

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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ROBERT CROSBIE A TEACHER OF PURE OCCULTISM

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The world's real Revelators have been few, and its pseudo-saviours legion.

—MAHATMA K. H.

IN THIS MONTH of the Summer Solstice, all Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists will be thinking of Robert Crosbie, the Founder of their organism. Each Lodge, each Study Group, each individual Associate should review the efforts of the past year, resolve on U.L.T. Day to serve the Cause better and plan for fresh work in the future.

It has been said that the world knows nothing of its greatest men; in our Theosophical Movement there have been hearts “pregnant with Celestial Fire,” minds full of loving friendship, and hands “that the rod of empire might have swayed” but which swayed in humble and often unseen service of many human souls. Such an one was Robert Crosbie, chela, true and faithful, of William Quan Judge, whose example, as a disciple of H.P.B., he copied. He learnt and lived the Discipline which Mr. Judge designated as belonging to the era of Western Occultism, which really means that Occult Way of Living which is suitable to the modern mind.

One of the results of the activities of our grand Theosophical Movement was the unifying of East and West — the Aryanizing of the West, the Westernizing of the East. It is true that the process has not been fully successful, inasmuch as each group osmosed from the other the wrong with the right. The noble philosophy of the Aryans has been assimilated by comparatively few in the Occident; students of Theosophy themselves are partly responsible for this meagre assimilation. Some leading propagandists of Theosophy — in Europe and America — after the passing of H.P.B. and W.Q.J. did not osmose the good, the true and the beautiful in Eastern Wisdom. On the other hand, influential propagandists in India did not adhere, in faith and loyalty, to the

Teachings of H.P.B. and her Masters as recorded by her in her writings. They compromised with religious superstition and orthodoxy and passed off pseudo-occultism as Theosophy. All the same the leading minds of the race, in Orient and Occident alike, have identical points of view in the political and social spheres, and also in reference to spiritual idealism and religious preferences.

For the Theosophical propagandist of the present day, who has to continue the task of bringing together in closer and more real contact souls in Oriental or Occidental bodies, there is no better programme than that embodied by Robert Crosbie in the Declaration of the United Lodge of Theosophists and the spreading broadcast of the Teachings of Divine Wisdom as recorded in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge.

Not only did Mr. Crosbie emphasize the principles and methods necessary for the service of Theosophy in this cycle. He appealed with sweet reasonableness to those who heard him, and his printed words appeal to us who are now labouring for the Cause. He said:

If we find ourselves in existence in a dark age, in a time of physical and psychological epidemics, it means that we are related to it. We should begin to see the cause in the effect, and if the effect is wrong, come out from among that kind of effects to a true basis in thought and action, while remaining with our brother pilgrims, and going through with them. Thus the Masters have done.

In other words, learning the lessons which the Esoteric Philosophy imparts, we must make our applications; the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* tell us what Deity we should contemplate upon, what Law we should respect and obey, what particular self-induced and self-devised ways and means we should adopt to further our evolution. To abandon the false ideas of science and religion and to adopt true ones is our solemn task, our duty.

Then, further, Mr. Crosbie said:

The laws and principles of existence — the true rationale of life — are presented by Theosophy; hence, each man's contact with it is alike an opportunity and a responsibility, to which he has been brought under Karma. He can make the most of it, or he may neglect it so as to fail to obtain or extend benefit. His refusal to take advantage of it now will make him less determined in some other life to carry out the purpose of his nature, which is defeated presently if he neglects, *under any circumstances or pressure*, that which he sees to be leading him in the right direction. But always there are those who will test Theosophy out in their own lives, and learn what it is, and will carry on the work to the last end. They in their good time must come to be the leaders and pioneers of humanity, which must learn, even though the learning takes centuries of suffering. If the light of pure Theosophy is kept burning clear, it will be the saving light of the whole world. That must be. But the question is, who will be the light-bearers?

Ours the solemn duty, once again, to be light-bearers. The dispelling of the darkness of ignorance is not really done by organized religions or searching sciences. The darkness of false beliefs and false knowledge has deepened, and the principles of Universal Brotherhood are remote from modern civilized life. Distance lends enchantment to the hills, verdant and beautiful; they pulsate with the message of peace and grace, and inspire people to practise brotherliness, but the call of the market-place strengthens their fear of loving and of trusting all their fellow men. It is the Knowledge of Theosophy which, proclaimed and reiterated, will increase the number of men and women who will perceive the practical value and ways of rising above all distinctions, and will acquire the habit of looking at the world as a single country and all mankind as united.

These ideas should make vibrant our U.L.T. Day [in 1975] — Wednesday, the 25th of June — if we hold them during the week, to preach them by lip and by life on that day.

THE FUNDAMENTAL STATEMENTS of the Teachers are axioms to be applied. At the same time they are woven in with such reasoning as may affect the ordinary way of thinking. Science, Psychology, and all efforts that are based on them, fail—and for no other reason than that they do not assume or admit that full and true knowledge exists. If Western Science and Psychology would go on with their painstaking efforts in the light of Theosophy, the spiritual and intellectual darkness of the world would soon be overcome and a civilization brought into being that would best express a true physical life. What hinders? Intellectual pride, together with the cramping effects of false religious conceptions. If the idea is held that there is but one life on earth, then all the learning of the man and of the age is limited to a small and narrow range. But if one grasps the idea of successive lives on earth—all under Karma—then, the learning takes on a wider sweep, leading the man to the conception that all powers of every kind proceed from the Supreme, the Self of all creatures; that he himself is in reality a spiritual being, and must think and act as such.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

THE ORIGINAL AIMS

IN *The Theosophist* for April 1880, the original Theosophical Society's general plans — which form the basis for all future Theosophical growth — were declared to be as follows:

(a) — To keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions.

(b) — To oppose and counteract — after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature — bigotry in every form, whether as an intolerant religious sectarianism or belief in miracles or anything supernatural.

(c) — To promote a feeling of brotherhood among nations; and assist in the international exchange of useful arts and products, by advice, information, and co-operation with all worthy individuals and associations; provided, however, that no benefit or percentage shall be taken by the Society for its corporate services.

(d) — To seek to obtain knowledge of all the laws of Nature, and aid in diffusing it; and especially to encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, and so termed the Occult Sciences. Popular superstition and folklore, however fantastical, when sifted, may lead to the discovery of long-lost but important secrets of Nature. The Society, therefore, aims to pursue this line of inquiry in the hope to widen the field of scientific and philosophical observation.

(e) — To gather for the Society's library and put into written form correct information upon the various ancient philosophies, traditions, and legends, and, as the Council shall decide it permissible, disseminate the same in such practicable ways as translation and publication of original works of value, and extracts from and commentaries upon the same, or the oral instructions of persons learned in their respective departments.

(f) — To promote in every practical way, in countries where needed, the spread of non-sectarian education.

(g) — Finally, and chiefly, to encourage and assist individual Fellows in self-improvement, intellectual, moral, and spiritual. But no Fellow shall put to his selfish use any knowledge communicated to him by any member of the First Section; violation of this rule being punished by expulsion. And before any such knowledge can be imparted, the person shall bind himself by a solemn oath not to use it to selfish purposes, nor to reveal it, except with the permission of the teacher.

Another phrasing of the Society's aims is to be found in the following from a Circular issued by the Founders in 1876:

The objects of the Society are various. It influences its fellows to acquire an intimate knowledge of natural law, especially its occult manifestations. As the highest development, physically and spiritually, on earth, of the Creative Cause, man should aim to solve the mystery of his being. He is the pro-

creator of his species, physically, and having inherited the nature of the unknown but palpable Cause of his own creation, must possess in his inner, psychical self, this creative power in lesser degree. He should, therefore, study to develop his latent powers, and inform himself respecting the laws of magnetism, electricity and all other forms of force, whether of the seen or unseen universes. The Society teaches and expects its fellows to personally exemplify the highest morality and religious aspiration; to oppose the materialism of science and every form of dogmatic theology, especially the Christian, which the Chiefs of the Society regard as particularly pernicious; to make known among Western nations the long-suppressed *facts* about Oriental religious philosophies, their ethics, chronology, esotericism, symbolism; to counteract, as far as possible, the efforts of missionaries to delude the so-called "Heathen" and "Pagans" as to the real origin and dogmas of Christianity and the practical effects of the latter upon public and private character in so-called civilized countries; to disseminate a knowledge of the sublime teachings of that pure esoteric system of the archaic period, which are mirrored in the oldest Vedas, and in the philosophy of Gautama Buddha, Zoroaster and Confucius; finally, and chiefly, to aid in the institution of a Brotherhood of Humanity, wherein all good and pure men, of every race, shall recognize each other as the equal effects (upon this planet) of one Uncreate, Universal, Infinite, and Everlasting Cause.

CONTRAST alone can enable us to appreciate things at their right value; and unless a judge compares notes and hears both sides he can hardly come to a correct decision. For one man to demand from another that he shall believe like himself, whether in question of religion or science, is supremely unjust and despotic. Besides, it is absurd. For it amounts to exacting that the brains of the convert, his organs of perception, his whole organization, in short, be reconstructed precisely on the model of that of his teacher, and that he shall have the same temperament and mental faculties as the other has. And why not his nose and eyes, in such a case? Mental slavery is the worst of all slaveries. It is a state over which brutal force having no real power, it always denotes either an abject cowardice or a great intellectual weakness.

The Theosophist is a journal of our Society. Each of its Fellows being left absolutely untrammelled in his opinions, and the body representing collectively nearly every creed, nationality and school of philosophy, every member has a right to claim room in the organ of his Society for the defence of his own particular creed and views. Our Society being an absolute and uncompromising *Republic of Conscience*, preconception and narrow-mindedness in science and philosophy have no room in it.

— H. P. BLAVATSKY

EQUIPPING ONESELF

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.

— *From the Declaration of the United Lodge of Theosophists*

MANY A NEW-COMER to Theosophy becomes a student — so great, so beneficial is the impact of the philosophy on receptive minds. When such a student sees the self-sacrificing service of others, he himself gets fired with the aspiration to serve. His immediate reaction is to study the philosophy in order that he, in his humble way, may spread the teachings and so help in the task of benefiting humanity. For him, the easiest approach to Theosophy is to subscribe to the three objects of the Movement, to study the Theosophical tenets and to embody as best he can the ethics of *The Voice of the Silence*. The danger he faces is that he may fall in a rut, and thus fail to perceive the opportunities for expanding his powers of service.

