer Land Zone within the milky way"<sup>1</sup>, though somewhat higher than the celestial territories of other people.<sup>2</sup> ... There, amid cities and villages abounding in palaces, museums, villas, colleges and temples, an eternity is passed. The young are nurtured and taught, the undeveloped of the earth, matured, the old rejuvenated, and every individual taste and desire gratified; spirits flirt, get married, and have families of children.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See "Stellar key to the Summer Land" by Andrew Jackson Davis.

<sup>2</sup> In the same author's work—"The Spiritual Congress", Galen says through the clairvoyant seer: "Between the Spirit Home and the earth, there are, strewn along the intervening distance ... more than four hundred thousand planets, and fifteen thousand solar bodies of lesser magnitude."

<sup>3</sup> The latest intelligence from America is that of the marriage of a spirit daughter of Colonel Eaton, of Leavenworth, Kansas, a prominent member of the National Democratic Committee. This daughter, who died at the age of three weeks, grew in some twenty-odd years in the Summer-Land, to be a fine young lady and now is wedded to the spirit son of Franklin Pierce, late President of the U.S. The wedding, witnessed by a famous clairvoyant of New-York, was gorgeous. The "spirit bride" was "arrayed in a dress of mild green". A wedding supper was spread by the spirit's order, with lights and bouquets, and plates placed for the happy couple. The guests assembled, and the wedded ghosts fully 'materialized' themselves and sat at table with them.

(New York Times, June 29th, 1879).

Verily, verily we can exclaim with Paul, "O death where is thy sting; O grave, where is thy victory!" Belief in the survival of the ancestors is the oldest and most time-honoured of all beliefs.

Travellers tell us that all the Mongolian, Tartar, Finnish, and Tungusic tribes, besides the spirits of nature, deify also their ancestral spirits. The Chinese historians, treating of the Turanians, the Huns and the *Tukui*—the forefathers of the modern Turks, show them as worshipping "the spirits of the sky, of the earth, and the spirits of the departed". Medhurst enumerates the various classes of the Chinese spirits thus: The principal are the celestial spirits (*tien shin*); the terrestrial (*ti-ki*); and the ancestral or wandering spirits (*jin kwei*.) Among these, the spirits of the late Emperors, great philosophers, and sages are revered the most. They are the public property of the whole nation, and are a part of the state religion, "while each family has, besides this, its own *manes*, which are treated with great regard; incense is burned before their relics, and many superstitious rites performed".

But if all nations equally believe in, and many worship, their dead, their views as to the desirability of a direct intercourse with these late citizens differ widely. In fact, among the educated, only the modern Spiritualists seek to communicate constantly with them. We will take a few instances from the most widely separated peoples. The Hindus, as a rule, hold that no pure spirit, of a man who died reconciled to his fate, will ever come back bodily to trouble mortals. They maintain that it is only the *bhutas*—the souls of those who depart this life unsatisfied and having their terrestrial desires unquenched, in short, bad, sinful men and women—who become "earth-bound". Unable to ascend at once to Moksha, they have to linger upon earth until either their next transmigration or complete annihilation, and thus take every opportunity to obsess people, especially weak women. So undesirable is to them the return or apparition of such ghosts, that they use every means to prevent it. Even in the case of the most holy feeling, the mother's love for her infant—they adopt measures to prevent her return to it. There is a belief among some of them that whenever a woman dies in child-birth, she will return to see and watch over her child. Therefore, on their way back from the ghaut, after the burning of the body, —the mourners thickly strew mustard seeds all along the road leading from the funeral pile to the defunct's home. For some unconceivable reasons they think that the ghost will feel obliged to pick

