

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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SOME THOUGHTS FOR U.L.T. DAY

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—EDS.]

Outside of initiation, the ideals of contemporary religious thought must always have their wings clipped and remain unable to soar higher; for idealistic as well as realistic thinkers, and even free-thinkers, are but the outcome and the natural product of their respective environments and periods. The ideals of both are only the necessary results of their temperaments, and the outcome of that phase of intellectual progress to which a nation in its collectivity has attained.

—H. P. B.

We... find ourselves ground down by the Karma of our national stem, so that we are really almost unable to tell what thoughts are the counterfeit presentments of the thoughts of our forefathers, and what self-born in our own minds.

—W. Q. JUDGE

Only when duty is done for Duty's sake *owed* to the Self of all creatures, will the reward of duties, “higher” to thy mind, present themselves in due and natural order.

—DHAN GARGYA

NEXT WEEK every U.L.T. centre and all U.L.T. Associates will remind themselves of the noble purposes with which Robert Crosbie led the way in the resuscitation of the disintegrating Theosophical Movement inaugurated by H. P. Blavatsky in 1875 in the city of New York. U.L.T. Day coincides with the culmination of the season on the day of the Summer Solstice. This, the longest day in the year, blesses with warmth and good cheer all men, reminding them that now the great Luminary is

curving southwards. The U.L.T. well symbolizes that day, representing as it does the longest period of constructive work on the Original Lines which any visible vehicle of H.P.B.'s Movement has to its credit.

Robert Crosbie was the good shepherd who led the way with a small flock. He had learnt in the school of experience; having weathered storms of his own and having watched other storms which wrecked more than one Theosophical organization, he had gained the necessary knowledge and strength to go forward. Also, he was well equipped with right knowledge, and his experiences had given him a true insight as to what aspects of study and of service should be stressed. The Declaration of the U.L.T. was born of his knowledge-experience and of his insight.

In answering a question about the real man environed by the unreal, he said:

As egos, we are only partially operative in bodies; Manas is not yet fully employed by us as a race; each incarnation is but one aspect of our past existences, we have to make the link between higher and lower, while we are in a body.

This short statement offers every individual Associate his opportunity to study, to apply and to advance the work of the Great Cause — to study so as to let the Light of Manas enter the brain made porous; to apply the purifying moral principles of the Esoteric Philosophy; and thus well equipped, to serve the mind of the race by the spoken and the written word. The result will be a double blessing: we will “make the link between higher and lower” within our own consciousness, and thus shall be fit to preach the precepts and to set the example. This is the message of the life and labour of the Friendly Philosopher.

We belong to the race, and its afflictions are ours. Here are some more words of Mr. Crosbie:

Race Karma influences each unit in the race through this law of cause and effect by distribution. National Karma operates on the members of a nation through the same law more concentrated. Family Karma governs only with a nation where the families have been kept pure and distinct; for in any nation where there is a mixture of family — as obtains in every Kali-Yuga period — family Karma is in general distributed over a nation. All men, having the same principles as constituents of their nature, are connected by both inner and outer principles of their being; they

therefore affect each other in subtle and unperceived ways, as well as by the external ways which are ordinarily perceived.

The superficial student is apt to miss the significance contained in these simple words. In essence and substance each one of us is the same as all other men, and yet different. Our individual Karma is linked with the collective Karma. That collective Karma has three main strands: each one of us is joined to the whole race through family and through nation, and this principle which binds the individual unit to the whole should be adequately understood, for it offers the basis for practice in right living.

One thing should be noted: the spiral of evolution produces cycles of time, and humanity is affected by the four *yugas* — the age of gold (*Satya Yuga*), of silver (*Treta Yuga*), of bronze (*Dwapara Yuga*) and of iron (*Kali Yuga*). Our present age is the hard Iron Age, the Dark and Black *Yuga*. It is marked by the peculiar feature that the family unit of today is no more pure and distinct.

There is an acceleration, a speedy movement, towards unification, and each man, each woman, gets an opportunity to do something with himself in this age.

Mr. Crosbie says that individuals feel the effects of collective Karma chiefly through their national Karma. Confusion of castes prevails: the "colour" of the soul is different from that of the body, and so there are misfits and disharmony; each member of a family is different from the other members, and it is not possible for us to conceive in this *yuga* of a pure Pandava family of five brothers, complementing and supplementing one another's work, influenced by one common wife — Draupadi. Family-Races are branches from Sub-Races (*cf. S.D., II. 434*) and are the parents of many tribes and more groups. Because of the confusion of castes (*varnasankar: cf. Gita, I. 41*) the channel of the family and family *dharma* are vitiated. The student of Theosophy and practitioner of the Esoteric Wisdom is given a very significant teaching for application by Mr. Crosbie in the words quoted above.

Today the principal channel through which collective Karma operates is the nation. The village *panchayat* of ancient India, the city-state, like that of Athens, the dukedoms and small kingdoms of countries like Italy, France, England, have all given place to the larger unit called the nation. Today the nation is the most important unit, though it also must

breeds in him cruelty, by his own egotism which breeds in him envy, by his own narrow-mindedness which breeds in him degrading meannesses. Lust of power is the worst of longings — it is the *tanha* which creates new slaves. Therefore:

Better than a man who conquers in battles a thousand times a thousand men is he who conquers himself. He indeed is the mightiest of warriors.

WHERE shall we find the true foundation for a changed civilization that all men and women can see and stand on? It is not philosophies nor religions nor political panaceas that are needed; but Knowledge, and a wider scope of vision than the vicissitudes of one short physical life. The knowledge that is greater than all the forms of religion ever invented is the knowledge of the very nature of man himself, for himself and in himself. For we are not here as things apart; we are here because of one great sustaining Cause — infinite and omnipresent, not separate from us, nor from any other being. It is the same in all beings above the human and in all beings below the human — the very root of our natures, the very man himself. It is the Source of all powers and of all actions, whether good or evil. Then, everything that is done by beings affects all beings, and all that is has been caused by beings, each one affected according to its share in the cause. . . .

The war of this or any time is the result of the warring spirit, of the selfishness of mankind. It is the result of the failure to understand the great purpose of life, the nature of our minds, the full power of attainment within each being, the one Law of absolute justice inherent in all beings, the One Deity behind and in all, the one Goal for every Pilgrim, however the path varies. As soon as men are brought to the perception that every one reaps exactly what he sows, no one will do harm to any other being; there will then be no war. There will be no such misery as now exists; for to realize our own responsibility to all others and to act in accordance, is to have become unselfish, and to have done away with the prime cause of sin, sorrow and suffering.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

TO THE READERS OF "LUCIFER"

[This article by H. P. Blavatsky appeared originally in *Lucifer*, January 1888. It was reprinted in part in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, December 1935, under the title "Ideals for Theosophical Magazines."—EDS.]

OUR magazine is only four numbers old, and already its young life is full of cares and trouble. This is all as it should be; *i.e.*, like every other publication, it must fail to satisfy *all* its readers, and this is only in the nature of things and the destiny of every printed organ. But what seems a little strange in a country of culture and freethought is that *Lucifer* should receive such a number of *anonymous*, spiteful, and often abusive letters. This, of course, is but a casual remark, the waste-basket in the office being the only addressee and sufferer in this case; yet it suggests strange truths with regard to human nature.¹

Sincerity is true wisdom, it appears, only to the mind of the moral philosopher. It is rudeness and insult to him who regards dissimulation and deceit as culture and politeness, and holds that the shortest, easiest, and safest way to success is to let sleeping dogs and old customs alone. But, if the dogs are obstructing the highway to progress and truth, and Society will, as a rule, reject the wise words of (St.) Augustine, who recommends that "no man should prefer custom before reason and truth," is it a sufficient cause for the philanthropist to walk out of, or even deviate from, the track of truth, because the selfish egoist chooses to do so? Very true, as remarked somewhere by Sir Thomas Browne, that not every man is a proper champion for the truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in its cause. Too many of such defenders are apt, from inconsideration and too much zeal, to charge the troops of error so rashly that they "remain themselves as trophies to the enemies of truth." Nor ought all of us (members of the Theosophical Society) to do so personally, but rather leave it only to those among our numbers who have voluntarily and beforehand sacrificed their personalities for the cause of Truth. Thus teaches us one of the Masters of Wisdom in some fragments of advice which are published further on for the benefit of the Theosophists.² While enforcing upon such public characters in our

¹ "VERBUM SAP." It is not our intention to notice anonymous communications, even though they should emanate in a round-about way from Lambeth Palace. The matter "*Verbum Sap*" refers to is not one of taste; the facts must be held responsible for the offence; and, as the Scripture hath it, "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

² "Some Words on Daily Life" (reprinted in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 22*).—EDS.

ranks as editors, and lecturers, etc., the duty of telling fearlessly "the Truth to the face of LIE," he yet condemns the habit of private judgment and criticism in every individual Theosophist.