In the early years of the Theosophical Movement, Mr. A. P. Sinnett, who was then a devoted student-server, received a communication from one of the great Founders of the Movement drawing his attention to the fact that the recognition of the higher phases of man's being was not to be attained by mere acquirement of knowledge. Now, after nearly a century of Theosophical endeavour, there still seems to lurk among students the misconception that to become theosophists all they have to do is to acquire knowledge. Book study is thus undertaken in all earnestness and sincerity, but even after years of strenuous effort no enlightenment comes. The student finds that his studies have given him only a little headway and that in his quest of soul and spirit he has made no apparent progress. He thus finds that the enigma of nature has remained unresolved and that the possibility of conscious communion with his inner Self has not advanced beyond a theoretical assertion. To counter a lopsided development which would result from the mere gathering and hoarding of information, Mr. Sinnett was told that the knowledge of spiritual facts had to be sought by personal experience and through actual observation. Books treating of Theosophical philosophy as well as devotional readings can and do help in establishing that serenity of mind which is essential for the gathering and evaluating of experience. They are aids valuable at all times, but they are no substitutes for the personal and conscious going through of spiritual experience. The student is expected to make a personal observation of any spiritual experience that may come his way. In the vast laboratory of nature he cannot stand aloof and expect to progress through the spiritual experience and observation of another. The

effort must be entirely his. There are no short cuts to attainment.

If the student desires to advance towards a more meaningful service of humanity, then must he supplement his book learning with practices aimed at arousing his inner being to activity, and later on to power. This can be achieved in several ways, each of which has to be adopted so as to cleanse and clear his perception on planes other than the physical. Two of the ways which could be adopted with advantage are: (1) meditation and (2) the observance of silence for certain periods of time to enable nature herself to speak to him who comes to her for information. This latter method gives the student the opportunity to make his obeisance to nature and then to seek points by which the spiritual and psychic blending of himself with nature can be effected. (See the opening statement of the article "Some Words on Daily Life" in *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 22.*) Both these methods require as a *sine qua non* the government of animal passions and impulses and the inculcating of an utter unselfishness of intention. A continuous devotion to the undertaking of this discipline is bound to breed enthusiasm the moment spiritual results begin to manifest under the student's own power of observation. The effort then takes on a more purposeful study of the laws that obtain in supernature, laws moreover which will enable him to aid the awakening of his dormant spirituality. It is only when this practice has been continued for a sufficiently long time that the student can proceed to the more recondite tasks of controlling his involuntary powers and developing his will in the right direction.

By adopting such practices as the above, the student would in fact be furthering the third object of the Theosophical Movement which is: To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially.

Theosophy is Universal Brotherhood. When the student is busy equipping himself for service, he has to be careful to see that each of his endeavours revolves round this central theme of Universal Brotherhood. His departure from this must invariably result in his straying away from the path. All that he learns of occultism, all the powers that are allowed to develop in him, all the qualities of service that burgeon in him are due to the help and guidance he receives in the inner planes of his being from the great custodians of the Wisdom. Selfishness, even if it be latent, acts as a repellent and closes the channel through which light can come. Besides selfishness and ambition, that which militates against Brotherhood is the magnetism and invisible results proceeding from erroneous beliefs. Faith in the Gods and God and other superstitions attract millions of foreign influences, living entities and powerful agents whose aim it is to lead the student on to the path of error. Said one of the Great Ones: "Unless a man is prepared to become a thorough Theosophist...give up entirely caste, his old superstitions and show himself a true reformer...he will remain simply a member of the Society with no hope whatever of ever hearing from us....It is useless for

a member to argue 'I am one of a pure life, I am a teetotaller and an abstainer from meat and vice. All my aspirations are for good, etc.,' and he, at the same time, building by his acts and deeds an impassable barrier on the road between himself and us."

The task of equipping oneself for service is no light one, for, to wean away man's thinking from bigotry — religious, scientific or social — requires that the student himself investigate and gather the proofs of its pernicious tendencies. For this, he must have not only a specialized knowledge but also a deep conviction based on personal experience. To promulgate the ideal of Brotherhood, the student has to demonstrate the truth of the teaching that the root of everything in nature is ONE, from which all emerge and into which everything returns. The parcelling of humanity into denominations of religions, sects, creeds and colours is man-made and has proved to be the breeding-ground of divisive tendencies. It therefore becomes the duty of the student to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions and to promote in every way and in all countries the spread of non-sectarian education.

In a student's life, study and practice have to be blended harmoniously with service. The hours available to the student for this purpose have to be judiciously allocated towards the discharge of all three functions. Spending all the time in service and neglecting either study or personal experience (which comes during moments of deep aspiration) is ill-advised. It is as ill-advised as the foolishness of the driver who takes the last ounce of energy out of his engine and forgets to refuel it in time. The invocation of nature during the daily hours of silence is as necessary as reviewing the actions of the day in the light of the Paramitas. Service starved of the strength which comes from such spiritual exercise hardly attracts the new-comer or swells audiences. Dissemination of the philosophy of altruism is a must, and if speaking or writing comes not easily to the man, then it would be excellent discipline to undergo the necessary training.

The equipment of the student is not complete unless he has acquired the aptitude to accommodate himself to any circumstance arising from the daily contact with students as equally anxious as he to further the cause of human Brotherhood. Injustice may be encountered, criticism and even uncharitableness received at the hands of friends and associates. It is this which is the real training ground for building a character of such strength and flexibility as service in the hostile world outside is likely to demand. Unbrotherliness and lack of charity is very painful to witness in an association of persons who profess to give themselves up to the most solemn questions affecting human interest. The revered Master K.H. gave the following advice: "Let meaner natures wrangle if they will; the wise compound their differences in a mutually forbearing spirit." This advice applies with equal force to individuals, societies and lodges.

LET US BE ALCHEMISTS

ALCHEMY! A word to conjure with! In how many of the Gothic romances of an older generation did not the mysterious figure of the alchemist play a part, seeking either to transmute base metal into gold or to brew the philtre that would bestow the gift of eternal youth! Mary Shelley, wife of the poet, wrote a fascinating story on this last theme. It ends grimly, though, with only bitter retribution resulting from the eagerly desired sip of the magic potion.

How different is the alchemy so often advocated by a wiser Master! Mr. Judge sums it up in a single sentence: "Unselfish labours for humanity can alone relieve us from the ocean of Samsara (Rebirth), develop our highest potentialities, and help us to alchemize our human weakness."

To alchemize our human weakness! Yes, that is the one form of occult art that Mr. Judge would have us practise. He has chosen the word with his usual nicety. For, to alchemize is to transmute. Our base metal must become gold. Our human weakness is to be changed to spiritual strength and integrity.

He would have us set the process going immediately. "Seek, then, to live the Higher Life by beginning *now* to purify your thoughts by good deeds, and by right speech." A short, simple recipe. It should save us from time-wasting at the outset. There is nothing recondite about the method he suggests, yet who can deny that it is indeed the highest form of alchemy? For the "practice of altruism in deed, word, and thought...purifies the covers of the soul," he goes on to tell us. (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 172)

Altruism first, last and always is for Mr. Judge the *sine qua non*, and he buttresses this tenet many times over in the course of his writings by showing it to be the redemptive process for even our physical bodies. We need not at present go into his teaching on atoms, but as our bodies are composed of these, he reminds us frequently how great is our responsibility to every single one of "these lives, these living entities called 'cells'" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 3*, p. 18), and that only by our practice of altruism can they be purified and advanced in the scale of being. "If we do all our acts, small and great, every moment, for the sake of the whole human race, as representing the Supreme Self, then every cell and fibre of the body and inner man will be turned in one direction." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12*, p. 15)

Is not this alchemy indeed? Well did the wise of old know it. For the transmutation spoken of by the real alchemists was the alteration of the base alloy in man's nature.

But there is more to the process still. Even our altruism must itself be alchemized. Mr. Judge reasons closely. "The performance of a good act is no virtue unless the person within is in the right attitude of mind. Many an apparently good act is done from selfish, hypocritical, crafty or other

wrong motives. These are only outwardly good. So we must attain to a proper state of mind, or mental devotion, in order to know how to perform our actions skilfully, without doing so for the sake of the result; doing them because they ought to be done, because they are our duties" (*The Heart Doctrine*, pp. 52-3). Here the alchemy comes from *motive*. "Motive is the essential test," says Mr. Judge. Always, and repeatedly, does he emphasize the importance of motive. Its transmutative effect is far-reaching. See his *Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*, p. 70: "The motives with which we live our lives go to make up our greater being, our larger life, our truer self." Yes, the alchemy we must practise can operate even as far as that.

Stop, though! Is not this overdoing it? After all, are not we students of Theosophy? What need of alchemy when we already have plain lines of conduct laid down for us in the teachings? Says Mr. Judge, we need something more. "The fundamental doctrines of Theosophy are of no value unless they are applied to daily life. To the extent to which this application goes they become living truths, quite different from intellectual expressions of doctrine. The mere intellectual grasp may result in spiritual pride, while the living doctrine becomes an entity through the mystic power of the human soul" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 12). Alchemy again! Yes, we *must* practise it. "It is just the difference between intellectual assent to a moral, philosophical, or occult law, and its perfect development in one's being so that it has become an actual part of ourselves." (*Ibid.*, p. 21)

Mr. Judge reminds us for our encouragement that "we have been here so many times that we ought to be beginning to learn" (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 50), which brings us to Karma and Rebirth, where we surely very plainly see alchemy, *i.e.*, transmutation, operating both in and on our own lives. Here are two brief but accurate descriptions of the process. "Each man's life and character are the outcome of his previous lives and thoughts" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 5*, p. 5). "Man is a thinker, and by his thoughts he makes the causes for woe or bliss; for his thoughts produce his acts." (*Ibid.*, p. 5)

Now it does not need much imagination to see in both these statements any one of ourselves in our role of alchemists, transmuted by our "lives and thoughts" into being *what* we are and *where* we are, and continuing the process, even though, through our ineptitude, we may at this present still be wrestling with base metal in the hope that it may yet become pure gold, towards which Mr. Judge gives his word of encouragement — "All that *is*, is forever in process of *becoming* something else" (*Echoes from the Orient*, p. 9). Once again, too, he provides a simple guide-line for the striving alchemist who may be desperately asking himself whether his methods are right or wrong. "The true path to divine wisdom is in performing our duty unselfishly in the station in which we are placed, for thereby we convert" — *i.e.*, transmute — "lower nature into higher, following Dharma — our whole duty." (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 106)

Finally, in closing, here are three examples of what we have chosen,

throughout this article, to call "alchemy." The first is from the opening letter from Mr. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me*. "The reason you have had help is that in other lives you gave it to others. In every effort you made to lighten another mind and open it to Truth, you were helped yourself" (p. 1) And again, "All help you extend to any other soul is help to yourself" (p. 12). Here is a beautiful instance of transmutation — what was *given* becomes what is *received*. In one of his sentences which are often more poetry than prose, Mr. Judge adds the comment: "Those pearls you found for another and gave to him, you really retained for yourself in the act of benevolence." (p. 1)

The second instance comes from the same book: "Do not look at things as failures, but regard every apparent failure after real effort as a success, for the real test is in the effort and motive, and not in the result" (p. 137). Alchemy indeed, fellow students, when our failures can be transmuted into success! Note again Mr. Judge's emphasis on motive.