up, on its way back, every one of these seeds. And, as the labour is slow and tedious, the poor mother can never reach her home before the cock crows, when she is obliged—in accordance with the ghostly laws—to vanish, till the following night, dropping back all her harvest. Among the Tchuvashes, a tribe inhabiting Russian domains, (Castren's "Finaische Mythologie", p. 122) a son, whenever offering sacrifice to the spirit of his father, uses the following exorcism: "We honour thee with a feast; look, here is bread for thee, and various kinds of food; thou hast all thou canst desire: but do not trouble us, do not come back near us." Among the Lapps and Finns, those departed spirits, which make their presence visible and tangible are supposed to be very mischievous and "the most mischievous are the spirits of the priests". Everything is done to keep them away from the living. The agreement we find between this blind popular instinct and the wise conclusions of some of the greatest philosophers, and even modern specialists, is very remarkable. "Respect the spirits and—keep them at a distance"—said Confucius, six centuries B.C. Nine centuries later, Porphyry, the famous anti-theurgist, writing upon the nature of various spirits, expressed his opinion upon the spirits of the departed by saying; that *he knew of no evil* which these pestilent demons would not be ready to do. And, in our own century, a kabalist, the greatest magnetizer living, Baron Dupotet, in his "Magie Devoilé", warns the spirits not to trouble the rest of the dead. For "the evoked shadow can *fasten itself* upon, follow, and for ever afterwards influence you; and we can appease it but through a pact which will bind us to it—till death!"

But all this is a matter of individual opinion; what we are concerned with now is merely to learn how the basic fact of belief in soul-survival could

have so engrafted itself upon every succeeding age,—despite the extravagances woven into it—if it be but a shadowy and unreal intellectual conception originating with "primitive man". Of all modern men of science, although he does his best in the body of the work to present the belief alluded to as a mere "superstition"—the only satisfactory answer is given by Prof. Max Müller, in his "Introduction to the Science of Religion". And by his solution we have to abide for want of a better one. He can only do it, however, by overstepping the boundaries of comparative philology, and boldly invading the domain of pure metaphysics; by following, in short, a path forbidden by exact science. At one blow he cuts the Gordian knot which Herbert Spencer and his school have tied under the chariot of the "unknowable". He shows us that: "there is a philosophical discipline which examines into the conditions of sensuous or intuitional knowledge", and "another philosophical discipline which examines into the conditions of rational or conceptual knowledge"; and then defines for us a third faculty . . . "The faculty of apprehending the Infinite, not only in religion but in all things; a power independent of sense and reason, a power in a certain sense contradicted by sense and reason, but yet a very real power, which has held its own from the beginning of the world, neither sense nor reason being able to overcome it, while it alone is able to overcome both reason and sense".

The faculty of *Intuition*—that which lies entirely beyond the scope of our modern biologists,—could hardly be better defined. And yet, when closing his lecture upon the superstitious rites of the Chinese, and their temples devoted to the worship of the departed ancestors, our great philologist remarks: "All this takes place by slow degrees; it begins with placing a flower on the tomb; it ends—with worshipping the Spirits. . . ."

## THE WHITE PEACE

It lies not on the sunlit hill  
Nor on the sunlit plain :  
Nor ever on any running stream  
Nor on the unclouded main—

But sometimes, through the Soul of Man  
Slow moving o'er his pain,

The moonlight of a perfect peace  
Floods heart and brain.

—WILLIAM SHARP,

## THE LINE OF LIFE'S MEDITATION

"Emotionalism is not Philosophy".—H. P. B.

Vicious tendencies and bad habits are easily recognized and at a very early stage of his schooling the aspirant to Soul-life learns that moral weakness pollutes the mind. It is very difficult even for him, however, to perceive that tendencies which the world accounts good—personal affection; *esprit de corps*, which is really cliquism; charity to others, which is so often conscience-easing for the giver, or the satisfaction of personal ambitions; the extending of the helping hand, which frequently turns out to be interference in the affairs of others; also pollute the mind.

