

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE UNITED LODGE OF THEOSOPHISTS THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

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Effective Theosophical work cannot be done unless there are found persons in the world who can see the necessity for it and will fit themselves more and more to supply the need. That certain persons find such an opportunity is their karma, but what they do with the opportunity depends upon their realization of its importance. 1. 2. 3.

Our thoughts are *our* thoughts; our lives are *our* lives and both are devoted to *our* work. Having put our hands to the plough, and seeing the field that needs cultivation, we may push on in confidence and faith. More power is needed? It will come, if we will just open those big hearts of ours and let "them" work. *Heart Work*

1909 Robert Crosbie and his companions founded the United Lodge Theosophists. Its Declaration, Policy and Programme, mainly conceived by him, are definite. For a full decade he imparted his garnered theosophical experience by precept and by example.

Robert Crosbie fully accepted the view of H. P. Blavatsky:

Our age, reader, is a paradoxical anomaly. It is pre-eminently materialistic, and as pre-eminently pietist, a Janus age, in all truth. Our literature, our modern thought and progress so-called, run on these two parallel lines, so incongruously dissimilar, and yet both so popular and so very "proper" and "respectable," each in its own way. He who presumes to draw a third line, or even a hyphen of reconciliation, so to speak, between the two, has to be fully prepared for the worst. He will have his work mangled by reviewers, who after reading three lines on the first page, two in the middle of the book, and the closing sentence, will proclaim

it "unreadable"; it will be mocked by the sycophants of science and church, misquoted by their flunkeys, and rejected even by the pious railway stalls, while the average reader will not even understand its meaning. The still absurd misconceptions in the cultured circles of Society about the teachings of the "Wisdom-religion" (Bodhism), after the admirably clear and scientifically presented explanations of its elementary doctrines by the author of *Esoteric Buddhism*, are a good proof in point. They might serve as a caution even to those amongst us who, hardened in almost a lifelong struggle in the service of our Cause, are neither timid with their pens, nor in the least disconcerted or appalled by the dogmatic assertions of scientific "authorities." And yet they persist ^{persist} in their work, although perfectly aware that, do what they may, neither materialism nor doctrinal pietism will give theosophical philosophy a fair hearing in this age. To the very end, our doctrine will be systematically rejected, our theories denied a place, even in the ranks of those ever-shifting, scientific ephemera — called the "working hypotheses" of our day.

"Theosophy is for those who want it, and for none others," and so Robert Crosbie did not waste his time and energy in trying to convert the scientist or the theologian. He laboured to attract those who

1. longed to receive explanations about what puzzled them, to gain knowl-
2. edge about ways and means to eliminate their own moral blemishes, to
- 3.4. brighten their own knowledge and to improve self-control and control
5. over their own environment.

Convinced that in the wisdom of the Message of Theosophy as recorded by H. P. Blavatsky and explained by W. Q. Judge we have all that is needed, he promulgated with devotion and zeal the doctrines and teachings of that Message. If, on the one hand, he left alone those who were wedded to their idols of science and religion, on the other he did not stress study of the numerous branches of modern knowledge for a proper comprehension of Theosophy. Direct study of the Theosophical text-books and straightforward promulgation of genuine Theosophical ideas were his method. His writings and all his work bear unmistakable evidence of this.

Robert Crosbie once said, "The power to learn is not learning," and he added:

To have a power and not use it for good is to lose it. To use it for evil is also to lose it in the long run, for by such use, conditions are produced in the individual that prevent any use and bring about an atrophy.