The third example comes from *The Heart Doctrine* and is interesting because here the alchemist's ingredient for transmutation is one of the "baser" things — personal pleasure. "The desire for physical enjoyment, if rightly directed, becomes elevated, as a desire for something higher, gradually becoming converted into a desire to do good to others, and thus ascending, ceases to be a desire, and is transformed into an element of the sixth principle." (p. 93).

Truly, nothing in life is static. "All," as Mr. Judge says, "is forever in process of *becoming*." Or, to keep to the imagery we have been indulging in, all is *volatile*, like the alchemist's ingredients. And as those mages of the past devoted their lives to one object, namely, the transmutation of "base metal" into "gold," so let us emulate them in zeal and in refusal to admit discouragement, all the more so since our gain will be the greater, for "the real object to be kept in view is so to open up or make porous the lower nature that the spiritual nature may shine through it and become the guide and ruler." (*An Epitome of Theosophy*, p. 13)

To CORRECT the evils, great and small, which spring from want of sympathy, and from positive enmity among strangers, as nations or as individuals, is one of the highest functions of civilization.

—ABRAHAM

THE SOUL'S LINEAGE

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate. . . .

— II. *Corinthians*, VI. 14–17

THE KNOWLEDGE about our physical pedigree is difficult to obtain and modern science knows too little to give us any satisfactory explanation. But man is more than his body. Karma and evolution have

. . . centred in our make such strange extremes!
From different Natures marvellously mixed.

Who among us knows all the links of heredity, astral, psychic, spiritual? And without possessing some knowledge of the subject how can we fulfil the injunction of the Oracle — Man, know thyself? If our body and personality have their own families, so our spiritual individuality has its own. Self-Knowledge is knowledge about this spiritual individuality. But that is possible to obtain only when we have known the self of matter, the personality with which we are almost completely identified, even when we are successful in separating ourselves for a while from it when in contemplation.

If we had to wait to know the pedigree of the Individuality till the lower personal self was fully conquered, we should be frustrated in our Theosophical undertaking in the process of time. Like so many other functions of Nature, the conquest of the lower and recognition of the higher go hand in hand. As the lower is denied, the higher reveals itself. And the correct method is to try to realize the higher and make it act, an effort which weakens the lower. To fight the lower is often to stir up the muddy torrents of *Kamaloka*; therefore let the lower sleeping dog lie, and if it is awake to mischief, pay no attention to it but get busy with the higher, *i.e.*, with the study of the Sacred Science and with contemplation on the supreme and sublime fact that each human being is an incarnation of his God.

Similarly, to free ourselves from the web of family Karma which mainly pertains to the personality, it is better to begin, not by fighting it, but by ignoring it, while centring all our thought and attention on the visible soul-family at hand. Just as, through a physical-plane Guru, the aspirant comes to the spiritual Great Guru, so also through the proper and adequate recognition of our spiritual family on this visible and objective plane we come to

realize the true spiritual pedigree to which our Buddhi-Manas belongs.

What is that visible spiritual family of the student of genuine Theosophy?

Often the U.L.T. has been called our spiritual home: it constitutes our soul-family. Within the ranks of the U.L.T. are to be found the true friends and kin of the student-soul. Each ardent and sincere Associate has to learn to identify himself more and more with the functions and the life of the spiritual family. This is primarily a mental activity: our thoughts, our feelings and our whole attention change their focus. Before coming to Theosophy our attention was focused on this thing or that. Among the variety of foci for the worldly men and women, the family is one; for many, naturally and rightly, the family in which the body is born plays a very vital part. But Theosophy, when taken seriously, changes the focus of attention and reveals, if the student is truly devoted, that the line of life-meditation is the service of Theosophy. The student feels within himself that the roots of his being are in the soil of the Lodge, not in that of his family.

It is to such students that the advice is given in the words of the Initiate Paul:

Come out from among them, and be ye separate

More striking are the words of Jesus:

I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

Christ or Christos is our own Spirit, one with Deity, and we cannot know that Divinity within until and unless we abjure the ways and habits of the personal self, the mode and method of life acquired by that self from its own family. This does not mean that we shall fail to perform our congenital duties, or run away from the family. But it does mean that we shall not be personally attached to father or son, which attachment blinds us to their non-spiritual defects as to their spiritual qualities. It is not fully recognized that personal affection and attachment shut out the world of spirit from our vision in just the same way as personal dislike and personal hatred.

The first necessary step is to recognize that life in Spirit is *trans*-manasic, not *cis*-manasic. It is in the mind that the starting point of soul-life inheres. It is the mind that has to be freed from attachment to the lower principles and it is in and with the mind that we have first to overcome personal attractions

and aversions. The family of the personality is an excellent gymnasium to develop the *Vairagya*-muscle. But how many students miss their opportunity, either by removing themselves from the family or by mistaking human personal affection for divine impersonal love!

Love belongs to the principle of *Buddhi* and is born in human consciousness only when personal affections-aversions, *raga-dvesha*, are overcome. That is what is most clearly and emphatically implied in the closing words of Jesus quoted above. Exactly the same teaching in almost identical words is given in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Give up thy life, if thou would'st live.

A foot-note explains that the life of physical *personality* has to be given up. Those who try to give up the personal life at home slip into living that life in the Lodge! They have changed the field of existence, not the mode of living. Therefore the plane of the mind must be recognized, whether we are fulfilling obligations at home, or earning our livelihood at office, or acquiring knowledge at the Lodge.

When mentally and within ourselves the knots of personal affection-aversion are cut, then the bonds of outer Karma become loose and ultimately fall away. To achieve this we must not wholly depend on the negative work at home, in the family of the personality, but mainly we should rely on the positive task at the Lodge, the visible family of the Soul. Not only should we acquire knowledge at the Lodge, but also gather soul-force sufficiently to live as student-practitioners when we are away from it.

The old custom of changing the name of the personality when the Hindu enters the life of the *sannyasi* is a true and graphic symbol. When we resolve to dedicate ourselves to the higher life, and to serve the Cause of the Masters of Life, we undertake to weaken the life of the personal form (*rupa*) to which a name (*nama*) is given. Our Name and Form are personal: it is easy to change the name, not so easy to change the form. The order of procedure is to change the form and then the name will change itself! One does not become a *sannyasi* by wearing the yellow robe, nor a *swami* by taking a new name.

It is at our spiritual home and in our soul-family that we undergo the transformation and acquire a new *rupa*. The process is long but the beginning must be made and it can be made today.

THE LEAVEN OF THEOSOPHY

[Reprinted here is the greater portion of an editorial published by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for March 1881. — EDS.]

THOSE OF US whose duty it is to watch the theosophical movement and aid its progress, can afford to be amused at the ignorant conceit displayed by certain journals in their criticisms upon our Society and its officers. Some seem to think that when they have flung their handful of dirt we must certainly be overwhelmed. One or two have even gone so far as with mock sympathy to pronounce us already hopelessly disrupted. It is a pity we cannot oblige them, but so it is, and they must make the best of the situation. Our Society as a body might certainly be wrecked by mismanagement or the death of its founders, but the IDEA which it represents and which has gained so wide a currency will run on like a crested wave of thought until it dashes upon the hard beach where materialism is picking and sorting its pebbles. Of the thirteen persons who composed our first board of officers, in 1875, nine were spiritualists of greater or less experience. It goes without saying, then, that the aim of the Society was not to destroy but to better and purify spiritualism. The phenomena we knew to be real, and we believed them to be the most important of all current subjects for investigation. For, whether they should finally prove to be traceable to the agency of the departed, or but manifestations of occult natural forces acting in concert with latent psycho-physiological human powers, they opened up a great field of research, the outcome of which must be enlightenment upon the master problem of life, Man and his Relations. We had seen phenomenalism running riot and twenty millions of believers clutching at one drifting theory after another in the hope of gaining the truth. We had reason to know that the whole truth could only be found in one quarter, the Asiatic schools of philosophy, and we felt convinced that the truth could never be discovered until men of all races and creeds should join like brothers in the search. So, taking our stand upon that ground, we began to point the way eastward.

Our first step was to lay down the proposition that even admitting the phenomena to be real, they need not of necessity be ascribed to departed souls. We showed that there was ample historical evidence that such phenomena had, from the remotest times, been exhibited by men who were not mediums, who repudiated the passivity exacted of mediums, and who simply claimed to produce them by cultivating inherent powers in their living selves. Hence the burden of proving that these wonders were and could only be done by the dead with the agency of passive medial agents lay with the spiritualists. To deny our proposition involved either the repudiation of the testimony of the most trustworthy authorities in many countries and in different epochs, or the wholesale ascription of mediumship to every wonder-worker mentioned in history. The latter horn of the dilemma had been taken.

Reference to the works of the most noted spiritualistic writers, as well as the newspaper organs of the movement, will show that the thaums, or "miracles," of every "magician," saint, religious leader, and ascetic, from the Chaldean Magusti, the ancient Hindu saint, the Egyptian Jannes and Jambres, the Hebrew Moses and Jesus, and the Mussulman Prophet, down to the Benares Sannyasi of M. Jacolliot, and the common fakir of today, who has made Anglo-Indian mouths gape with wonder, have each and all been spoken of as true mediumistic marvels. This was the best that could be done with a difficult subject, but it could not prevent spiritualists from thinking. The more they have thought, read, and compared notes, during the past five years, with those who have travelled in Asia and studied psychological science *as a science*, the more has the first acrid feeling against our Society abated. We noticed this change in the first issue of this magazine. After only five years of agitation, without abuse from us or any aggressive propagandism on our part, the leaven of this great truth has begun to work. It can be seen on every side. We are now kindly asked to show Europe and America experimental proofs of the correctness of our assertions. Little by little, a body of persons, including some of the best minds in the movement, has come over to our side, and many now cordially endorse our position that there can be no spiritual intercourse, either with the souls of the living or the dead, unless it is preceded by self-spiritualization, the conquest of the meaner self, the education of the nobler powers within us. The serious dangers as well as the more evident gratifications of mediumship are becoming gradually appreciated. Phenomenalism, thanks to the splendid works of Professor Zöllner, Mr. Crookes, Mr. Varley, and other able experimentalists, is tending towards its proper limits of a problem of science. There is a thoughtful and more and more earnest study of spiritual philosophy. We see this not alone among the spiritualists of Great Britain, Australasia, and the United States, but also among the intellectual and numerous classes of the Continental spiritists, and the magnetists. Should nothing occur to break the present harmony and impede the progress of ideas, we may well expect within another five years to see the entire body of investigators of the phenomena of mesmerism and mediumism more or less imbued with a conviction that the greatest psychological truth, in its most unadulterated form, can be found in the Indian philosophies. And, let it be remembered, we ascribe this great result not to anything we few may personally have done or said, but to the gradual growth of a conviction that the experience of mankind and the lessons of the past can no longer be ignored. . . .