The *Gita* describes spiritual knowledge as the best and the incomparable purifier. It also teaches that wisdom springs up from within. When the mind is cleansed, wisdom proceeding from the soul flows into that mind. The cleansing of the mind is the preparatory step towards "the path which leads to the knowledge of what is good to do". To do good is not easy; a great misunderstanding exists in the brains of many philanthropists, social servants and others, regarding service to their fellow-men, because in their zest to do good they do not know what good implies and how it can be done. *Karma-marga*, the Path of Action, consists not only in doing good actions, nor even merely in the performance of duties; it is the performance of one's own Karmic duties, according to a certain method, plus the performance of certain types of actions which are pleasing to Ishwara and which Shri Krishna names—Yagna, Tapas, Dāna. Acts of sacrifice, of charity, of mortification of the lower and contemplation of the higher have to be performed by the method which is described in the *Gita*. The method of paying Karmic debts and obligations, as well as of performing these special acts, implies knowledge; without it a man cannot walk the Path of Karma. To do good one must know what it is good to do.

Detachment of the mind from actions is the *modus operandi*. But it is not detachment in the performance of evil actions which is recommended; evil actions must not be performed. What is demanded is detachment in the performance of good actions. If, under Karma, a temptation to do something wrong comes to a man he must not give way, but must resist the urge of wrongdoing and turn the force of evil to some good account. One's past Karma is modifiable by present ideation; it can even be completely transformed by establish-

ing a new line of the lifetime's meditation—though this is a most difficult undertaking.

Each one of us has two natures—material and spiritual, terrestrial and celestial, temporal and eternal. In the consciousness of the earnest and devoted aspirant there will be found two lines of life's meditation—one primary and predominant; the other secondary and obtrusive. To develop into a Black Magician is not easy, any more than it is easy to unfold the powers of the Adept of the White Light and Wisdom—though the course leading to Dugpaship is nearer to many in this Kali-Yuga because of their carnal nature which is not curbed or properly handled. But the sincere devotee should discover his line of life's meditation and perceive the other line which obtrudes and which is of Myalba, of the earth, earthy. Instead of wavering and shifting from one side to the other he should learn to eschew the terrestrial line of meditation and to focus with all the strength of his consciousness on the higher line. He must do this *before* death overtakes him. In the process of dying, *i.e.*, the separation of the soul from the body, each one follows the line of least resistance—the line of his own life's meditation. The Occult science teaches that there are certain great plexi in the body, one of which becomes the channel for the soul's departure at the time of death; this is not arbitrary; the channel which the soul uses is determined by his line of life's meditation. This passage has a far-reaching influence which contributes its own quota to the conditions to which the soul returns.

Changing our past by our present effort through a reconstruction of our line of life's meditation, we learn to tread the Path of Duty in which the growth of our own soul and the service of other souls coalesce. He who desires only to progress will meet with frustration; he who desires only to serve others will meet with defeat and disappointment; but he who walks the Path of Karma as outlined above will find the "right road, the only vehicle" to the real *summum bonum*.

Detachment is the way: detachment in doing; this does not mean to detach ourselves from deeds, but to detach ourselves from our own personality while performing the deeds. The following statement of H.P.B.'s has puzzled some students. It contains the clue for the aspirant who has chosen to

tread the Path H.P.B. has shown, the Path of Duty and of Altruism lighted by the Wisdom-Religion:—

The mind must remain blunt to all but the universal truths in nature, lest the "Doctrine of the Heart" should become only the "Doctrine of the Eye", (i.e., empty exoteric ritualism).

Many a student-aspirant commits the blunder of making esoteric truths bases for exoteric ritualism—in Lodge work, in personal life, in his relation to his co-students and to his fellow men. In the name of the Impersonal, people are apt to revel in personality; in the name of Compassion to revel in personal affections; in the name of Vairagya to run away from duties; in the name of sacrifice to indulge in selfish actions. But these are not deliberate undertakings; unconsciously they slip into error. The remedy? The advice of W. Q. Judge:—