Unfortunately, these are not the ways of the public and readers. Since our journal is entirely unsectarian, since it is neither theistic nor atheistic, Pagan nor Christian, orthodox nor heterodox, therefore, its editors discover eternal verities in the most opposite religious systems and modes of thought. Thus *Lucifer* fails to give full satisfaction to either infidel or Christian. In the sight of the former — whether he be an Agnostic, a Secularist, or an Idealist — to find divine or occult lore underlying "the rubbish" in the Jewish Bible and Christian Gospels is sickening; in the opinion of the latter, to recognize the same truth as in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures in the Hindu, Parsi, Buddhist, or Egyptian religious literature, is vexation of spirit and blasphemy. Hence, fierce criticism from both sides, sneers and abuse. Each party would have us on its own sectarian side, recognizing as truth, only that which its particular *ism* does.

But this cannot nor shall it be. Our motto was from the first, and ever shall be: "THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN TRUTH." Truth we search for, and, once found, we bring it forward before the world, whencesoever it comes. A large majority of our readers is fully satisfied with this our policy, and that is plainly sufficient for our purposes.

It is evident that when toleration is not the outcome of indifference it must arise from wide-spreading charity and large-minded sympathy. Intolerance is pre-eminently the consequence of ignorance and jealousy. He who fondly believes that he has got the great ocean in his family water-jug is naturally intolerant of his neighbour, who also is pleased to imagine that he has poured the broad expanses of the sea of truth into his own particular pitcher. But anyone who, like the Theosophists, knows how infinite is that ocean of eternal wisdom, to be fathomed by no one man, class, or party, and realizes how little the largest vessel made by man contains in comparison to what lies dormant and still unperceived in its dark, bottomless depths, cannot help but be tolerant. For he sees that others have filled their little water-jugs at the same great reservoir in which he has dipped his own, and if the water in the various pitchers seems different to the eye, it can only be because it is discoloured by impurities that were in the vessel before the pure crystalline element — a portion of the one eternal and immutable truth — entered into it.

There is, and can be, but one absolute truth in Kosmos. And little as we, with out present limitations, can understand it in its essence, we still know that if it is absolute it must also be omnipresent and universal; and that in such case, it must be underlying every world-religion — the product of the thought and knowledge of numberless generations of thinking men. Therefore, that a portion of truth, great or small, is found in every religious and philosophical system, and that if we would find it, we have to search for it at the origin and source of every such system, at its roots and first growth, not in its later overgrowth of sects and dogmatism. Our object is not to destroy any religion but rather to help to filter each, thus ridding them of their respective impurities. In this we are opposed by all those who maintain, against evidence, that their particular pitcher alone contains the whole ocean. How is our great work to be done if we are to be impeded and harassed on every side by partisans and zealots? It would be already half accomplished were the intelligent men, at least, of every sect and system, to feel and to confess that the little wee bit of truth they themselves own must necessarily be mingled with error, and that their neighbours' mistakes are, like their own, mixed with truth.

Free discussion, temperate, candid, undefiled by personalities and animosity, is, we think, the most efficacious means of getting rid of error and bringing out the underlying truth; and this applies to publications as well as to persons. It is open to a magazine to be tolerant or intolerant; it is open to it to err in almost every way in which an individual can err; and since every publication of the kind has a responsibility such as falls to the lot of few individuals, it behoves it to be ever on its guard, so that it may advance without fear and without reproach. All this is true in a special degree in the case of a theosophical publication, and *Lucifer* feels that it would be unworthy of that designation were it not true to the profession of the broadest tolerance and catholicity, even while pointing out to its brothers and neighbours the errors which they indulge in and follow. While thus keeping strictly, in its editorials, and in articles by its individual editors, to the spirit and teachings of pure theosophy, it nevertheless frequently gives room to articles and letters which diverge widely from the esoteric teachings accepted by the editors, as also by the majority of theosophists. Readers, therefore, must not condemn any article in *Lucifer* with which they are not entirely in accord, or in which expressions are used that may be offensive from a sectarian or a prudish point

of view, on the ground that such are unfitted for a theosophical magazine. They should remember that precisely because *Lucifer* is a theosophical magazine, it opens its columns to writers whose views of life and things may not only slightly differ from its own, but even be diametrically opposed to the opinion of the editors. The object of the latter is to elicit truth, not to advance the interest of any particular *ism*, or to pander to any hobbies, likes or dislikes, of any class of readers. It is only snobs and prigs who, disregarding the truth or error of the idea, cavil and strain merely over the expressions and words it is couched in.

Theosophy, if meaning anything, means truth; and truth has to deal indiscriminately and in the same spirit of impartiality with vessels of honour and of dishonour alike. No theosophical publication would ever dream of adopting the coarse — or shall we say terribly sincere — language of a Hosea or a Jeremiah; yet so long as those holy prophets are found in the Christian Bible, and the Bible is in every respectable, pious family, whether aristocratic or plebeian; and so long as the Bible is read with bowed head and in all reverence by young, innocent maidens and schoolboys, why should our Christian critics fall foul of any phrase which may have to be used — if truth be spoken at all — in an occasional article upon a scientific subject? It is to be feared that the same sentences now found objectionable, because referring to Biblical subjects, would be loudly praised and applauded had they been directed against any gentile system of faith (*Vide certain missionary organs*). A little charity, gentle readers — charity, and above all — *fairness* and JUSTICE.

Justice demands that when the reader comes across an article in this magazine which does not immediately approve itself to his mind by chiming in with his own peculiar ideas, he should regard it as a problem to solve rather than as a mere subject of criticism. Let him endeavour to learn the lesson which only opinions differing from his own can teach him. *Let him be tolerant, if not actually charitable*, and postpone his judgment till he extracts from the article the truth it must contain, adding this new acquisition to his store. One ever learns more from one's enemies than from one's friends; and it is only when the reader has credited this hidden truth to *Lucifer*, that he can fairly presume to put what he believes to be the errors of the article he does not like, to the debit account.

LOOKING AT THE QUESTION

“Looking at the question in the light of Theosophical theories.”
—*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 133

I

“What then is good Karma and what bad?”
—*Vernal Blooms*, p. 8

IN THIS GROUP of four short articles based on the teaching of William Quan Judge we are taking four questions which he represents students as asking, and bringing together various passages from his writings in order to answer them.

We begin with a basic one: “What then is good Karma and what bad?” because, in varying terms, it is one that 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*, 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 — though this is by no means the full answer to the student's question.

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 then 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?

KARMA is a word of many meanings, and has a special term for almost every one of its aspects. It means, as a synonym of sin, the performance of some action for the attainment of an object of *worldly*, hence *selfish*, desire, which cannot fail to be hurtful to somebody else. Karma is action, the Cause; and Karma again is "the law of ethical causation"; the *effect* of an act produced egotistically, when the great law of harmony depends on altruism.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

CONCENTRATION

Having become indifferent to objects of perception, the pupil must seek out the Rajah of the senses, the Thought-Producer, he who awakes illusion....