History teems with examples of the foundation of sects, churches and parties by persons who, like ourselves, have launched new ideas. Let those who would be apostles and write infallible revelations do so; we have no new church but only an old truth to commend to the world. Ours is no such ambition. On the contrary, we set our faces like flint against any such misuse of our Society. If we can only set a good example and stimulate to a better way

of living, it is enough. Man's best guide, religious, moral and philosophical, is his own inner divine sense. Instead of clinging to the skirts of any leader in passive inertia he should lean upon that better self — his own prophet, apostle, priest, king and saviour. No matter what his religion, he will find within his own nature the holiest of temples, the divinest of revelations.

THAT WHICH propels towards, and forces evolution, *i.e.*, compels the growth and development of Man towards perfection, is (a) the MONAD, or that which acts in it unconsciously through a force inherent in itself; and (b) the lower astral body or the *personal* SELF. The former, whether imprisoned in a vegetable or an animal body, is endowed with, is indeed itself, that force. Owing to its identity with the ALL-FORCE, which, as said, is inherent in the Monad, it is all-potent on the *Arupa*, or formless plane. On our plane, its essence being too pure, it remains all-potential, but individually becomes inactive: *e.g.*, the rays of the Sun, which contribute to the growth of vegetation, do not select this or that plant to shine upon. Uproot the plant and transfer it to a piece of soil where the sunbeam cannot reach it, and the latter will not follow it. So with the Atman: unless the higher Self or EGO gravitates towards its Sun—the Monad—the lower *Ego*, or *personal* Self, will have the upper hand in every case. For it is this Ego, with its fierce Selfishness and animal desire to live a senseless life (*Tanha*), which is “the maker of the tabernacle,” as Buddha calls it in *Dhammapada* (153 and 154). Hence the expression, “the Spirits of the Earth clothed the shadows and expanded them.” To these “Spirits” belong temporarily the human astral selves; and it is they who give, or build, the physical tabernacle of man, for the Monad and its conscious principle, Manas, to dwell in. But the “Solar” *Lhas*, Spirits, warm them, the shadows. This is physically and literally true; metaphysically, or on the psychic and spiritual plane, it is equally true that the Atman alone *warms* the inner man; *i.e.*, it enlightens it with the ray of divine life and alone is able to impart to the inner man, or the reincarnating Ego, its immortality. . . . Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus*, that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man. In sober truth, vice and wickedness are an *abnormal, unnatural* manifestation, at this period of our human evolution—at least they ought to be so. The fact that mankind was never more selfish and vicious than it is now, civilized nations having succeeded in making of the first an ethical characteristic, of the second an art, is an additional proof of the exceptional nature of the phenomenon.

THE THREE DANGERS

THE PRACTISING STUDENT of the Esoteric Philosophy has to avoid three dangers:

(1) Sensuous attractions to which the “fashionable” butterflies and drones succumb, without a pang of conscience. Such take the downward road to immorality and soullessness. This desire works insidiously.

(2) Religious orthodoxy which shuts the doors and windows of the mind and which hardens the heart and deadens the Soul within. The brain looking for the God without, becomes dead to the whisperings of the God within. The orthodox man of every creed is taking to mediumship, often unconsciously to himself.

(3) Complacency and self-righteousness of the ordinary person, the attitude of false contentment — we have to live, labour, love and die, and we are doing the best we can, enduring our aches and pains as we enjoy our health and life; there is no room for anything else; life is a mixture of good and evil, take them both as they come along and do not bother about them.

Sense-impulses are insidious and without vigilance a student is apt to fall prey to them and wake to its dangers when too late.

Religious emotion-feeling is attractive, because it looks like devotion, which it is not. Without knowledge, orthodoxy is mistaken for conviction and emotional upsurge for spirituality.

The third, in one way, is the most serious tempter. Many a promising aspirant has ruined his career mistaking complacency for contentment. Without Divine discontent which urges us to improve, real contentment is never there. To take Karma humbly lying down, without any effort to overcome it, is a corroding influence which produces *tamas*. Evil often is an awakener; as often is good a soporific against which the student has to guard. Do not think that everything is all right with you, or all wrong with you; good and evil are not merely to be put up with, but to be used — enhance the good, crush out the evil. Do not fancy, but make sure that you are doing your best. It is not easy to do one's best; but we can and should try.

AIMS: WORTHY AND UNWORTHY

The term "Universal Brotherhood" is no idle phrase....It is the only secure foundation for universal morality. If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind; and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*.

Beware then of an uncharitable spirit, for it will rise up like a hungry wolf in your path, and devour the better qualities of your nature....Broaden instead of narrowing your sympathies; try to identify yourself with your fellows, rather than to contract your circle of affinity.

— A MASTER OF WISDOM

AS THE INQUIRER goes on extending his reading of Theosophical literature he gets a glimpse of the wonderful powers that come to him who advances along the Path of Occultism. Perhaps he has read *Isis Unveiled* and the *Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*. He gets convinced that phenomenal powers bordering on what he calls miraculous do exist. He desires to acquire some of these powers. Has he not heard of successful experiments in thought-transference and mind-reading? Has he not witnessed the power that the hypnotist wields over his subjects, forcing them into droll antics? Has he not read about mediums who seemingly summon denizens from spookland and secure startling messages from across the threshold? He finds all these and many more powers treated of and explained in Theosophical texts. His curiosity is aroused and he longs to have one or two such powers up his sleeve — if not for gain, then at least for the delectation of some few before whom he may condescend to demonstrate. The aim of such an inquirer is clear enough. He desires something for himself and resolves to get it from Theosophy, even though he is warned that selfish motives will lead to no successes.

Then, there is another type, the trend of whose thoughts has always been to escape from the round of births and deaths. Reacting sharply against blind belief in either religion or science, he perceives that the way of life recommended by Theosophy will lead him to liberation and therefore to a forgetting of the woes of the world and of men for ever. His aim, too, is clear. His motive for effort is — HIMSELF. Though he may discourse most convincingly on Universal Brotherhood and even help other human beings, he does so to serve his own purpose. He has chosen a goal other than that presented by Theosophy — Renunciation; and though he may not know it and be indignant if so told, he separates himself from all men. He will help others, but only because by such action he enhances the chances of an early liberation.

Surpassing both these in his ambition is the shrewd inquirer who comes with wits sharpened from the world of Mammon. His ambition is for recognition, precedence and authority over men. He feels that these are easy of attain-

ment in an organization most of whose members are not worldly-wise nor cravers for position. Any Theosophical administration would suit him admirably — or so he thinks. True that in joining any such organization he has not only to subscribe to the idea of Universal Brotherhood, but to participate actively with others in forming the nucleus of such a brotherhood. He may recognize himself to be an orthodox religionist or one who despises the caste or religion of others, and be thus firmly fixed in the path of error. None the less, the vision of fruits to be plucked from the Theosophical tree is too tempting to be laid aside. So he resorts to the old, old game of make-believe. What he says to himself is that with all his leanings towards particular sects and creeds, he can still practise brotherhood among his chosen few. In these times of the United Nations, a glib talk of Brotherhood is always in the air and it would be advantageous even socially to declare oneself a staunch supporter of the principle. Joining in the effort to form a nucleus? Why, dear sir, most certainly. But suppose I postpone it till I have advanced far enough? I will then be in a far better position to volunteer the effort!

Such are the delusions that have gripped and enslaved many an otherwise promising head and heart.

Now if Theosophy were like any other ism, the hidden motive or the lack of moral foundation would hardly make any difference. The man of selfish motive would then have prospered as do so many politicians and men of business. But with Theosophy it is different. This is so because as one advances in this philosophy, one arouses into action nature's finer forces and these in colour and vibration reflect the innermost motives and thoughts of the man. They portray his moods and ambitions, his sympathies and antipathies in a startlingly clear degree. Karma then steps in and surrounds him with such circumstances, temptations and difficulties that the subtlest of masks is torn from the face and the man stands naked and his worldly motives get pushed to the top and become revealed.

Theosophy is not like so many extant religions that, getting hardened after the departure of their respective founders, become fossilized under the rude impact of the materialism of centuries. The fountain-source from which all knowledge emanates remains intact, impartite, unpolluted from the dawn to dusk of humanity. It has its Custodians who, remaining consciously immortal in different bodies, have preserved themselves and their precious treasure from the ravages of time and death. When the receptivity of humanity permits, they send from among themselves one or more Initiates to guide humanity back towards paths of peace and progress. These Great Ones work in our world through accredited messengers as well as through "companions" selected from out of the great concourse of men that is attracted by Their Teachings. Each man who (even though in secret) lays his service at Their feet is known, recognized, and if found worthy, accepted. He who takes up the study of Theosophy in all earnestness, he who records his desire to join in the effort to promote Universal Brotherhood, he, by that resolve, projects a part of

himself into the atmosphere where the Masters are.

The aspirant would avoid many a pitfall if he were to remember that in Occultism true enlightenment can come only when the aim of the candidate coincides with the Aim of the Theosophical Movement. If the two are divergent or even at some variance, then the lesser being always the weaker aim is brushed aside and its votary is either thwarted or thrown completely off the track by the nemesis that follows upon the violation of the Law of Karma. This is so because the Wisdom that is Theosophy is living and its custodians have to be sure that it will not be defiled by misuse for unworthy ends.

The Theosophical Society was formed with the chief object of inviting men and women to join in the effort to form the nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. The dissemination of hitherto secret teachings about the constitution of the universe and man; of the states after death and of the powers latent in man — all these had the purpose of bringing the world to duty and benefiting mankind. He who sought advancement was expected to spread the truth and provoke men to correct thinking and a correct way of life. Men were wanted, not ceremony-masters, and what was expected was devotion and not mere observances.

Universal unity is a fact because there is only one source from which all spring and into which all must in time get merged. It is this idea which must be made to dominate all thought and action. He who would make reservations about caste, creed or colour sets himself up as something apart and distinct from those belonging to other castes, creeds and colours, and in so doing makes himself antagonistic to their advancement and interests. This antagonism and the feeling of class superiority debars a man from the beneficence that ever flows from the planes of Soul and Spirit.