*Arouse the inner attitude of attention and caution.*

## "I AM DOING NOTHING"

Master Krishna instructs his pupil in the art of doing great things, many things and of yet preserving the mental and bodily health. It is a very general complaint that human bodies get tired out and human minds fatigued after a few hours of work every day and that people get old before their time. Nervous disorders due to over-work have greatly increased and one of the reasons for the present moral laxity is said to be over-work from which men and women have to find an escape: moral laxity an escape! Physiologically as well as psychologically this is putting the cart before the horse. Nervous disintegration follows the "escapes"; mental fatigue tires the nervous system; the body reacts much more to our mental attitudes than the mind to the state of bodily health. No one need deny that physiological and pathological disturbances affect the psychic nature, but the vast number of nervous ailments spring from mental confusions and moods. Bodily fatigue does take place, and under Nature's laws cannot be avoided; but Nature has her own remedy to compensate for that bodily fatigue in sleep. Similarly the body must die, but it need not die prematurely and violently, as it so often does as a result of those very "escapes" mentioned above and because of various habits we acquire in this civilization. Most people live like superstitious barbarians—over-eating, drinking, drugging, running

about achieving next to nothing, wearing themselves out by a round of "busy-ness". All this the Theosophical student tries to avoid, but in his own enthusiasm to serve his fellow-men, to make soul-progress, to gain merit—albeit all unconsciously to himself—he makes the same mistake on a higher spiral, and has to pay the price for that error.

In the *Gita* the disciple is taught to act with calmness and detachment. It is said:—

"I am doing nothing" in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing; even when speaking, letting go or taking, opening or closing his eyes he sayeth, "the senses and the organs move by natural impulse to their appropriate objects".

Bodily fatigue traced so often to over-work is really due to the mental attitude we have towards our work. It is not work that kills but our mental picture of that work. Our psychic moods fatigue and kill us, not the actual labour with senses and organs and brains.

Further on we are told in the *Gita* :—

"Whoever in acting dedicates his actions to the Supreme Spirit and puts aside all selfish interest in their result is untouched by sin, even as the leaf of the lotus is unaffected by the waters."

When work is exercise there is fatigue; when it is worship it energises the organs which it calls into play. Even in performing Theosophical work we should avoid being carried away by the excitement of effort; we should learn to work without strain. To do this we should learn to take the attitude "I am doing nothing". It lessens the strain which tires us out.

W. Q. Judge wrote to a student:—

One could be confined to a prison and yet be a worker for the cause. So I pray you to remove from your mind any distaste for present circumstances.

Life being probationary all of us are prisoners—each in his own personality. It is no use trying forcefully to break the prison walls; Mr. Judge does not say "Remove yourself from the prison house". No, he asks us to remove from our own mind the attitude of distaste for present circumstances.

It is said that a very busy man finds time to do many things; and yet more things. Two factors are involved in doing many things: one is method, but the other, without which even method will not be successful, is the mental attitude. When a man says "I am doing nothing", he not only weakens the bonds of attachment but also discovers the source of energy which prevents illegitimate fatigue.

## CORRESPONDENCE

It is difficult to understand why the writer of the article "Gandhiji's Rite of Fast" in your April issue should derive such obvious satisfaction from the substitution of "a contest of psychic forces" for a political struggle. Nor, indeed, why he should assume that the whole of "the Indian people" (whatever that term comprises) obediently follow Mr. Gandhi's leadership, or that many of the subjects of Indian States have not been influenced by Congress agitation from outside, in relation to a projected Indian Federal Constitution, which is a matter for calm discussion and negotiation, free from extraneous factors. Mr. Gandhi will have a clear recollection of his own difficulties at the Round Table Conference in London over the single issue of a Communal Electorate, when agreement between the Indian representatives was undiscoverable.