It might truthfully be said that his motto for Theosophical promulgation was this: "One can help another to see the truth in himself." And what was the primary idea which was the very centre of his promulgation? This: "*Potentially*, we are All; *actually*, we are what we are able to manifest." *Potentially
Actually*

To follow faithfully his method of study and promulgation is the solemn duty of the U.L.T. It is natural, therefore, that those who occupy in the world "the seats of the mighty" and also those who hanker to occupy such seats, shun the company of the U.L.T. and its Associates. We need not be concerned about that; much less, be anxious. *Power*

What is the work of the earnest Associates? Robert Crosbie's words have a profound significance:

Our work is here and now in the conditions that surround us; when we have eliminated our defects on this plane of existence, we will be able to avail ourselves of our inner knowledge *in a bodily existence* and not before.

The main task of the U.L.T., then, is to reiterate the Theosophical truths for those who need deeper aspects of the Wisdom, without neglecting the newcomer or the enquirer. To each and every person, the beginner, the young student, the old student, the truth about applying *apply* the doctrines must be taught. It is through proper application of what is studied and what is promulgated that real progress is made — progress not only of the individual but equally of the whole Movement.

The application by each naturally refers to his own condition; it depends upon what he studies, what he understands; application by the beginner is as profitable to him as is the application by the old aspirant to himself. Application as a principle is of supreme importance to everyone, without exception.

This work executed and sustained in the present will ensure our future advance. The fresh cyclic impetus will bring us face to face with the Theosophical "Judgement Day." Will the U.L.T. have held to the Original Lines, studied and promulgated the Original Teachings, embodied the Original Impulse? That depends on the present-day Associates who become true companions of the Holy and Wise Masters and serve the Cause of Human Brotherhood according to Their Plan. This was taught and shown by the Friendly Philosopher, Robert Crosbie. *Fresh Cycle
"Judgement
Day"*

PREPARING FOR SERVICE

The fearless warrior, his precious life-blood oozing from his wide and gaping wounds, will still attack the foe, drive him from out his stronghold, vanquish him, ere he himself expires. Act then, all ye who fail and suffer, act like him; and from the stronghold of your Soul chase all your foes away — ambition, anger, hatred, e'en to the shadow of desire — when even you have failed.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

WHEREVER success comes through effort, wherever seemingly insurmountable obstacles are faced and overcome, there the force and power of concentration has been at work lending its great strength and support to the endeavour. Can the student use the dynamism of this force for living the Theosophical life? The answer, as is apparent, is of course yes; for the force of concentration being colourless can be tailored to the soul's needs. That concentration can be used for non-spiritual and even evil purposes is evident. So, to protect himself, the student is required to learn how to use safeguards against the derelictions of his lower self.

Before the student enters upon the laborious disciplines which ultimately will give him the power, he has to keep before his mind certain ideas that are basic to the effort. For instance, he has to take it as an axiomatic truth that the graph drawn for any progress in endeavour will not show a straight line of ascent. All human tendencies (good or bad) obey the law of cycles. They disappear for a time, and the individual may congratulate himself that he is rid of the bad; but they are bound to recur under the law of cycles. The man who thinks that night will not follow upon the heels of day errs and may have to suffer bitterly for his ignorance. Therefore, the wise student always prepares himself for the coming on of darkness. His wrong attachments, his attitude of *laissez-faire*, his undesirable inclinations will present themselves before him at regular intervals, maybe in dreams, or by association of ideas, or through the sudden appearance of old and now undesirable acquaintances. For each such eventuality, the student has to prepare a plan and a programme during the periods of calmness when these assaults are yet remote possibilities.

The next point to consider is the effect of causes which one has already generated and which are past recall. There is every possibility that seeds of frustration sown years back may fructify at the very moment when the student starts on his reform. These may present barriers through circumstance, chance, environment, temptation, ill-health,

calamities that shake the mind, etc., etc. The ripples of karmic effects have to be anticipated, lived through and without apparent resistance allowed to exhaust themselves the while one holds grimly on to the end in view. This too has to be envisaged and the relevance of rebuffs acknowledged, so that we leave no room for the despondent view that the difficulties are insurmountable. Fogs when they come blot out the whole landscape and even make the taking of the next step hazardous. But fogs do lift, and the wise man is he who is strongest in the exercise of patience.