When to himself his form appears unreal, as do on waking all the forms he sees in dreams;

When he has ceased to hear the many, he may discern the ONE — the inner sound which kills the outer....

Before the Soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united....

For then the Soul will hear, and will remember.

And then to the inner ear will speak—

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

—*The Voice of the Silence*

IT IS round these few lines that the student of Theosophy must build his resolve, his course of conduct and his daily spiritual exercise. His efforts have to be concentrated towards one objective only — that he may discern the ONE — the inner sound which kills the outer. If this were beyond the capacity of the aspirant, the instruction would not have been worded in the manner in which it stands today. In fact, unless the few directions contained in these verses are followed, the rest of the book will have hardly anything to offer. It is only to those who try to become indifferent to objects of perception and who persist in the endeavour as year piles upon year that the message of the spiritual life comes loud and clear.

Before meditation can be thought of, the aspirant has to achieve some degree of concentration. At all times before he enters upon his sacred hour dedicated to the spiritual, he has to immunize himself against all earthly reactions and stabilize himself by becoming indifferent to outer as well as to inner sights and sounds that project objects of perception on to his mind. His preliminary endeavour must be to render the emotions powerless to disturb his serenity at least for the hour. The smarting under a wrong; the indignation and the shame of being the target of calumny; the feeling of being ostracized by the very persons from whom love and tolerance are due — these are but a few circumstances that life throws up and which, if rightly approached, become the training media for achieving the higher indifference. It is circumstances such as these which teach the disciple to go through

the foul atmosphere of personal existence. Then, there are days of gloom when nothing seems to go right and sitting for concentration arouses only greater oscillations. There come moments when undesirable images come trooping in, unbidden, devilish and full of terror. Matter has these tendencies, but the Soul of man is stronger than any compulsion which these may impose. There also come days when the man, squirming under the tyranny of others, wonders whether brotherhood does exist and is the key to emancipation. Such are the events that try men's souls and which by their very virulence arouse the soul's strength to stand up and conquer.

A man is said to be concentrated when he makes his entire consciousness (body, desires, mind) converge to a focal point of attention. At such time, he brings the entire force of his thoughts to rest upon a single point, so that there is no straying away, no relaxation of effort during the time that concentration is practised. The energy thus fixed on any subject or object is intense and produces results the magnitude of which surpasses the achievements of what the world calls brilliant minds. In such a state of concentrated effort, there can be no deviation of attention, no lessening of the compact oneness of the effort. Fixity of purpose, one-pointedness, the refusal to be drawn away from the desired objective and the shutting off of all channels that can bring in outside disturbing elements are requisites for its practice. The health of the body is as vital to its practice as is the peace of mind and serenity of temperament. As a practice conducive to an awakening of the Soul, it demands an exclusive devotion that discriminates between sights, sounds, emotions and acts and divides them into those favourable and those inimical to its development. Of this, Krishna speaks:

This divine discipline is not to be attained by the man who eateth more than enough or too little, nor by him who has a habit of sleeping much, nor by him who is given to overwatching. The meditation which destroyeth pain is produced in him who is moderate in eating and in recreation, of moderate exertion in his actions, and regulated in sleeping and waking. (*Bhagavad-Gita*, VI. 16-17)

He then goes on to advise that such a man should centre his heart in the true Self and be exempt from attachment to all desires. He alone should adopt the practice who is prepared to centre his heart in the true Self which is the Self of all creatures. He who practises concentration for ends other than these is no devotee of the Highest and but

makes the effort to possess the higher force for lesser and even non-spiritual ends.

If Krishna's words of wisdom are given their due importance, it will be found that they demand an active awareness of the entire daily life of the aspirant, no moment excluded. In such context, the trivia of a day may for the higher life be stumbling-blocks, the ordinary modes of society inimical, rivalry in business and the pursuit of "innocent" pleasures a deterrent and a bar to progress. "Concentration" is the act, conscious and cautious, of trying to find an emplacement of the Soul in the Highest. No light task this, for, as late as in the Eleventh Chapter of the *Gita*, Arjuna confesses that during his walk in life he had forgotten who Krishna was and had therefore been guilty of not paying due reverence to the ubiquitous presence that is Krishna. Even though a disciple of Krishna, he had failed to discriminate between the mortal and the Krishna-aspect of things. It is in this wide context that Arjuna's words have to be placed. Says he: "Having been ignorant of thy majesty, I took thee for a friend, and have called thee 'O Krishna, O son of Yadu, O friend'; and blinded by my affection and presumption, I have at times treated thee without respect in sport, in recreation, in repose, in thy chair, and at thy meals, in private and in public." It is such loss of memory of the highest which has to be guarded against; for, without this ever-present memory the soul will not be able to rest upon the Spirit in every moment of leisure.

The concentration which the disciple must seek is totally different from that which is made to go under that name in recent times. The quacks are a-plenty and the market of ambitious learners is rapidly expanding. Concentration is but the use of a force which like any other can be drawn upon for good or evil ends. There is a craze to acquire it to secure personal advancement and to obtain dominance over the destinies of other men. The student of Theosophy is warned against practising concentration for ignoble and for personal ends. As one who tries to put the interest of others above his own, he is expected to acquire steadiness of mind and accumulate reserves of power. These he must acquire so that he becomes the better equipped to serve humanity. His efforts at concentration must revolve round the desire to make Theosophy a living power which can work through his life force. In concentration, he must find that potency which will enable him to build up a vast brotherly love which cuts across the barriers of race, caste, creed and colour. He has to gather in himself vast stores of energy

which will ultimately give him the strength to bestow labour unselfishly upon humanity, upon all men, whether good or bad. To attain such a high objective, he has to convert himself from the man ravaged by desires into an impersonal force for good. He trains himself to use his senses and organs of action for such efforts as shall benefit mankind in the mass. It therefore follows that when such an aspirant sits for the practice of concentration he strives to make himself completely forgetful of his personal self. So doing, he becomes the better equipped to saturate himself with that sincere quality of altruism that knows no barriers and is free from all limits.

Granted that the student has this noble objective, how does he plan to proceed, what knowledge does he seek, what powers does he covet?

Concentration has to become a way of life, an intimate attribute of the waking man. Yet, for him who would like to be inducted into it gradually the best exercise is that of reviewing the walk of himself as a personal man throughout the preceding twenty-four hours. Did Theosophy walk with him the thorny paths of discipline? Did it form the back-drop to his plans, his successes and his failures? Picking up each event, he has to scrutinize it as though from the throne of the Most High. Did the ideal of a universal brotherhood of humanity peep through his dealings with men? Did he show indifference to his own sufferings and bear his soul in peace even when personal injustice was meted out to him by cruel hands? Did he seek out him who sat starving for the word of wisdom and give to him the benign protection of a living LAW? Was he charitable to the weaknesses of others? Did he attend to his duties — not at all, indifferently, or with assiduity born of devotion? Did he help lame dogs over stiles? Did he step aside so that thus the advance of another was assured? Each event has to be seen in retrospect and from each has to be extracted its lesson for the living of the life. To each act, for each reaction, the following five norms could be applied: Did it evoke in me that charity which is the manifestation of love immortal? Did it synthesize the unity of thought, word and act? Did it go to build up reserves of that calmness which would remain unshaken through all experiences? Was boldness to the fore — the boldness that comes of an awakened soul? Was a divine indifference to pleasure and to pain effectively maintained at all levels? And whether the answer be “yes” or “no” the effort of concentration builds up in memory the images of what should have been the ideal movement of the soul at the time when it stands allied to its parent.

All this in the retrospect — the casting up of credits and debits, the assimilation of experience, the generating of a knowledge to meet similar situations in the future. The exercise marks the closing of a twenty-four hour day. But there is yet another exercise where imagination is called upon to play a very important part in the life of the man. The Soul has, at the start of the day, to cast its vision forth on flesh, to foresee and to plan its mind-painted images for the morrow. What duties have to be performed? What shall be his attitude at performance time? Whom is he likely to meet? Is there a possibility of his having to listen to slander? If so, how will he comport himself? Can he bring someone on to the right path? If there is a chance that another will be unjustly attacked in his presence, how shall he go to his defence and yet preserve the image of respectability, decency and good behaviour? If calamitous circumstances are likely to arise, how will he control his reactions, how turn the circumstance so as to trample a vice or help a merit grow — in himself and in others? A half-hour dedicated to such work tends to grow and grow till each moment of leisure comes to be spent in the close nearness of the man's personality to his inner light.