No one will want to begrudge Mr. Gandhi the halo which his devoted followers are determined to hold over his head, or to deprive him of the place which history might accord him in the list of Indian Saints. But is there not patronizing dogmatism, foreign to theosophical thought, in the suggestion of the writer that those, in India and elsewhere, who do not see eye to eye with him are therefore "devoid of spiritual perception"?<sup>1</sup> And why should unwarranted disparagement<sup>2</sup> be meted out to Lord Willingdon, Mr. Chamberlain, and M. Daladier in particular, for no reason apparently other than a commendable, if exaggerated, desire to extol *satyagraha*? Mr. Gandhi is wise enough not to ask others to follow his personal example. Indeed, if every party, sect, and individual in India with a grievance or with a lively sense of the doctrine of "spiritual atonement" (as described by our author) were to resort to such a rite, chaos would probably ensue, if nothing worse, as the history of the non-coöperation movement and civil disobedience bears ample witness.

A comparative study of Mr. Gandhi's teachings should not involve a fanatical or self-righteous attitude of mind, or the confusion of spiritual values with psychic conflicts. The theosophical worker in India, as elsewhere, has a gigantic task before him in the furtherance of the three Objects of the Theosophical Movement, and in winning attention for the Esoteric Philosophy, as recorded in these modern days in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky. And, in the performance of that unspectacular work, he cannot do better than follow the sage advice of Mr. W. Q. Judge :

"Our destiny is to continue the wide work of the past in affecting literature and thought throughout the

<sup>1</sup> The writer did not say this; what was said was: "Some of the 'educated' people saw no connection between fasting and a broken promise and thought the fast quixotic; others saw in it ugly coercion by which Gandhiji was trying to terrorize the Ruler of Rajkot—a false view which only men without spiritual insight could hold. Students of Theosophy, i.e., of the Esoteric Philosophy or the Wisdom-Religion recorded by H. P. Blavatsky, found no difficulty whatever in comprehending the meaning of Gandhiji's Rite of Fast."—EDS.

<sup>2</sup> In the opinion of our correspondent, who will grant that others have the right to hold a contrary view.—EDS.

world, while our ranks see many changing quantities but always holding those who remain true to the programme and refuse to become dogmatic or to give up common-sense in theosophy. Thus will we wait for the new messenger, striving to keep the organization alive that he may use it and have the great opportunity H. P. B. outlines when she says: 'Think how much one to whom such an opportunity is given could accomplish' " (*The Path March*, 1892.)

London

4th May, 1939.

B. P. HOWELL

[We gladly print the above though we do not agree with our friend and correspondent in all his strictures. In the "gigantic task" in which "the theosophical worker in India" is engaged, he finds Gandhiji's programme and policy of the greatest value to his own labours. Further, cognisant of the uttermost chaos prevailing in Europe, some theosophical workers cannot help evaluating very highly the principles of Satyagraha philosophy, and think that in that philosophy Europe can find solutions for her problems.—EDS.]

In the *Harijan* for May 13, 1939, Gandhiji's address to the fifth session of the Gandhi Seva Sangh which met at Brindhaban is summarised, and students of Theosophy will be interested in the following which emphasised the Theosophical teaching of impersonality :

Some of you are known as 'Gandhi-ites'. 'Gandhi-ites' is no name worth having. Rather than that why not Ahimsa-ites? For Gandhi is a mixture of good and evil, weakness and strength, violence and non-violence, but *ahimsa* has no adulteration.

This is yet another instance of the views of Gandhiji approximating the teachings of Theosophy. Impersonality is thus described by Robert Crosbie :—

The question of personality is so large that it may seem as though its successful solution should resemble the working out of a complicated mathematical problem. But the greatest truths are the simplest. And if we reflect a moment on what impersonality *is not*, perhaps that will help us to see what it *is* . . . For practical purposes : if we are developing the child-heart ; if we are learning to love things beautiful ; if we are becoming more honest and plain and simple ; if we are beginning to sense the sweet side of life ; . . . if we feel ourselves expanding in sympathy ; if we love to work for Theosophy and do not ask position as a reward ; if we are not bothering too much about whether we are personal or impersonal—this is travelling on the path of impersonality.



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# 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 to 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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