The aims for which the Theosophical Movement was launched into the public world may be gathered from the following extracts from Masters' letters:

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

II. The true Theosophist is a philanthropist — “not for himself but for the world he lives.”

III. Perish rather the Theosophical Society...than that we should permit it to become no better than an academy of magic, and a hall of Occultism!

IV. It is he alone who has the love of humanity at heart, who is capable of grasping thoroughly the idea of a regenerating practical Brotherhood who is entitled to the possession of our secrets... A man who places not the good of mankind above his own good is

not worthy of becoming our *chela* — he is not worthy of becoming higher in knowledge than his neighbour.

V. We seek to bring men to sacrifice their personality — a passing flash — for the welfare of the whole humanity.

VI. Union and co-operation are indispensable. Union does indeed imply a concentration of vital and magnetic force against the hostile currents of prejudice and fanaticism.

VII. This is the moment to guide the recurrent impulse which must soon come, and which will push the age towards extreme atheism, or drag it back to extreme sacerdotalism, if it is not led to the primitive soul-satisfying philosophy of the Aryans.... You and your colleagues may help to furnish the materials for a needed universal religious philosophy; one impregnable to scientific assault, because itself the finality of absolute science, and a religion that is indeed worthy of the name since it includes the relations of man physical to man psychical, and of the two to all that is above and below them. Is not this worth a little sacrifice?

WHAT is noble? What does the word "noble" still mean for us nowadays? How does the noble man betray himself, how is he recognized under this heavy, overcast sky of the commencing plebeianism, by which everything is rendered opaque and leaden?

It is not his action which establishes his claim; actions are always ambiguous, always inscrutable; neither is it his "works." One finds nowadays among artists and scholars plenty of those who betray by their works that a profound longing for nobleness impels them; but this very need of nobleness is radically different from the needs of the noble soul itself, and is in fact the eloquent and dangerous sign of the lack thereof.

It is not the works, but the belief which is here decisive and determines the order of rank. To employ once more an old religious formula with a new and deeper meaning, it is some fundamental certainty which a noble soul has about itself, something which is not to be sought, is not to be found, and perhaps is not to be lost—the noble soul has reverence for itself.

NIETZSCHE

LEARNING AND TEACHING

A TEACHER, it is said, can but point the way. He guides or readjusts, but cannot push or pull the pupil forward, nor pour in vast masses of knowledge. A pupil acquires learning and wisdom by his own efforts. A teacher can provide evidence of fact — the history of past occurrences. In the present, the teacher can show evidence of method, or the laws of relationship. The future is in the hands of the disciple. He has to work on himself and establish his own disciplines if he desires success.

When a pupil seems to go out of line, or encounters a “blank wall,” he may come to the teacher for assistance, in which case a good teacher would first have the pupil review his achievement, place it in as broad a context of experience as is possible to him; then perhaps point to a principle that would serve the pupil to achieve his own readjustment. Efforts to seek, to understand, to correlate, these are the building blocks of self-induced and self-energized progress. One has to desire something to work for it. This orientation of the personal desire requires careful consideration on the part of the pupil, since this will lead him through his self-chosen goal. So in the ancient wisdom of the *Veda* it is said: “Desire first arose in IT, which was the primal germ of mind; and which sages, searching with their intellect, have discovered to be the bond which connects Entity with Non-Entity.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 176).

Each should think over questions deeply, in all their aspects, in order to *find the answers for himself*. Let us make some observations and ask ourselves some questions based on the *Rig-Vedic* statement quoted above. IT (the SELF of ALL) antecedes “desire.” Then would not “desire” (Kamadeva) be that divine, universal and all-embracing LOVE which unites all beings and creatures into one single family? This is the mysterious connection that links embodied selves to the One SELF (entities to Non-Entity). So, should not a condition of brotherhood be the normal state of affairs, instead of that of fear, doubt and conflict that besets our lives? If all that exists now, exists because of prior causes, do not such conditions arise because of our mental state of confusion, delusion and ignorance? Each one desires a “way out.” One of these is to secure confidence in the great Law of Karma, eternal Justice, which rules the world with constancy. The disciple ought, then, to avoid anticipating the future. He will get his just due. He cannot avoid it.

A few more aphorisms may help. “Impermanent are all conditioned beings (forms of matter),” said the Buddha, directing our attention thus to that which lies behind “form” and causes it. We do not sense matter at all, but only its phenomena. The atom corresponds to the solar system and to the galaxy; so, too, does man, as he embodies in potency every force and form of the WHOLE. That which is changeable cannot define change. A stable basis for observation is needed. Since we see alternation in space, in time and in motion, something in us has to be fixed, or stable. It is this which records

the experience of matter (form) as *instinct*. It is this which records the experience of attraction and repulsion as *feeling*. It is this which records the experience of comprehension, of analogy and correspondence, as *mental action*. It is this which is one with eternal LAW and records its impress as *intuition*. Finally, it is this which we refer to as ATMAN, or IT. This is the great secret of all life. This is why we are asked to "look inward" that we may see that at the innermost core of our being we are Buddha — all-wise — and be inspired to transmute our nature into that of a Buddha-like individual. This is the goal of all learning — that we may teach our lower nature to recognize the "highest" within as its *guru* and its friend.

THE VOW OF POVERTY is a power. It is the power to say, at each instant and to the Law: Thy will be done! The power to abandon hopes, fears, plans, codes, thoughts. To see each moment dawn as 'twere the last, yet to live it as though it were eternal. To have no rights, no wrongs, no *mental* possessions. To see all things, even the innermost, appear and disappear as Life now forms and now dissolves. To lay claim to nothing save to patience, and then to abandon that for a supreme content. Careless of self-vindication, careless even of justification for causes or persons with which one is identified; ready to explain one's self; equally ready to remain unexplained. Amid a deep interior peace to arise on outward planes, sword in hand, for the defence of principles and the maintenance of justice to others. Without aggression, to defend most earnestly; to strike home, when needed, to the heart of hypocrisies and ambitions, waging war with every ally of material darkness, and most of all with one's own material mind; and all these while remote in spirit and calm in soul. On the outer plane there is no real peace, but only a base compromise, with which the flaming Christ-sword is forever at war. Not all who have taken the Vow wear an aspect of external amiability. The mendicant is a stranger to professions of sweetness and light; he neither rejects nor invites sacrifice and pain. He blesses the Law when it gives and when it takes. He takes hold and quits alike indifferently so far as himself is concerned, and for his erring fellows grieves in silence, not with that audible pity which is itself a form of self-complacency. Deep within his soul he has found the Unconscious. He knows that It possesses naught because Itself is all. He strives to merge his personal Consciousness into the Great Deep. His ever-widening mind becomes a breath and embraces the universe; the Vow has borne its harvest when it "inherits the earth," which is the conquest of the personal thought.

—JASPER NIEMAND

SPEECH—THE CREATIVE LOGOS

They received the use of the five operations of the Lord, and in the sixth place he imparted them understanding, and in the seventh speech, an interpreter of the cogitations thereof.

— *Ecclesiasticus*, xvii. 5

THE CENTRAL TRUTH of the Esoteric Philosophy, round which the whole system of practice revolves, is that man is the microcosm of the Living Universe. Man-spirit is linked with Universal Spirit and between the two subsists an indissoluble link reproducing itself in many links between the two cosmoses. The one link reflects itself in innumerable ways, as many links.

The universe is living as is man, and the Law and laws governing both are identical; the body of man and the visible, material bodies of the earth and the sun are governed by the self-same Law and Its variants, natural laws. Human mind and divine mind, the spiritual and psychic natures of both the microcosmos and the macrocosmos, are similarly under the sway of the Law, and the laws. To comprehend the nature and action of these links, more than the reasoning faculty is needed. The intuitive faculty should function in some measure. To develop intuition the student has to learn the importance, value and use of the law of correspondence and analogy.

The moral nature of the universe is a fact, though man's mortal mind and his perishable personal nature fail to perceive its working or to recognize its existence. But Esoteric Philosophy teaches that the Creative Logos manifests as the Great Cosmos. Also that spiritual forces act in matter and manifest in man as will-power, thought-power, etc.

In that Esoteric Philosophy, human speech is accorded a high place. Man is a creator in several ways, but in his personal nature his mouth has been designated as corresponding to *Vach*, speech of the Creative Logos. The birth of self-consciousness in man is intimately connected with the birth of human word-speech. All men of the 20th century speak, but is their speech a manifestation of the Creative Logos, the Divine *Purusha*? Says *Light on the Path*:

Speech comes only with knowledge. Attain to knowledge and you will attain to speech.

Speech is the power of communication; the moment of entrance into active life is marked by its attainment.

The divine give, they demand that you also shall give before you can be of their kin. This law is discovered as soon as the disciple endeavours to speak. For speech is a gift which comes only to the disciple of power and knowledge.

There are other pregnant statements on the subject in the same book and

its congeners, ancient and modern.

What is shown in the above three quotations is that words and ideas are like body and soul and that, unless words are idealized, ideas cannot be formed or patterned in words. The speech to which the human kingdom has attained is certainly not the speech of Wisdom. Many diverse tongues, the clashing sounds uttered as words by the ignorant egotists which most men are, cannot be that speech which comes with knowledge.

In the second quotation we move one step forward in the understanding of our subject. Has modern man truly entered into "active life"? Has he attained the real power of communication? His active life is gross and selfish and ends in frustration, his very success turning to dust and ashes in his mouth. What portion of his active life goes to form a basis of spiritual communication for the soul in the future? What proportion of his active life will become the basis of his Devachanic ideation?

In the third quotation the place and time are referred to, at which true speech comes as a gift. Knowledge of the Esoteric Philosophy comes to us as a gift from the Immortal Sages. We have to learn to use it. Reading with the eyes and hearing with the ears is the first step. Mental reflection and determined application of what is learnt is the second. The assimilation of what is learnt, reflected upon and practised is the third and flowers in the earnest and zealous effort of the aspirant to promulgate.

Speech, *i.e.*, words spoken and written, form the basis and the buttresses of Theosophical promulgation. Study is the foundation; application the walls; promulgation, the protecting roof of the Temple of Wisdom.

The Esotericist's body is the Temple a-building; his feelings, his will, his words, his deeds are fashioning the various parts of the edifice. Man evolves fitfully, unconsciously to himself, through a few pleasures and many pains. The Esotericist evolves feat-fully by performance of deliberate and predetermined acts, concerned chiefly with words and sounds. Therefore are small talk and gossip condemned and moral conversation and Theosophical preaching recommended. The very purification of mind is done in a great measure by words and sounds; the enlightenment of speech sheds light and warmth of a particular power. Not to lie is a negative virtue; to sound the notes of truth is a positive function. He who studies comes to application; he who applies come to promulgate. In this study of words the reader will find the great worth of our threefold work — study, application, promulgation.