Like a good artisan, the man of concentration selects and arranges his tools for the effort to be undertaken. The sculptor, the painter and the artist invoke their muse; why not therefore he who sculpts and paints with life for his creations? This is exactly what he is expected to do with the power of concentration after centring himself in the true Self. His is the privilege and the responsibility to create and project on to this plane the images that his soul builds — pictures of deeds well done and of days and nights spent in holy striving.

HERE is advice given by many Adepts: every day and as often as you can, and on going to sleep and as you wake, think, think, think, on the truth that you are not body, brain, or astral man, but that you are THAT, and "THAT" is the Supreme Soul. For by this practice you will gradually kill the false notion which lurks inside that the false is the true, and the true is the false.

—W. Q. JUDGE

STUDIES IN MAGIC

VIII. — ORACLES AND VISIONS

Imagination is a potent help in every event of our lives. Imagination acts on Faith, and both are the draughtsmen who prepare the sketches for *Will* to engrave, more or less deeply, on the rocks of obstacles and opposition with which the path of life is strewn.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

OF no other nation in antiquity do we possess so much knowledge concerning the treatment of disease in the Temples, as of Egypt, where the adept-priests knew how to awaken that inward voice in man, with which usually he himself is not acquainted, and which was regarded as a direct gift of the gods. There, this voice was universally used for the cure of diseases and for other purposes, but at the same time the process was veiled from the eyes of the ignorant with the wise intention of preserving it from profane and evil use. In this we find the idea of the Oracles. The voice of the Oracles is in one sense an echo of the original language of mankind, which the wise knew how to call forth.

How the obtaining of oracles by the “sacred sleep” was practised in the highest antiquity is described by Madame Blavatsky in her first book, *Isis Unveiled*. She writes:

In India, this sublime lethargy is called “the sacred sleep of ***” It is an oblivion into which the subject is thrown by certain magical processes, supplemented by draughts of the juice of the *soma*. The body of the sleeper remains for several days in a condition resembling death, and by the power of the adept is purified of its earthliness and made fit to become the temporary receptacle of the brightness of the immortal Augoeides. In this state the torpid body is made to reflect the glory of the upper spheres, as a burnished mirror does the rays of the sun. The sleeper takes no note of the lapse of time, but upon awakening, after four or five days of trance, imagines he has slept but a few moments. What his lips utter he will never know; but as it is the spirit which directs them they can pronounce nothing but divine truth. For the time being the poor helpless clod is made the shrine of the sacred presence, and converted into an oracle a thousand times more infallible than the asphyxiated Pythoness of Delphi; and, unlike her mantic frenzy, which was exhibited before the multi-

tude, this holy sleep is witnessed only within the sacred precinct by those few of the adepts who are worthy to stand in the presence of the ADONAI.

Before one is worthy to be "the mouthpiece of heaven," one has to be very pure. Bulwer-Lytton, in *Zanoni*, describes the invocation of his own Augoeides by the purified adept, and there he gives us to understand that the slightest touch of mortal passion unfits the hierophant to hold communion with his spotless soul.

The insight into the future, the gift of prediction, is not strange to human nature; yet there is one which is sickly and false, as well as one which is healthy and truthful. That is healthy which was peculiar to the early ages, and even now appears occasionally in good and pure men in moments of inspiration. Those predictions which approach the nature of oracles have degenerated into the sickly kind. How healthy inspiration degenerated into diseased insanity is explained by Schubert thus:

We find on all hands that that state of wild inspiration in which futurity dimly reveals itself was produced by violence, the direst of which was the shedding of human blood. . . . The more ancient, better heathenism, shrinking from all spilling of blood, alone made itself worthy, by abstinence and pious innocence, of the revelations of higher nature, and in this manner obtained glimpses of its secrets. When, however, the gates of nature's sanctum were closed to the gradually ripening human mind, it sought in an inhuman manner to find another road through the gates of death and terror, and over bleeding and mangled corpses. In vain; the former sun did not rise, and there was only a faint light in the vault of the former nature.

Describing natural soothsaying as "that which does not take place from supposition, observations, or well known signs," Cicero states that it arises from an inner state and activity of the mind, in which men are enabled to foretell future events "by an unfettered advance of the soul." This is possible "in dreams, in madness, and also in minds of great constitutional purity." He observes:

Of this description are the oracles — not such as are grounded on augurial sign, but those which arise from an inner and a divine source. If we laugh at predictions drawn from the sacrifice of animals as folly, if we turn to ridicule the Babylonians and the Caucasians, who believe in celestial signs, and who observe the number and course of the stars, if we condemn all this for their

superstition and folly, which as they maintain is founded upon the experience of fifty centuries and a half — let us in that case also call the belief of ages imposture; let us burn our records, and say that everything was but imagination! But is the history of Greece a lie, when Apollo foretold the future through the oracles of the Lacedaemonians, of the Corinthians? I will leave all else as it is; but this I must defend, that the gods influence and care for all human affairs. The Delphic oracle would never have become so celebrated, nor so overwhelmed by presents from every king and every nation, if every age had not experienced the truth of its predictions. Or has its fame departed? The power of the earth which moved the soul of the Pythia with its divine breath may have vanished through age, as rivers are dried up or take other courses; but the fact is there and always will be, unless we overturn history itself.

That men often foretell events shortly before their death is one of the earliest experiences. Homer was well acquainted with this: for the dying Hector foretold the approaching death of Achilles. When Calanus ascended the burning funeral pile, and Alexander asked him if he were in need of anything, he replied, "Nothing! the day after tomorrow I shall see you"; which was verified by subsequent events.

To natural soothsaying belongs second sight. As in sleep-walking an inner activity arises during sleep, in second sight does a dream state appear, when awake, connected with an increased keenness of the senses. Visions, sounds, and even sensations of taste and odour, are experienced, and future and distant things foretold. It is as if a portion of far-off space and time were placed before the seer as a perfect and living picture: for instance, deaths, the arrival of persons who may be hundreds of miles distant, events occurring at other places, etc. The language used in second-sight is often symbolic, and experience alone may be able to unravel its meaning.

Van Helmont describes clairvoyance as a direct sight of the soul, and believes this to have been the original state of man before the "Fall"; that now, however, it is cramped on all sides by the body, and has transferred its duties to its handmaidens, the senses. After death, however, the soul regains its former clear-sightedness, when it is no longer compelled to understand from conclusions drawn, but *now* and *here* will include all things, and memory and reflection will be unnecessary. The soul will then contemplate truth without striving and difficulty.

Drugs and narcotics, too, form part of the paraphernalia of the psychic, ecstatic mood. Some priests and oracles of old had visions under the influence of gases and vapours. The most violent convulsions were even then connected with somnambulism, as in the case of the priestess of Apollo at Delphi. Incense and the bewildering dances of the Turkish dervishes also produce dizziness and prophetic visions similar to those observed in the priests of antiquity — in the Sabaism of the Canaanites in the service of Baal, in the Indian worship of Kali, in the Phoenician Moloch, in the Bacchanalian festivals of the Greeks and Romans, and more recently among the Lapps and Finns. "In this case," says Passavant,

it is not the peaceful light which flows calmly from the soul, but lightning flashing forth from within. Where, however, in men impure in mind and spiritually evil, the deeper powers are aroused, such blackness may seize upon the roots of the mind, and such terrible moral abysses present themselves, that men under the restraints (of social laws) could scarcely have imagined them possible.