The third important idea to grasp before entering upon the task in reality is that beyond the lower mind of passions and false ideologies there exists the extensive field of the Higher Mind with its powers, potencies and functions. Beyond even that Higher Mind and far surpassing it, there exists in reality of Function and Awareness the plane of the Higher Self, the illimitable realm of Ishwara and Brahma, of Ormazd and Osiris. The aspiring disciple has to prepare out of the substances available to him vestures suitable for entry and work on each of those planes of being; for, his earthly body is too restrictive and too gross to be of any use beyond the plane of material existence and brute energy.

That the knowledge of the two subjects of Karma and the Higher Self is vital to the aspirant is made clear in *The Key to Theosophy*. In the catechism between the Enquirer and the Theosophist, the Enquirer is made to ask: "Where does a Theosophist look to for power to subdue his passions and selfishness?" And the Theosophist answers: "To his Higher Self, the divine spirit, or the God in him, and to his *Karma*" (p. 72). A study of the references under the two heads of "Higher Self" and "Karma" in the indices to *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Key to Theosophy* is bound to yield rich and rewarding dividends.

Long before he attempts to enter upon his discipline, the student has to ask himself repeatedly the questions: "Why do I want to cultivate the power of concentration? Why do I want to weave the vestures that will give me an entry into the realms of Soul and Spirit?" There are inquirers and not so few of them either who want it all for their own salvation. They want to outstrip their brother-men in the race towards a liberation that will isolate them from the world and men for ever. For such as these, the disciplines which Theosophy advocates are meaningless. But there are others who in the silence and the sanctified solitude of their Souls have vowed that when they hold the prize of liberation in their palms they will yield up their great reward for the

sake of others. They are aspirants to Sorrow throughout the coming cycles. Theosophy and Occultism are for them. For such renunciators, it is well to bear constantly in mind throughout life that they pledge themselves to work for others. For them, to live to benefit mankind becomes the first step and even supersedes the no less important step of practising the glorious virtues. This discipline — that of dedicating one's life for the beneficence of all kind — has to be adopted at even very low levels at which the aspirant may find himself. Long ages must pass before the aspirant will be in a position to offer the final sacrifice; but even where he is, now and today, he can kindle in himself that fire of aspiration which can make him yearn for that day when he will have reached that stature when he can in all sincerity vow: "Never will I seek nor receive private individual salvation. Never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever and everywhere will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world." (Pledge of Kwan-Yin)

Senses No man can hope to succeed in concentration so long as his senses, like untrained horses, run riot with no real control by the thinking man. The first steps — elementary from the point of view of the discipline to be followed — are therefore limited to the curbing and training of the senses. The exercise for the beginner is set out thus in the *Book of the Golden Precepts*: "Withhold thy mind from all external objects, all external sights. Withhold internal images, lest on thy Soul-light a dark shadow they should cast."

However innocuous the enjoyment of a sense-pleasure may appear to be (sense-delighting sounds do so appear), it has in it the germs of the non-essential and even of the a-moral. Experience teaches that wherever the non-ethical is allowed a foothold, there the living of the real inner life becomes difficult. This is so because it generates the tendency towards a laxity in discipline and a relaxation of concentration. The teaching advises that when the mind wanders from the discipline, it has to be brought back and placed upon the Spirit. Any sort of attachments — and the senses are the doors through which these may enter — are corrosive of the discipline. "Thou shalt not let thy senses make a playground of thy mind," says *The Voice of the Silence* (p. 54). "He is possessed of spiritual knowledge whose senses are withheld from objects of sense," says the *Bhagavad-Gita*. (II. 68)

Once that a protective wall is raised around the mind against the onslaught of the senses, its training can be entered upon in earnest. The