CHARACTER is destiny.

—HERACLITUS

THE TEACHINGS OF PLOTINUS

[Reprinted here from *Theosophy (The Path)* for September 1897 is another of Dr. Alexander Wilder's articles. His article on Plato appeared in our May issue.—EDS.]

AUGUSTIN, the celebrated bishop of Hippo in Northern Africa, described Plotinus as "Plato risen from the dead." The singular probity of his character, his profound knowledge, his intuitive perception which often seemed like omniscience, his ecstatic vision of Divinity, joined with extraordinary sagacity in worldly matters, seemed to warrant such a declaration. The little that is known of his personal history has been given by his more distinguished disciple, Porphyry, who considered him divinely inspired.

The Platonic philosophy had been preserved by the Older Akadémé approximating somewhat toward the Pythagorean principles and then returning to the doctrines of the great philosopher. There were also other schools, more or less amplifying his teachings all the way down to the close of the Macedonian period. The establishment of the famous Museum and Library at Alexandria was the occasion for a new departure. The representatives of every school of thought were invited thither, Wise Men of the Far East, together with the Sages of the regions then known as the West. There had occurred a great upheaval in philosophic and religious thought, which added importance to the undertaking. Asoka, having embraced Buddhism, had engaged in the most extensive work of propaganda ever known, and sent eighty thousand missionaries, southward, eastward, northward, and even to the Greek-speaking countries. The Jews had their Temple in Egypt, erected by their legitimate High Priest, and not inferior to the sanctuary at Jerusalem, or its rival on Mount Gerizim. There were also Therapeutae, and sects of philosophy not necessary to enumerate. All were welcomed by the Ptolemies to the Lecture-Rooms at their capital, and their books were eagerly procured for the Great Library. There was also a purpose to surpass the similar enterprise then in active operation at Pergamos.

Under these auspices there was developed a disposition to reconcile the conflicting sentiments, and harmonize, as far as might be, the several schools of belief. As the Platonic philosophy was most complete of all and included the higher speculation, metaphysical and ethical idealism, it was best suited for the foundation of an eclectic effort. Contiguity with the East and the general adoption of the occult Mithraic Rites over the Roman world operated powerfully to mitigate the hostilities incident to the various national and tribal religions. There arose at one time and another men of ability to prepare the way for a harmony of philosophic systems. Phila, Apollonius of Tyana, Alexander the Aphrodisian and others may be named in the number.

Ammonius Sakkas of Alexandria, however, is generally accredited as

the first teacher of what is distinctly recognized as Neo-Platonism. Like other great leaders, little is recorded of him personally. An Indian orator once addressed a missionary: "The Great Spirit speaks: we hear his voice in the winds, in the rustling of the trees, and the purling of the streams of water; but he does not write!" The great teachers seem to have been equally silent with pen and stylus. Confucius, Gautama, Zoroaster, Socrates, Jesus are known only through their professed disciples. It was more common to publish recondite doctrines under another name as Hermes Trismegistus, to which we may add the Socrates of Plato's Dialogues, Zarathustra of the Vendidad, Dionysius the Areopagite, Christian Rosenkreutz, and others with which we are more familiar. The entire dogmas of Pythagoras were inculcated with the prefix of "Ipse dixit"; and Plato, it was affirmed, taught a doctrine orally which his disciples promulgated in like manner, but which was not preserved in writing.

Ammonius Sakkas taught at Alexandria in the earlier years of the third century of the present era. It was his belief that true doctrines were contained in every faith and philosophic system, and he proposed to winnow them out for an Eclectic Scheme. The name selected for himself and followers was that of *Philaletheans*, or lovers of the truth. A Zoroastrian tendency may be perceived; the Eranian doctrines were designated as truth; all divergent systems, as "the Lie." He had a select body of disciples whom he obligated to secrecy, considering that the "Wisdom of the Ancients" was too holy to be confided to profane persons. This obligation, however, was set aside by Hercunius after his death.

Plotinus, however, became the representative and chief apostle of the new Eclectic Philosophy. He was a native of Lykopolis or Siut in Upper Egypt, and was born in the year 205. He became a student at Alexandria in 233, but was about to leave in disappointment when he was introduced by a friend to Ammonius Sakkas. He at once in a transport devoted himself to the new philosophy, remaining with the school eleven years. At this time the amiable youth Gordian (Marcus Antoninus Pius Gordianus) had become Emperor, and now set out on an expedition into the Parthian dominions. Plotinus accompanied the army with the purpose "to study the philosophy of the Parthians and the Wisdom particularly cultivated by the Indian Sages." His expectation, however, was not realized, the Emperor being assassinated by a rival.

He now came to Rome, where he engaged zealously in his esoteric studies. It was his aim to restore the philosophy of Plato in its essential character, and in short to live the life of the disembodied while yet in the body, as is set forth in the *Phaedo*. He had many disciples, many of them senators, physicians, and others of philosophic tastes. Among them was Porpnyrius, a native of Tyre, who at his request afterward edited and revised his work. Though he lived a celibate and carefully abstained from public affairs, he was often made a trustee and guardian of orphan children, particularly fatherless girls, and their estates, and also an arbiter of disputes, and he always

discharged these trusts with absolute fidelity. The Roman Emperor Gallienus, who greatly admired him, bestowed upon him a deserted city in Campania, to which was given the name of Platonopolis, and he made an endeavour to establish there a Platonic Politeia, but without success. The courtiers hindered his efforts.

In many respects he resembled the Yogis of India. He was ascetic in his habits, abstaining from animal food, and he is described as "ashamed that his soul was in a body." He would not let his picture be painted, or tell the name of his parents or the race to which he belonged, or even discourse about his native country. Though often dyspeptic and subject to colic, he refused medical treatment, as unfit for a man of adult years. He never bathed, but made daily use of massage. A pestilence raged at Rome with such violence that five thousand persons are said to have perished in a single day. Plotinus was one of the victims. His servants had died from the epidemic, leaving none to care for him, and he suffered terribly. His voice was lost, his eyes blinded, and offensive ulcers covered him to his hands and even his feet. He lingered in this condition till the year 270. In this condition he was carried to Campania, where friends ministered to him. Here he was visited by Eustachius from Putechi. "I have expected you," said the dying man. "I am now endeavouring that my divine part may return to that divine essence that pervades the universe." He was sixty-four years old at the time of his death.

The veneration which the disciples of Plotinus entertained for him was almost a worship. He was reputed to possess superhuman powers. Those who became familiar with him, like those associating with Socrates, passed thenceforward a better life. A lady named Khion with her daughters living in his house, lost a valuable necklace, and Plotinus, looking among the servants, picked out the thief. Polemo, a young man of his acquaintance, was told that he would have a loose life, and die early. Porphyry himself construed too literally the notion of hating the body, and was contemplating suicide. Plotinus perceived this, and pronouncing it the effect of disease, sent him to Sicily, where he recovered, but never saw his preceptor again.

An Egyptian priest at Rome employed a theurgic test in order to discover the guardian demon of Plotinus. It was done in the temple of Isis, but one of the higher order appeared. "Thou hast a God for a guardian," he declared. On another occasion, one Olympius attempted to bring upon him by magic art the baneful influence of the stars, but the malignant defluxion was reflected upon himself. This endeavour was several times repeated, but always with a similar result. The soul of Plotinus repelled every evil assault. It was "always tending to Divinity," says Porphyry.

The oracle was consulted, and described him as blessed of the Muses and possessing endless bliss. "By the assistance of this Divine Light," says Porphyry, "he had frequently raised himself by his conceptions to the First God who is beyond, and by employing for this purpose the Paths narrated by Plato in *The Banquet*, there appeared to him the Supreme Divinity who has

neither any form nor ideal, but is established above mind and everything spiritual — to whom also, I, Porphyry, say that I was approached and was united when I was sixty-eight years of age. . . . The gods frequently directed him into the right path by benignantly extending to him abundant rays of divine light; so that he may be said to have composed his works from the contemplation and intuition of Divinity.”

Plotinus did not readily compose books. Not till Porphyry became his disciple did he begin, and he gave his compositions to Porphyry to revise. He prepared some fifty-four treatises which were comprehended in the six *Enneads* of nine parts each. We may surmise his estimate of his redactor by his praise of a poem, *The Sacred Marriage*, composed by the latter. “You have thus yourself at the same time a poet, a philosopher, and an hierophant.”

It was the purpose of Plotinus to combine and systematize the various religious and philosophic theories, by exalting them to the higher concept. He taught the fact of three hypostases or foundation principles — the Absolute Good, Mind and Soul. “For,” says Taylor, “according to Plato, the Good is superessential; Intellect is an impartible, immovable essence, and Soul is a self-motive essence, and subsists as a medium between Intellect and the nature which is distributed above bodies.”

The Divine Being is accordingly designated by Plotinus, “The Good,” “The One,” “The First,” “The First Cause.” In essence he is absolutely one and unchangeable; but plurality and changeableness pertain to his workings. He is the Light shining into the darkness or chaos. The first sphere of his activity is Mind or Intellect, in which he differentiates himself into consciousness and its objects. In this Mind are the Ideas or idealities, which are at once the archetypes and moving forces of the universe. From it all things proceed.

Thus, the Divine Spirit is the self-active, creating principle, and from spirit all matter is derived. The world and the universe are the product of spirit: as also Paul declared: “All things are out from God.”

The most immediate product of Spirit, as Plotinus taught, is Soul, which in its turn shapes matter into corporeal conditions. Receiving from the Spirit the world of Ideas and the image or archetype, it forms and fashions the world of Sense.

All existence, therefore, is an emanation and projection from the Divine One — not in time, however, but in Eternity. There is also, he inculcated, a returning impulse, attracting all again to the centre and source. Hence he made less account of external knowledge, but regarded the real truth as to be apprehended by an immediate divine illumination. He held revelation to be a perception which the individual attains, by coming in touch with the Deity. This is Ecstasy — an absence and separation of the spirit or superior intellect from the sensation and consciousness of the body and from the external memory, being rapt in contemplation of the Absolute Good.

Socrates himself was frequently in this enthusiastic condition. Alcibiades describes him in the *Banquet* as one day during the Athenian expedition to Potidaea, standing by himself in contemplation, from early dawn till mid-day and on through the night till next morning, when he performed an invocation to the Sun and went away. Xenocrates was also thus absent from the body. Paul describes a similar rapture when he was himself in the third heaven or paradise, hearing things unspeakable. In the initiations at the ancient mysteries, particularly at Eleusinia, it was attempted to produce or develop an analogous condition.