Apollonius, whose philosophy is purely Platonic and Pythagorean, believed that all comes from God, or the Divine Principle. Our soul is a portion of the Divine and is separated from It by matter, but may regain the divine power of performing wonders as soon as it is purified from the dross of matter and becomes again filled with the original in-born radiance. In his own words:

My mode of life is very different from that of other people; I take very little food, and this, like a secret remedy, maintains my senses fresh and unimpaired, as it keeps everything that is dark from them, so that I can see the present and future as it were in a clear mirror. The sage need not wait for the vapours of the earth, and corruption of the air, to foresee.... This mode of life produces such an acuteness of the senses, or some other powers, that the greatest and most remarkable things may be performed.

Acute and far-seeing investigators of antiquity recognize the conditions of the magical state as natural appearances, so that they regard the prediction of future events, and seeing at a distance, as rare developments of the inward ability of the human soul, but at the same time as a natural phenomenon of the same.

Commenting on the belief that souls separated from the body alone can look into the future, Lamprias says:

If the unembodied souls are, according to Hesiod's opinion, daemons [guardian spirits, or the immortal, incorruptible part of the man], holy inhabitants of the earth and guardians of mortal men, why should we seek to deprive those souls which are still in the body of that power, by which the former know future events, and are able to announce them? It is not probable that the soul gains a new power of prophesy after separation from the body, and which it before did not possess. We may rather conclude that it possessed all its powers during its union with the body, although in a lesser perfection. Some of these are imperceptible and hidden, or dull and weak; others again are as if seen in vapour or moving in water, indolent and without activity, and require a careful tending and restoration of their proper state, as well as a thorough clearing and purification of all that which obstructs their exercise. For as the sun does not shine only when it passes from among the clouds, but has always been radiant and has only appeared dim and obscured by vapours, the soul does not only receive the power of looking into futurity when it passes from the body as from a cloud, but has possessed it always, though dimmed by connection with the earthly. . . .

Weak, dull, or imperceptible as these powers implanted in the soul may be, yet it sometimes happens, that one or another, as it were, buds forth and is exercised in dreams and in the mysteries, either because the body is then purified and obtains the necessary disposition, or because it possesses the power of reflection, and can occupy itself with futurity, depending upon the imagination and not upon reason, now that it is free from and unfettered by the present. Euripides certainly says: he who makes a good guess is the best soothsayer; but he errs, for he only is a shrewd man who follows the guidance of his reason and the rules of probability. The power of prediction, on the contrary, is in itself, like an uninscribed tablet, without reasoning or destination, but yet capable of certain imagination and presentiment, and reaches futurity without the conclusions of reason; but especially when the soul is entirely separated from the present.

The highest step in the system of visions is ecstasy — a removal from the world of the senses, so that the subject of the visions remains in a purely internal world, mostly without external participation. In ecstasy, the imagination is heightened to such a degree that the body either appears dead, or is cataleptic, and insensible to all outward excitement. The mind, however, beholds distant and future events. The

abstraction of the truly inspired, however, is not to be mistaken for the convulsive prophesyings of the untrained seer or those self-mortifying mountebanks who vibrate between madness and bigotry. Poets, artists and mystics are often thrown into an ecstatic state by very slight causes. Those ideas which float so constantly around them, form their world of the spirit, and the real world, on the other hand, is to them but a field on which the invisible ideas are reflected, or they carry its impressions with them to the realms of the mind. As Cicero emphasizes:

In the inner recesses of the mind is divine prophecy hidden and confined, as the soul, without reference to the body, may be moved by a divine impulse, which when it burns more vividly is called madness (*furor*).

“Without this madness,” Democritus maintains, “there can be no poet.” As Plato states:

Every power of the mind may be violently excited if the soul itself is not disturbed. As regards very pure minds it is no wonder that they are acquainted with future things, as they are more divine in their nature.

It is stated of the painter Angelico da Fiesole that he often fell into ecstatic states while painting, and had in them ideal visions, and Michael Angelo says of a picture painted by him that “No man could have created such a picture without having seen the original.” Blake, too, often fell into ecstatic states.

In a state of ecstasy, it is possible for the divine essence to be communicated to the higher spiritual self. Plotinus defined real ecstasy as “the liberation of the mind from its finite consciousness, becoming one and identified with the infinite.” This, says Madame Blavatsky, citing Dr. Alexander Wilder, “is the highest condition, but not one of permanent duration, and it is reached only by the very *very* few.” She adds:

It is, indeed, identical with that state which is known in India as *Samadhi*. The latter is practised by the Yogis, who facilitate it physically by the greatest abstinence in food and drink, and mentally by an incessant endeavour to purify and elevate the mind.

It can therefore easily be understood that among the hermits and saints, such as those of India, in secluded forests and caves, as well as

among persons who have been brought up with every thought studiously turned from the outer world, ecstatic states should arise, in which men experienced bliss, from the fact that no limits bounded them and no foreign influences prevented the mind from floating in the unbounded spheres of the imagination. Neither need one feel surprise when seers of a less elevated nature are able to look far into the future, or present ideas in striking imagery, which they could not have learned from the outside world; for they rise from the inexhaustible, overflowing inner spring of the spiritual universe, as the noblest germs of thought are unfolded in repose and seclusion, but are retarded by the whirl and restlessness of the surrounding world. In this connection, the advice given by Abbot Simeon to the Quietists who inhabited Mount Athos in the fourteenth century is of interest:

Sitting alone in a corner, observe and practise what I tell you; lock your doors, and raise your mind from every vain and worldly thing. Then sink your beard upon your breast and fix your eyes on the centre of the body — on the navel; contract the air-passages that breathing may be impeded; strive internally to find the position of the heart where all mental powers reside. At first you will discover only darkness and unyielding density; but if you persevere night and day, you will miraculously enjoy unspeakable happiness. For the soul then perceives that which it never before saw — the radiance between the heart and itself.

Ennemoser in his *History of Magic* explains the difference between the lower order of visions and the true inspiration of the holy seers and prophets — those inspired by their Inner God, which is their Higher Self:

The motives are as different in each as the actions. In the magic ecstasy and the religious fanaticism of the self-torturers, the visions and the imagined communication with God take place by chance, or through artificial agencies; but in the real prophets and true saints the divine mission falls unexpectedly upon them from above. A self-arrogated excellence and self-sufficiency are the mainsprings of the former; it exists in seclusion, darkness, and solitude; it renounces every social bond of life, and every endeavour to cultivate the mind. In the latter, reign, on the contrary, humility, pleasure in light and life, with the impulse to work openly and actively. No division of stations takes place, but every power is united to form a common whole; the prophet preaches the word of God and the belief in His power; the reward and

punishment for good and evil deeds; and the love of God and our neighbours, is his open admonition. If in the former, pride in self, and contempt, or, at least, but small esteem for the world, is to be found, with the continual striving for a perfect apathy of the passions, so may we observe in the latter a wise use of life, a joyful peace in the service of God. . . . The true prophet is a child in humility, a youth in action, and a man in counsel. The world is often a hell to the ecstasist; but to the saint, a school, where duties are learned. There, the means of producing ecstasy are contempt and renunciation of the world, and unnatural mortification of the body; here, the world is arranged for enjoyment of life; and the true prophet makes use of no artificial means. . . .

The visions of the former are not always to be relied upon, neither are they always understood. In the prophets, visions are the reflection and illumination of a divine gentle radiance on the mirror of their pure soul, which retains its whole individuality, and never forgets its perfect dependence and connection with God and the outer world. The contents of these visions are the common circumstances of life — religious as well as civil; the words are teachings of truth, given clearly and intelligibly to all men and ages. The prophet neither seeks nor finds happiness in the state of ecstasy, but, in his divine vocation, in the instructing and active working among his brethren. . . .