Memory

first steps in this direction consist of obtaining control over memory and the self-reproductive processes of thought. The building up of a chain of thought-images around an awakened memory of sensual gratification is the usual prelude to a fall. So is the dwelling of the mind on pictures of illegitimate delights anticipated by fancy and given strength by an ever gnawing hunger to experience them. A chance thought, a dream remembered, a sound heard or a sight perceived may through association of ideas set up a chain reaction that plays havoc with the unsteady edifice that the neophyte is wont to build during the early stages of his struggle to move towards the light. To repeat: "Withhold thy mind from all external objects, all external sights. Withhold internal images, lest on thy Soul-light a dark shadow they should cast," is the sage advice *The Voice of the Silence* gives. Many read it — some even regularly — and pass on unmindful of the imperative nature of the instruction. Such have not heeded the words which follow the title of the book and which say: "For the daily *use* of Lanoos (disciples)." It is the daily use made of the instructions over continuous and unbroken periods that is of the essence. The silent repetition of sacred texts is also important; but then it serves another purpose.

When these disciplines have been successfully adopted and made a part of one's life, then the disciple is ready to enter upon the next step of his training. He is now called upon to learn to distinguish between the real and the false, the ever-fleeting and everlasting. He has first to learn and then to discern that both these aspects exist and that to be successful in the service of humanity he has to be sure to owe allegiance to the permanent and not to the mutable aspects either in man or in nature. The false is the shadow of the True. Know the Truth and the false will fall away as easily as does darkness at the approach of light.

real + false

The TRUTH that will dispel many an illusion is that the Divine Essence, the Universal Soul, is in all things and everywhere and that by it the whole of manifestation is sustained. In *The Voice of the Silence* it is spoken of thus:

Alas, alas, that all men should possess Alaya, be one with the Great Soul, and that possessing it, Alaya should so little avail them!

Behold how like the moon, reflected in the tranquil waves, Alaya is reflected by the small and by the great, is mirrored in the tiniest atoms, yet fails to reach the heart of all. Alas, that so few men should profit by the gift, the priceless boon of learning truth, the right perception of existing things, the knowledge of the

non-existent. (pp. 26-27)

In this passage, the indications are clear and unambiguous. It is only through Alaya that man can hope to possess Truth and right perception as well as the knowledge of that which transcends manifestation. Herein lies the essence and scope of spiritual service. In all in whom the perception of Alaya is dulled, in all who in their blindness respect not the reflections of Alaya in the small and in the great, there remains the scope of the sowing of the seeds of Truth. The Paths to Alaya have to be searched for, not only for oneself but also for those whose souls are struggling in the profound gloom of materiality. The aspirant is called upon to serve in the only sense in which service becomes meaningful. Each step in his progress onwards he has to share with others, and if he does not find those others readily, he is advised to seek them out. *The Voice of the Silence* gives the advice:

Give light and comfort to the toiling pilgrim, and seek out him who knows still less than thou; who in his wretched desolation sits starving for the bread of Wisdom and the bread which feeds the shadow, without a Teacher, hope or consolation, and — let him hear the Law. (p. 40)

Intuition THE BEST WORK is done not by rules but by imagination. By imagination I really mean intuition. Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Unless there is an inner harmony of the universe, there can be no science. Nature was constructed in a wonderful way and our task is to find out the mathematical structure of Nature itself.

Man's meaningful existence Man can find meaning in life only through devoting himself to society.

No chance I have not yet found all the calculus I need. But of one thing I am certain, the universe is not run on blind chance.

The meaning of relativity has been widely misunderstood. It does not mean that everything in life is relative and that we have a right to turn the world mischievously topsy-turvy.

—EINSTEIN

"fortuitous concurrence of atoms"

THE PRAYER OF THE VIRTUOUS, BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END

[The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, conceived and instituted by H.H. the Dalai Lama in 1971 at Dharamsala (H.P.), has undertaken a programme of research, translation and publication of several works from original Tibetan sources. We reprint here, by special permission, Tsong-kha-pa's *Thog-mthah-ma* (*The Prayer of the Virtuous, Beginning, Middle and End*), translated by Sherpa Tulku, Khamlung Tulku, Alexander Berzin and Jonathan Landaw, under Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey. This is a revised version of the translation originally prepared by the same team in 1969.