Socrates in the *Phaedo* describes the philosophic soul as retiring within itself, pushing aside the body as far as possible, having no communication with it, and so aiming at the discovery of that which is. Plotinus also teaches that the wise one cognizes the ideal of the Divine Good within him by withdrawing into the Sanctuary of his own soul. Others seek to realize it, as in the Theurgic Rites, by laborious effort of an external character. The true aim is to concentrate and simplify. Instead of going out into the manifold, the true way is to forsake it for the One, and so to float upward toward the Divine fountain of being which flows in each of us.

He declares we cannot attain to this knowing of the Infinite by the exercising of the reasoning faculty. It is the province of that faculty to distinguish and define; and the Infinite may not be thus brought within limitations. Only by a faculty superior to the understanding can we apprehend the Infinite; and this may be done by entering into a state in which the individual is no longer his finite self, and in which the Divine Essence is communicated to him. This is Ecstasy — the liberating of the mind from the finite consciousness. Like can only apprehend like; thus ceasing to be finite we become one with the Infinite. In the reducing of the Soul to this simple condition, its divine essence, this union or identity is realized.

The mind is thus illumined with divine light. The person cannot tell whence it comes or whither it goes.¹ It is he, rather, who approaches to it or withdraws. One must not pursue it, but abide waiting for it patiently, as if looking for the sun to rise above the ocean. The soul, blind to all beside, gazes intently on the ideal vision of the Beautiful, and is glorified as it contemplates it.

This condition, Plotinus says, is not one that endures permanently. Our common human nature is not sufficient for it. It may be enjoyed now and then. All that tends to purify the mind will assist in the attainment, and facilitate the approach and recurring of these felicitous experiences.

There are different paths to the Sublime Height. Every one may take the one that is best suited to him. There is the love of beauty and excellence which inspires the poet; the devotion to the Supreme One and the pursuit of the

¹ Jesus says to Nicodemus: "The pneuma or spirit moves whither it will, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Superior Knowledge which impel the philosopher; the piety and love which characterize the ardent soul. These are so many paths conducting to the heights above the actual and the particular; and then we stand in the immediate presence of the Infinite, who shines out as from the deeps of the soul.

It will be perceived that Plotinus extends human consciousness from the physical and psychic, of which we all know, to a supra-consciousness or apperception in which the higher intellect or spirit is brought into communion with its like, and to the realization of being one with Divinity itself. This is the acme of Neo-Platonism. The Mysticism of later centuries which Dionysius, Eckhart, Boehmen and Molinos inculcated, and which Sa'adi and others diffused in the Moslem body, took from this an inspiration. The Apostle Paul himself recognized the doctrine. He describes the entirety of man as "spirit and soul and body," and "delights in the law of God after the inner man." He also treats of the "psychic man" that does not receive the things of the spirit, and "one that is spirited, who knoweth the All, but is not himself known by any."

Iamblichus of Coelesyria mingled with these doctrines a Theurgic Initiation after the manner of the Egyptian priests and Theosophers and was followed by Proclus and others. But in its simplicity as taught by Plotinus and Porphyry, there were no such secret observances, but only a general conforming to the customs instituted for the general public. It was enough for the philosopher to contemplate excellence and by a pure and true life realize it in himself. Such are they of whom the world is not worthy.

THE HEART of the wise, like a mirror, should reflect all objects,
without being sullied by any.

—CONFUCIUS

THE MYSTERY OF DUAL LIFE

[The following is extracted from H.P.B.'s review of A. P. Sinnett's novel, *United*, published in *The Theosophist* for May 1887. The above title is our own. — EDS.]

HITHERTO there has been too much tendency in the organs of our Society to sacrifice spirit to form, to lay too much stress on isolated cases of the normal manifestations of psychic powers, instead of popularizing them as a LAW IN HUMAN NATURE.

This power is "latent *in MAN*," and not in solitary units of the human family only, though this mystery of dual life in every man, woman and child may remain unknown to them ninety-nine times out of a hundred. This ignorance is due to our Western modes of life.

Whether rich or poor, educated or illiterate — we, of the civilized nations, are born, live and die under an artificial light; a *false* light which, distorting our real selves like a mirror cracked in all directions, distorts our faces, and makes us see ourselves not as we are, but as our religious superstitions and social prejudices show us to ourselves.

For who of us knows, or has any means of knowing *Self*, while he lives in the lethal atmospheres of whether Society or Proletariat? Who, taught from babyhood that he is born in sin, helpless as a reed, whose only true support is the "Lord" — can think of testing his own powers — when even their presence in him is a thought that never could enter his mind? Between the eternal struggle for more gold, more honours, more power in the higher classes, and the "struggle for existence," for bread and *life*, in the lower ones, there is no time or room for the manifestation of the "inner man" in us. Thus, from birth to death that Ego slumbers, paralysed by the external man, and asserts itself only occasionally in dreams, in casual visions, and strange "coincidences" — unbidden and unheeded. The *Psychic* or HIGHER SELF as it is called in *United*, has to be, first of all, entirely ridden of the soporific influence of *Personal Self*, before it can proclaim obviously its existence and actual presence in man. But once this condition is fulfilled, then truly "he who reigns within himself and rules passions, desires, and fears, is more than a king" — as Milton says: for he is *an adept already*; the *shell* alone between the inner man and the world of objective as subjective manifestation, is to be overcome; and when it offers no better resistance than a merely passive one then the higher self is as free as on the day on which that shell will be left behind him for ever. But there are rare individuals who seem born with this capacity for certain mysterious objects of karma, and whose *inner SELVES* are so strong as to actually reduce to nought the resistance of their personal or provisional bodies.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Until recently, many scientists and nutritionists used to classify meats as “first-class” proteins and vegetables as “second-class” proteins, thereby implying that nonanimal sources of protein were somehow inferior in quality. The most current medical and scientific evidence, however, goes to show that a vegetarian diet is more nutritionally sound than a meat diet — as long as a few simple rules are followed. The word “vegetarian,” it should be remembered, is not, as one might think, derived from the word “vegetable,” but from the Latin *vegetus*, which means “whole, sound, fresh, lively.”

An article in the October 1974 issue of *Today's Health* (published by the American Medical Association) lists the following points in favour of vegetarianism:

- * Man can subsist perfectly well on a proper nonflesh diet;
- * Statistically, vegetarians in the United States are thinner, healthier, and may live longer than meat eaters;
- * Meat, especially in the large quantities Americans are accustomed to eating, may be harmful to the body;
- * Protein from nonflesh foods can be an adequate nutritional substitute for meat protein.

Protein is essential to life: It is the substance that the body uses to build and replenish its organs, skin, cartilage, nails, hair, muscles, and the organic framework of bones. To be useful to a person, the totality of food proteins must be “complete” — that is, all eight essential amino acids must be ingested simultaneously, and in the right proportion....It is possible to satisfy your protein needs by a proper intermixing of vegetable proteins....Wheat, which has a deficiency in the amino acid lysine but an abundance of sulfur-containing amino acids, can be combined with beans, which have the opposite enrichment combination. Taken together, they complement each other to form a “complete” protein....Many field trials have shown that proteins provided by suitable mixtures of vegetable origin enable children to grow as well as children provided with milk and other animal protein.

Nutritionists have established that vegetarians who eat a proper diet consistently meet their protein and caloric needs but do not significantly exceed them; while most meat eaters consistently exceed their limits and, as a consequence, suffer from overweight and high levels of serum cholesterol. Some studies even indicate a strong correlation between a meat diet and cancer of the colon. And there are indications that meat is highly susceptible to bacteria growth and food spoilage. Meat eaters also may be bothered by poor absorption and elimination.

Scientific evidence suggesting the superiority of a vegetarian diet is offered also by anthropologists, whose field investigations of certain non-meat cul-

tures have documented the excellent health and longevity enjoyed by these people. Heart diseases and many forms of cancer are practically unknown in some "underdeveloped" countries where meat is not part of the diet and where the life style is quite different from that of the so-called civilized world.

The article in *Today's Health* makes only passing mention (quoting Jay Dinshah, president of both the North American Vegetarian Society and the American Vegan Society in Malaga, New Jersey) that vegetarianism "is a part of the practice of Ahimsa (nonkilling, noninjuring), an expression of the Oneness of all life." Besides being nutritionally advantageous, a vegetarian diet is superior on ethical and moral grounds. It is, besides, conducive to psychic and spiritual health, to the development of intuition and other inner faculties and powers. In the words of H.P.B. :

One of the great German scientists has shown that every kind of animal tissue, however you may cook it, still retains certain marked characteristics of the animal which it belonged to, which characteristics can be recognized. And apart from that, everyone knows by the taste what meat he is eating. We go a step farther, and prove that when the flesh of animals is assimilated by man as food, it imparts to him, physiologically, some of the characteristics of the animal it came from. Moreover, occult science teaches and proves this to its students by ocular demonstration, showing also that this "coarsening" or "animalizing" effect on man is greatest from the flesh of the larger animals, less for birds, still less for fish and other cold-blooded animals, and least of all when he eats only vegetables. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 258)

A medico-scientific experiment to cure chronically ill patients with the help of the ancient Indian method of healing — the use of *mantras* — is being carried out in a leading Bombay hospital under controlled conditions and the watchful eyes of top specialists and researchers (*Free Press Journal*, April 23). The experiment, conducted by instructors from the Institute of Lifetrans at Khapri, near Nagpur, is intended to prove the efficacy of *mantras* when all other therapies fail. The Institute claims to have cured many chronic cases of polio and other ailments, but this is the first time that the experiment is being conducted in a modern hospital with specialists in medicine and surgery watching.

The experiment is based on the principles of healing spelled out in one of the old Indian scriptures, *Hiranyagarbha Samiksha*. The newspaper report quotes a spokesman of the Institute as saying that

Mantra was a group of words and sounds which, uttered in a particular manner, set a train of thought vibrations (*Manojava*) in motion, converted itself into energy and produced the desired results on the human system.

Mantra shastra was a fully-developed science practised by the ancient Hindus during both pre- and post-Vedic periods. The effect of the mantra could be attained by practising it with the necessary concentration for a certain period of time.

In the psychic healing experiment that was being conducted by the instructors of the Institute, the healing energy was transmitted by the incantation of a *mantra* by the healer and by magnetizing water which was imbibed by the patient as medicine.

The spokesman said that the scripture referred to above contained *mantric* cures for every disease and ailment and detailed how this therapy could be used even to improve agricultural production. The Institute, which is barely a year old, had already achieved revolutionary results by the application of *mantra* therapy to agriculture in a series of experiments on its farm at Khapri. Many post-graduate scholars are now undergoing training in *mantra shastra* at the Khapri Institute.