To instruct his neighbours in the divine knowledge — to spread the perception of truth and love among his fellow-men, is his one desire; he is therefore an unwearied and victorious antagonist to evil and wickedness. He seeks not anything worldly — selfishness, the passions, ambition, health, are disregarded by him. He preaches the future, not the present happiness of all, and travels on, a mediator between God and man, gloriously radiant in word and deed. He does not seek seclusion, does not lose himself in visions and phantasies, prophesies nothing grievous, but great and universal truths to ages and nations. Armed with divine powers, he is able to perform miracles, as well upon himself as upon others. Comfort, peace of mind in suffering and trial, warnings against great dangers, the healing of grievous sickness, help in want and persecution, are his glorious powers; and to elevate mankind is the object of his strivings.

THE PATH OF THE THEOSOPHIST

THEOSOPHY, as a synthesis of religion, philosophy and science, is comprehensive, wide and deep, and brings its message of help and inspiration to all people, young or old, poor or rich, physically, morally, intellectually and spiritually, with its keynote of the brotherhood of man. It raises us all to the level of learners with our eyes fixed on those great Masters of Wisdom who from behind the veil of matter instruct and guide and inspire, and lead us out of the encircling gloom of matter into the light of Their world of Spirit. To reach Them it is necessary for us to remember that all of us are learners as well as teachers, learning from those who know more, teaching to those who happen to know a little less than ourselves at the present moment in any particular field of knowledge. The best of Theosophists is but a pupil-teacher, and therefore what he says must be regarded as coming from one student to another, from one learner to other co-learners. Elders there are, Teachers there are, but they have remained from the early days of H.P.B. down to the present moment mostly unknown, unrecognized by the great majority. We are inquirers, seekers of the Wisdom, and the quest is successful only in proportion as we follow the ancient method of learning things, not by the power of mind or by the power of works, but by the power of life. From that point of view Theosophy is deeper, wider, loftier than any Theosophical programme drawn up in any age, in any clime of the world.

The inquirer has to turn into the student, and the student into the Theosophist who embodies the Wisdom in his life, makes that Wisdom part and parcel of his daily existence, and manifests it in thought, word and action, not only in his connection with any particular Lodge or Theosophical work, but year in and year out, month by month, week by week, day by day, hour by hour. Therefore the great task of students of Theosophy is so to mould their lives that they become men and women different from the ordinary men and women of the world. Little use for us is that Wisdom if not embodied in our lives, so that it illuminates our heads, purifies our hearts, elevates our lower natures, and makes greater and more helpful the service of our hands. Unless it brings an inner equipoise in life, a harmony within, Theosophy has not gone very deep with us, it is but a surface influence, and we are only "marking time."

Our great aim and task ought to be the transforming of ourselves,

the altering of our own constitution by the gaining of a new point of view, the obtaining of a new attitude towards life. We must not ascribe to Theosophy the ordinary position of a formal creed, for Theosophy is not something which ought to be believed in; it is something which ought to be *known*. Theosophy is not even only a matter of intellectual recognition; it is fundamentally a matter of spiritual realization, and spiritual realization demands effort; it means endeavour to make ourselves Theosophists so that the power of Theosophy manifests itself in our lives. This is very different from the ideal that sometimes we put before ourselves, of doing some good work in one place or some Theosophical service in another. Higher altruism has little to do with service that does not connect itself with life; it demands daily expression in the environment in which we find ourselves. Adjusting that environment by the power that comes from Theosophy to our hands, illuminating everything by the knowledge that comes through Theosophy to our minds, purifying everything by the spirit of Theosophy that comes to our hearts, that should be the outstanding thought; as students of Theosophy, by pursuing a definite plan of life, we should change ourselves from the dead men and women that we are to the *living* men and women that we ought to be — that is our task. How are we going to achieve it?

First, by a programme of life which is laid down by the illumination that comes from knowledge. Knowledge first; for ignorance is the root cause of all evils, all crimes, and the elimination of ignorance from our own lives by the power of Knowledge is our first great task; for, if we do not *know*, we cannot purify ourselves. We must know our strong points and our weaknesses, our place in evolution, the capacities which we have and the faculties which we are going to possess. The study of man's own nature, his evolution from the past to the future and his present place in it — all these are subjects for investigation, and the study of Theosophy therefore occupies a prominent position in our programme. We cannot serve others by remaining ignorant; we can help them only by our knowledge, and the right kind of service we are able to give to the world in different spheres and through different grades of activity comes to us from the knowledge which we possess. It is no use to teach the world just what might be called the "jargon" of Theosophy; our teachings ought to be applied. Rounds, cycles, planetary chains, are indeed subjects for study, but not of propaganda. Their study, as also the study of our own spiritual, intellectual and physical

pedigree, is necessary for understanding the problems of the world of today and for offering solutions. We shall not be able to help ordinary humanity, or understand the great artists, religionists or mystics, unless we have the *key* which the knowledge of Theosophy brings us. Therefore it is essential that the knowledge shall become part and parcel of our very consciousness, for not only the gathering of knowledge but its assimilation is essential, so that Wisdom of the soul shall illumine the mind.

We shall not be able to appreciate or absorb the great body of truth which has come to us as Theosophy unless we attend to our own mind and heart. To really understand Theosophy we need a controlled and purified mind. Meditation and study are the two wings on which the bird of spiritual life can ascend into the heavenly regions. The ethics of Theosophy are even more important than are its intellectual principles. Some may say: "It is not necessary for me to be pure in heart," but we shall not be able to realize Theosophy unless we have not only a well-filled head, but also a pure heart, and therefore the ethics of Theosophy should be practised daily. We work in a quaint way sometimes with our psychic tendencies. There is a lower way in which we arouse and excite our psychic nature, but there is a higher and nobler way in which psychic *culture* is obtained. The lower way deals with what are called the ordinary psychic powers — to see colours, to hear sounds, to travel in the astral world, to be clairvoyant or clairaudient, to be "invisible helpers," but that is the way which no great teacher of Atma-Vidya has ever advocated in the past or the present. The Path is indicated in *The Voice of the Silence*, in *Light on the Path*, in the ancient books, the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Upanishads. The Path is everywhere the same. Just as you cannot get love out of hate, so you cannot get spirituality out of psychism; you cannot get saintly life out of an impure nature. Now the purity of the spiritual life as lived by a Theosophist is more far-reaching and profound than the purity of the ordinary religious man of the world. Purity in all forms, not only cleanliness of body but also of speech, not only cleanliness of mind but also of feelings, and the control of senses and the sense-organs. Purity at every turn is the fundamental basis of life, for it is purity which enables us to live the life of brotherhood. We ought to understand the relationship between purity and brotherhood.

Over and over again in all spiritual movements the battle has been fought around the idea of purity. There can be no compromise between

that which is impure and that which is pure. And we must not think that, because we condemn impurity, therefore we must cease helping our brothers who are impure; we must make the distinction between the criminal and his crime, between the sinner and his sin. By all means condemn the sin, by all means condemn the crime, but the criminal and the sinner are our brothers; their sin and their shame are our sin and our shame. How are we going to help them? First, by recognizing that sin and crime *are* sin and crime. Let us not try to explain them away; let us not try to make compromises with them. We cannot make wrong right, either by explanation or interpretation. The way in which we should give help is by living our lives purely; then, because we are pure, and embody in ourselves certain qualities of purity, all the members of the human race whom we contact share our purity. The recognition of the brotherhood of humanity requires that no distinction be made as to race, creed, caste, sex or colour, but the spiritual Brotherhood will come about by men and women living the purity of the spiritual world, which is higher and altogether different from the purity of the ordinary men and women of the world. He who is pure will recognize what is impure and must help him or her who manifests impurity, according to his or her stage of evolution. If we want to establish universal brotherhood we cannot place outside that brotherhood the sinners and criminals of the world. If a person is impure we will not remove his impurity by simply saying, "He is impure," nor can we do it by preaching to him, but we can remove his impurity if we keep alive in ourselves all the ideals of purity. Purity as a high ideal, to be embodied and thus recognized in the minds, hearts and activities of our brothers — is an inspiration. There is no other way but that of LIFE for producing spiritual results. Without that work no Theosophical body can live.

To turn to our work and activity in the world: Spiritual service of the race is related, not to set programmes, but to life itself, the life which says, "I am going to perform my Dharma, I am going to express my innate spiritual nature in the place in which Karma has placed me." The fulfilment of congenital duties, the duties with which we are born — that is what we must adhere to. Let us sanctify and spiritualize that which is our environment.

Let us not try to impose what we have gained from the teachings of Theosophy upon others. Let us try to measure the strength of the people with whom we come in contact. Let us remember that they too

are unfolding gods and try to help them to take the next step in advance, which is to enable them to live spiritually. But we must remember that what may mean spiritual life for some people is not the spiritual life for others. Discrimination in rendering Theosophical service is a *sine qua non*. We may go to religious congregations, political parties, philosophical societies, etc., and speak the eloquent word or render helpful service, but if we *live Theosophy* — that is the real kind of help. And whether we be politicians, religionists, artists, economists, or anything else, living our principles day by day, so that our life speaks rather than our lips, we shall find that life is more eloquent than words and produces farther reaching results. What is needed is the power of inspiration that comes from life, and therefore we must light the flame of Spirit in our own hearts. How shall we light it? Where is the source from which we shall ignite the flame? Those who are the great Masters of Wisdom — from that great source we get our opportunity of lighting our own light in our own hearts. To follow Them in the process of living, to copy Their great example in our own small petty lives — that is what is needed.

Make the Masters *real*. They are living human beings embodying wisdom, embodying compassion, pillars of light! Miraculous might be called Their Luminosity that They cast no shadows of ignorance or evil. Do not try to meet those great spiritual entities in the physical world, do not try to see Them in the astral world, do not try to contact Them by the power of the lower mind. Think of Them, but by the power of Life, which flows from Their Lotus Feet. Try to embody that power, to match that force. If we take one step towards Them They will take one towards us, for They love us who belong to this orphan humanity. We should try to be Their messengers — *by life*, and if our life cannot speak, then our words will not avail. The god within must speak the language of Life. It is that inner god that the Masters teach; it is to that inner god that Their blessings come — neither to the body, nor to the mind. That inner god manifests the power not to *rule* others, but to *help* others. Wisdom of the Masters enables us to understand all and therefore to love all. We need to make the Masters real in our everyday existence by the power of universal Love. The great inspiration that we need is to work with the power of the god within, the Inner Ruler; that ought to energize all our labours, even the very smallest actions — the signing of a letter, the keeping of the accounts, the work behind the counter of the shop, at

the desk in the office, at home, at the club; for the Inner Ruler can manifest himself everywhere and at all times. Says *The Voice of the Silence*: "Of teachers there are many; the MASTER-SOUL is one, Alaya, the Universal Soul." But the book regrets: "Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them!" To be full of Alaya's power is to be incarnated. To manifest that power in action day by day so that everything becomes sacred — that is the great task which lies before us. This is the Path for the Theosophist; all other paths lead us astray. The Path of the Inner Ruler, fearless, self-reliant, is the Path of the Masters of Theosophy, difficult to tread, hard to climb, but the easier roads of ritualistic prayer, of worship of personalities, of other-dependence lead to misery. Learn the Law of Manu — "Self-dependence alone is Bliss."

IN all things it is better to hope than to despair.

Men are so constituted that everyone undertakes what he sees another successful in, whether he has aptitude for it or not.

Those who hope for no other life are dead even for this.

In the works of man as in those of nature, it is the intention which is chiefly worth studying.

Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.

What is not fully understood is not possessed.

Nature knows no pause in progress and development, and attaches her curse on all inaction.

—GOETHE

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

In the January *National Geographic*, Samuel W. Matthews reports on dramatic new discoveries about "This Changing Earth." Scientists who study the earth have within the past few years come to "a startling new understanding of the shifting, shuddering, hot-hearted planet on which we ride":

Their new view of the earth is of continents drifting majestically from place to place, of mountains and island chains forming like rumples in rugs pushed together, of oceans opening and closing.

The earth's seemingly rigid crust, these geologists say, actually consists of a crazy quilt of great rafts, or "plates," that are much like huge ice floes jostling about on a frozen sea. From 30 to 100 miles thick, the plates slowly move, carrying the continents and ocean basins with them.

Sliding over a hot, semiplastic layer below, the rigid plates grind and crush together, causing earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. They crack, usually in the ocean basins where they are thinnest, and the pieces move apart. In the cracks molten rock wells up and solidifies, like new ice forming. Along other edges the plates are just as steadily destroyed. They bend downward, forming the deep oceanic trenches, and slide beneath an opposing plate or edge of a continent to be consumed within earth's interior.

Teaching of geology is being totally revised on the basis of this sweeping revolution in understanding of the earth. "It is as if we have been walking the deck of a ship, eyes down to study the deck, and have never looked up to see that the ship itself was moving," according to a noted Canadian geologist, Professor J. Tuzo Wilson of the University of Toronto.

Geographers had noticed long ago that the continents—Africa and South America in particular—would fit together like a jigsaw puzzle, if only they could be moved. During the past decade, new and sophisticated instruments, some developed to sound the sea-floors, others to record earthquake waves, have brought to light that through the rifts in the ocean floor the very stuff of earth's interior was welling up to form new crust, solidifying and moving outward, and that the sea floors were spreading, carrying or pushing the continents ahead of them.

Further evidence of continental drift came from the compass.

Earth's magnetic field — the lines of magnetic force running between north and south poles — influences the magnetism of rock as it cools from molten form or accumulates as sediment on the floors of lakes and seas. Rock layers formed in past geologic ages keep permanent records of the direction to the magnetic poles at the time. As measured on different continents, however, rocks of the same age seemed to point to poles in different places. Investigators believe that the problem could be solved only by assuming the continents themselves had moved. One investigating British team demonstrated continental drift by matching pole positions. The poles as recorded in England's rocks, for example, could be precisely matched to North America's by closing up the Atlantic.

Incidentally, paleomagnetism, as the science is called, has brought to light that the earth's magnetic field has reversed, flip-flopped north and south, many times — “at least 171 times in the past 76 million years.”

It occurred to investigators that if new crustal rock was indeed cooling and solidifying at the ocean rifts and spreading outward, a record of the magnetic flip-flops would lie there in the ocean floor; and so it proved. Sea-bottom magnetism revealed to oceanographers how fast the sea floor was spreading. Other evidence also piled up — *e.g.*, the discovery of fossil fragments of land creatures found in Antarctica that were identical to those known to have lived in Africa, India and China millions of years ago, going to show that these lands were once part of a single continent. The most convincing evidence of all came home in mud and rock drilled from the floors of the world's oceans by a drill ship named *Glomar Challenger*. After several drillings the ship proved that the sea floor was spreading; the Atlantic Ocean was indeed growing wider.

Geologists believe that some 200 million years ago the land areas formed a single supercontinent — Pangaea, meaning “all lands” — washed by only one ocean, Panthalassa, “all seas.” “The new data,” says the *National Geographic* article, “make it possible to date when various parts of Pangaea split and began moving apart”:

North America and Africa separated 180 to 200 million years ago. A rift between Africa and South America appeared about 135 million years ago. Finally, North America parted company with Europe only about 80 million years ago. . . .

Wegener's single great protocontinent split first into two blocks. . . .

In the north was Laurasia, consisting of the ancient landmass of North America (called Laurentia) plus Europe and Asia. In the south was Gondwanaland, or Gondwana (named for a geologic region of India), made up of Africa, South America, Antarctica, Australia, and India, which then lay far south of Asia. The Tethys Sea, an arm of the great ocean Panthalassa, extended westward between them.

Then South America began sliding westward. Africa parted from Antarctica. India broke free and sailed 5,000 miles north. It collided with Asia only some forty million years ago. The collision uplifted the high Tibetan Plateau and raised the Himalayas. . . .

While the Atlantic and Indian Oceans opened, the Pacific shrank. The Americas slid west, the huge Eurasian block and Australia drifted east. The Pacific's floor, meanwhile, was being consumed in the great trenches around its rim. At the same time new sea-floor rock was welling up and solidifying along a mid-ocean rift. . . .