In *The Theosophist* for August 1882 appeared an article entitled “‘Tharana,’ or Mesmerism” in which the writer claimed to have cured, generally within a few hours, acute sprains as also scorpion-bites, by the power of *mantras*. To this, H.P.B. appended an Editorial Note from which the following is extracted:

A *mantram* is simply a recitation of certain verses held sacred among the Hindus. Yet, if repeated loudly and after a certain rule of phonetics, *i.e.*, chanted in a peculiar way, we do not know why the resultant sound could not possess as curative a power in itself as a mesmeric “force.”...If the dulcet tones of a flute have been known to soothe, and in many instances to arrest for a considerable time the throbbings of the nerves in fits of *sciatica* — why not the rhythmic sounds of a Sanskrit *mantram*? The forefathers of many Brahmans — if not the latter themselves — must have certainly known more of the mystery of sound than Professor Tyndall, even though that learned gentleman has succeeded in drawing musical sounds from fire and imponderable gases....The ancient Greek mystics, equally with the Western occultists and the adept Brahmans, agreed all in teaching that sound emanated from the Astral Light, or *Akasa*, in its purest essence....It is not sufficient to know a thing theoretically, as it will be only leading to eternal confusion, even “by learning some *mantram*, and trying its effects on patients,” unless one knows the philosophy — so to say, the *rationale* of the cure. Even success is no proof that it may not turn out very injurious some day. Therefore, before one becomes a practitioner, he ought to become a student....

An adept knows that in the centre of the Astral Fire must he search in nature for the origin of every sound — and it *is* sound — the Vach — that is the curative agent in a *mantram*....If we say that nature has in reality *seven*, not five or even four, elements, some of our readers may laugh at our *ignorance*, but an initiate would never do so, since he knows very well what we mean. He knows that, in the case in point (the power of a *mantram*), it is through occult sounds that the adept commands the elemental forces of

nature. . . . The *mantram* ignorantly employed may, and often has, proved a treacherous weapon, whose mystical power has caused it to turn and *stab the user*.

Any systematized assessment of the way today's young people are thinking and behaving is of value, not merely sociologically but as an indicator of the shape of things to come. In that respect the survey conducted recently in Bombay by a team headed by a psychologist, Prof. M. B. Ghorpade, must be considered important. About 1,600 Bombay University students coming from different backgrounds and belonging to 13 colleges in the city and to several post-graduate departments on the Kalina campus were interviewed to find out their religious and moral beliefs, their social awareness, their attitudes to sex and marriage, drugs and alcohol. According to Professor Ghorpade, the findings of the survey would apply to the entire student population in Bombay because the sample subjected to the study constituted the core section. (*The Times of India*, May 19)

Of the students interviewed, 15 per cent were opposed to all religions but held firm faith in god as a "giver of justice" or as "the supreme creator." A mere one per cent did not believe in god or conform to any religion. The majority believed in a humanitarian religion — helping people in distress and doing good to others — though they did not have a personal god, did not practise rituals or frequent holy places.

The survey revealed that the general belief that our educated youths lacked social awareness and fellow-feeling for the weaker and deprived sections of society was not well-founded. About 70 per cent of the boys and girls interviewed wanted to help the weaker sections of society but they did not know how to go about it. They expressed, however, their disillusionment with various schemes of social service now undertaken at the university level.

The students' attitude to sex was conditioned by cultural traditions and 82 per cent of the girls and 70 per cent of the boys held views on sex that could be described as very conservative by western standards. About 11 per cent of the boys and five per cent of the girls held that permissive sex should not be regarded as "reprehensible" and that ideas of "virginity, chastity or purity" should be ignored.

About three per cent boys and two per cent girls admitted that they took drugs almost regularly. Drug and alcohol addiction, gambling and wayward behaviour of various sorts were more prevalent among students belonging to the rich and upper-middle classes. But only 24 per cent of the boys and 35 per cent of the girls thought that drinking was a social evil. Four per cent of the boys and one per cent of the girls confessed to taking liquor regularly. In general, resistance to alcohol appeared to be stronger and more widespread among girls than among boys.

About 49 per cent girls and 42 per cent boys gave importance to caste and community considerations while choosing a marriage partner. The rest were willing to marry outside their caste and religion. A majority of youths would set a great score by love, good character and modest behaviour in their partners, while five per cent of the girls and 14 per cent of the boys would opt for highly sociable, bold, beautiful and fashionable partners.

These findings, according to Professor Ghorpade, indicated that a majority of boys and girls took a dim view of people who deviated from the traditionally accepted standards of moral behaviour of men and women.

In our cities, the influence of Western civilization envelops the youth of both sexes. They often fail to realize that the aping of degrading and demoralizing habits, manners and customs is not the mark of culture and civilization. Most of these "educated" youths are ignorant of the true meaning of the very words they bandy about — culture and civilization. They need to learn to discern the true, the good and the beautiful in Western as in Eastern civilization. There are falsehoods, evils and ugliness in both. Principles on which the "unspoilt" life of the East is still supported must at least be grasped, respected and understood if ever the educated youth of today are to become citizens of the world. Even the goodness of the modern world is unprincipled; its "altruism" is no longer founded on a knowledge of the Self of all beings and therefore on the love of Self, but only on selfish inclination.

Students of Theosophy will be reminded of H.P.B.'s article "Civilization, the Death of Art and Beauty" (reprinted in *She Being Dead Yet Speaketh* from *Lucifer* for May 1891) — a scathing indictment of the tendency to ape Western civilization on the part of Asian nations.

To what extent will the liberalization of prohibition in Maharashtra State lead to indulgence or to compulsive drinking? What makes the average man take to liquor? Who can be described as an alcoholic? Has dry-law relaxation spelt the end of the illicit liquor trade? D. D'Souza, who recently did an in-depth study of these and related problems, tries to provide the answers in his article "The Phenomenal Rise in Alcoholism" in the *Free Press Journal* for February 16.

The study revealed that an increasing number of teenagers, especially college-going youths belonging to the higher middle and upper social class, were frequenting liquor shops. Some retailers ascribed the trend to "permissiveness among modern youth," to the adolescent need for "self-assertion" and to the fact that "drinking is considered manly."

According to city psychiatrist J. A. Kohiyar, a heavy drinker is "one with a low tolerance level to conditions of stress. He is usually a dependent type." Psychoanalyst M. V. Amrit states that pathological drinking usually rises from some emotional maladjustment, for instance the withholding of maternal

love and attention in infancy. "The latent anger built up, thus early, against society can be aggravated by unfavourable factors or environment at school or later in life," he adds. Norma Caldeira, a social worker attached to an alcoholics' rehabilitation centre, believes that "a potential addict usually has a poor self-image which he bolsters up by boasting, posturing and a show of aggression."

An intensive study of a suburban 1,000-hut colony in Santa Cruz by social worker P. A. Hanif revealed that about 60 per cent of the inhabitants, who include school-teachers, white-collar workers, technicians, mill- and factory-hands, are addicted to liquor, 10 per cent being hard drinkers who have to keep themselves topped up with alcohol most of the time. About 30 per cent spend half their pay on drink, 25 per cent one-third, a few all they earn, causing acute distress and privation in the family. Some teenagers resort to thieving to get money for booze.

In view of the increase in drinking, measures to counteract it and cure addiction have added relevance. Although it is claimed that prohibition propaganda has been intensified, the article deplors that "there is a measure of casualness, even condescension, about governmental propaganda against drink which makes Bombayman shrug it off." The article goes on to say:

To be meaningful, prohibition publicity and follow-up therapy should be based on an analysis of the occupational distribution of the drinking population, their social background and their motivation for taking liquor.... Since the drink problem will always be with us, enlightened propaganda and medical techniques will prove more effective than punitive measures, such as the arrest of drunks. The Medical Council on Alcoholism, an international body, feels that publicity should be directed towards exposing to people the dangers of excess. Abuse of liquor leads to physical damage like cirrhosis of the liver, neuritis, heart-wall weakening, impotence and even insanity. Socially, it breaks up families and is the cause of secondary poverty. It loses the nation many precious man hours.

In the ultimate analysis, the drink problem cannot stand alone and should be tackled not only in its medical aspect but side by side with a systematic change in the whole social and economic set-up, beginning with the motivation for heavy indulgence.

A. M. Lorenzo, of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, says what this is, precisely, in his book *The Drink Problem in Urban Bombay*. He writes: "In urban society the sources of anxiety are numerous. Men and women are raked with tensions because they fear hunger, insecurity of property and position and general privation. They worry for old age, illness, unemployment, and to mitigate their pain and disabilities they drink to forget."

Political leaders and welfare workers must therefore find remedies for the sources of conflict cited above, as well as for dismal housing, social ostracism and pressures, long and fatiguing conditions at work, wages that cannot keep in line with rising prices, and absence of cultural interests. These are basic problems connected with lack

of education and national development and create the climate which drives the masses to drink.

It is extremely disturbing that juridical and public opinion is slowly veering away from a sensible and compassionate view of crime and punishment and towards the restoration or continuation of the death penalty. In India, it has not yet been abolished; according to the law ministry's decision, it should be imposed in special cases. In Britain, which abolished this heinous and barbarous punishment some years ago, the debate is still raging (especially among the lords) on its restoration. In the United States, Maryland has just restored the death penalty, thus becoming the 32nd State to do this after the 1972 Supreme Court ruling. That ruling was that capital punishment was unconstitutional since judges and juries had discretion in imposing it. Now what many States have done is to take away this discretion from judges and juries and vest it in the governor! (*The Times of India*, April 30)

The idea of taking one life for another is revolting and the arguments on its behalf are thinner than air. The deterrence theory is a primitive myth: there has been no upsurge of murders in Britain after capital punishment was abolished. One argument against it is that the very finality of the punishment overwhelms the crime. From the Theosophical viewpoint, it is an evil flowing from ignorance of the truth about man's real nature and faculties and their action and condition after bodily death. When a wide and deep knowledge and belief in respect to the occult side of nature and of man shall have become the property of the people, then may we expect a great change in the matter of capital punishment.

The following is from an editorial in *The Times of India* for May 14:

The greatest disservice to man in recent years was rendered by the producers of the American film *The Exorcist*. Gleefully they must have counted the millions they raked in at the box office, but they never realized the tremendous psychological damage they have done. Many more people in these supposedly enlightened times are being driven to the devil and devil worship, somewhat as the Gadarene swine were driven into the sea. There has been an astonishing increase in popular belief in the occult and the mysterious, especially their forbiddingly evil aspects. Is it a pathetic indication of a reversion to the dark ages? Today the devil is ruling the world. There are realms of fear which, while fascinating in a morbid way, are unsafe to venture into. Part of the blame for all such disturbing developments must go to the audio-visual media — television, films, brain-washing, advertising — and to those long-robed professional purveyors of fear.