The sea floor spreads, the plates move, the earth's rigid crust is created and destroyed. What unimaginably great force drives this system? What causes the globe to shudder and shift, continents to move? Geologists with the deepest involvement in this field are the first to admit they do not know. The motive power of the new "global tectonics" is still its greatest mystery. . . . Whatever the forces, they are beyond man's control, and perhaps his full comprehension. They are also so slow as to be almost unfelt over any man's life-span, or even that of man on earth. . . .

Scientists continue their search for the oldest rocks of earth's crust, and for clues to what may have happened not just millions but billions of years ago. In a new six-year international effort called the Geodynamics Project . . . they will study the slow drift of plates and its effects in mountain building, earthquakes, and volcanoes. They will look for the driving mechanism, the "engine" that moves entire continents and creates oceans.

The search has been called the greatest jigsaw puzzle ever put together, a new game of chess played on a spherical board. It certainly fulfils the ancient Chinese maxim, embodied in the *I Ching*, that the one constant certainty in the world is change.

"It is absolutely *false*, and but an additional demonstration of the conceit of our age," says *The Secret Doctrine*, "to assert (as men of science do) that all the great geological changes and terrible convulsions have been produced *by ordinary and known physical forces*."

For these forces were but the tools and final means for the accomplishment of certain purposes, acting periodically, and apparently mechanically, through an inward impulse mixed up with, but beyond their material nature. There is a purpose in every important act of Nature, whose acts are all cyclic and periodical. But spiritual Forces having been usually confused with the purely physical, the former are denied by, and therefore, have to remain unknown to Science, because left unexamined. (I. 640)

Scientists are now admitting that a panoramic review of one's life does indeed flash before a person suddenly exposed to the threat of death. Dr. Russell Noyes Jr., a University of Iowa psychiatrist, has collected clinical and autobiographical accounts of what the persons concerned had believed were their final moments in the dying process. (*Science Digest*, January 1973)

Dr. Noyes reports:

Usually vivid scenes of some or many of the events of his life flash through his mind in rapid succession. Typically, the memories are accompanied by pleasurable emotions. . . . Thus, as seems natural, life arises to a sharper focus and is clung to as more precious just at the moment it is about to be lost.

Among the accounts Dr. Noyes gives is that of a nurse who suffered an allergic shock reaction to penicillin and witnessed in rapid succession a great many scenes from her life, beginning with early childhood. Mountain climbers who had survived a precipitous fall that seemed fatal had fleeting life reviews during the downward plunge. Dr. Noyes quotes a description by Albert Heim, a Zurich geology professor, of what happened when he fell helplessly from a cliff:

I could perhaps compare the clear flashes of thought best to images from a film sprung loose in a projector or to the rapid sequence of dream images. . . . I acted out my life as though I were an actor on a stage upon which I looked down from the highest gallery in the theatre. . . .

After the life review phase comes a final phase of "transcendence," which Dr. Noyes describes as rising above time and space and above common thought and ideas. Psychoanalyst Carl G. Jung who had been very near death after a heart attack and saw himself, as it were, floating away from earth bathed in a glorious light, has gone on record:

It is impossible to convey the beauty and intensity of emotion during these visions. They were the most tremendous things I have ever experienced... I can describe the experience only as ecstacy of a contemporal state in which the present, past and future are one...

Dr. Noyes points out that

Just as usual feats of physical strength are reported by persons exposed to extreme danger, so a tremendous speeding and apparent sharpening of mental activity may occur as well. The upsurge of life-saving energy is countered by a powerful urge to surrender. At the point of surrender fear subsides, and a feeling of tranquillity, often profound, develops. With the end of uncertainty, anxiety falls away and the event of death itself is faced with calm.

Occultism traces all such remembrances in the dying to the thought-power of the *individual*, instead of to that of the personal (lower) Ego. "While records of even important events are often obliterated from our memory," says H. P. Blavatsky, "not the most trifling action of our lives can disappear from the Soul's memory, because it is no MEMORY for it, but an ever-present reality on the plane which lies outside our conceptions of space and time" ("Memory in the Dying": *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 25*). Thus, while physical memory in a healthy living man is often obscured, one fact crowding out another weaker one, at the moment of the great change that man calls death that which we call "memory" seems to return to us in all its vigour and freshness. For however brief a period, our two states of consciousness, the higher and the lower, blend together, and the dying person finds himself on a plane where there is neither past nor future, but all is one present.

That so-called intelligence scores, which have been made much of, have little to do with a person's life or accomplishments, is the conclusion arrived at by Harvard researchers Mary Jo Bane and Christopher Jencks, in their article "Five Myths About Your IQ" (*Harper's Magazine*, February 1973). Those who do well on IQ and achievement tests do not perform much better than average in most jobs; nor do they earn much more than the average. (An intelligence quotient is computed by ascertaining a person's mental age on the basis of a

standardized intelligence test, and multiplying the result by 100. That result is then divided by the person's chronological age, to yield the IQ. Thus, the average IQ of the population is 100. About one person in six has an IQ under 85, and about one in six has an IQ over 115. About one in 40 is under 70, and about one in 40 is over 130).

Children with low IQ scores have been the subject of anxious solicitude from their parents, and parents' and teachers' anxieties have been further intensified as a result of claims that IQ scores are largely determined by heredity. "If an individual's genes determine his IQ, and if IQ then determines his chances of adult success, it is a short step to the conclusion that there is nothing he can do to improve his prospects."

The controversy over IQ and achievement tests [say the authors] has become so bitter that it is almost impossible to discuss the subject rationally. Neither social scientists nor laymen seem to have much interest in the actual facts, which are extremely complex. The best currently available evidence suggests that:

IQ tests measure only one rather limited variety of intelligence, namely the kind that schools (and psychologists) value. Scores on the tests show remarkably little relationship to performance in most adult roles. People with high scores do a little better in most jobs than people with low scores, and they earn somewhat more money, but the differences are surprisingly small.

The poor are seldom poor because they have low IQ scores, low reading scores, low arithmetic scores, or bad genes. They are poor because they either cannot work, cannot find adequately paying jobs, or cannot keep such jobs. This has very little to do with their test scores.

Claims that "IQ scores are 80 per cent hereditary" appear to be greatly exaggerated. Test results depend almost as much on variations in children's environment as on variations in their genes.

While differences in the environments that children grow up in explain much of the variation in their test scores, differences in their school experiences appear to play a relatively minor role. But even socioeconomic background has a quite modest impact on test scores. Many factors that influence the scores seem to be unrelated to either school quality or parental status. At present

nobody has a clear idea what these factors are, how they work, or what we can do about them.

If school quality has a modest effect on adult test scores, and if test scores then have a modest effect on economic success, school reforms aimed at teaching basic cognitive skills are likely to have minuscule effects on students' future earning power.

Each of these conclusions contradicts a commonly accepted myth about IQ....

What does the term "intelligence" really mean? For most people, it includes all the mental abilities required to solve whatever theoretical or practical problems they happen to think important. At one moment intelligence is the ability to unravel French syntax. At another it is the intuition required to understand what ails a neurotic friend. At still another it is the capacity to anticipate future demand for hog bristles. We know from experience that these skills are only loosely related to one another. People who are "intelligent" in one context often are remarkably "stupid" in another. Thus, in weighing the value of IQ tests, one must ask exactly what *kinds* of intelligence they really measure and what kinds they do not measure.

The evidence we have reviewed suggests that IQ tests are quite good at measuring the kinds of intelligence needed to do school work. Students who do well in IQ tests are quite likely to get good grades in school. They are also likely to stay in school longer than average. But the evidence also suggests that IQ tests are *not* very good at measuring the skills required to succeed in most kinds of adult work.

Thus, so-called intelligence tests may result in the greatest injustice and harm. Human intelligence and behaviour cannot be reduced to mathematical quotients, and it is good that this is being recognized.