In the writings of H.P.B., more than one reference is made to Tsong-kha-pa, the great Tibetan 14th-century Exponent of Wisdom, also known as Je Rinpoche, "The Chief of Great Price." A peculiarly intimate tie connects him with the recent stages of the Theosophical Movement, for he not only introduced a purified Buddhism in his own day and into his own country, but also gave a strong impulsion toward spreading the Wisdom-Religion throughout the world. *The Theosophical Glossary* says of him:

"He was a great Adept, who being unable to witness any longer the desecration of Buddhist philosophy by the false priests who made of it a marketable commodity, put a forcible stop thereto by a timely revolution and the exile of 40,000 sham monks and Lamas from the country. He is regarded as an Avatar of Buddha, and is the founder of the *Gelukpa* ("yellow-cap") Sect, and of the mystic Brotherhood connected with its chiefs. The "tree of the 10,000 images" (*khoom-boom*) has, it is said, sprung from the long hair of this ascetic, who leaving it behind him disappeared for ever from the view of the profane."—Eds.]

I pay heartfelt homage to all of the Buddhas

As well as their Sons in the ten main directions.

(1)

May the powerful Three Jewels of Refuge in Buddha,

His teachings and assembly, all lacking deceit,

And the might of the Masters who teach what is true,

Fulfil boundless prayers of my pure selfless wish

To be able to free from this round of existence

Limitless beings who suffer no end.

(2)

In all future lives may I never fall back
 To rebirth in one of the three lower states;
 May I rather take birth with a sound human body
 Fully endowed with the favoured conditions
 And freedom to study the teachings of Buddha,
 (That I may be able to liberate all).

(3)

From the moment I am born may I shun strong attachment
 To all worldly pleasures — they bring no relief;
 But rather by thinking about the true meaning
 Of giving up suffering and the causes for grief,
 May I never shrink back from exerting full effort
 To live with pure morals, thus banishing pain.

(4)

In order that I may be fully ordained
 May I never be thwarted by hindrances coming
 From clinging to family, to friends or to wealth;
 But rather may all the conditions that favour
 Becoming a monk come about as I've wished.

(5)

Then once I'm ordained, for the rest of my life
 May I never be stained by committing a breach
 Of the conduct prescribed in the codes of the Buddha
 Or common-sense guidelines of moral control;
 Instead may I keep all the vows as I've promised
 Before the eyes of my Abbot and Guru.

(6)

With pure moral conduct in all of my lives
 May I put Mahayana's profound and vast teachings
 As much into practice and use as I can.
 And may I be able for eons past number
 To do all the difficult labour required
 To benefit fully the numberless beings
 Who have all been my mother in lifetimes gone by.

(7)

May I always remain in the care of a Guru
 Whose nature is enriched by the benefits coming
 From study and practice of what Buddha taught,
 Who possesses in full self-control and compassion,
 Whose senses are calmed and who always is dauntless
 In helping all others without a regret.

(8)

Just as Sada-prarudita showed pure devotion —
 To serve Dharmod-gata, he cut off his flesh —
 May I too please my Guru, not being pretentious,
 With body, my wealth and with even my life.
 May I never displease him for one single moment,
 Nor cause him to be disappointed in me.

(9)

May the deep profound sense of Perfection of Wisdom,
 The insight that penetrates clear to the Void,
 Be shown to me always as Sada-prarudita
 Learned from his Guru, devoid of mistakes,
 Not warped by the waters of wrong understanding,
 Not cluttered with guesses at what it might mean.

(10)

May I always be free of the influence coming
 From misleading friends or from wrong-minded Gurus
 Propounding false nihilist views of denial
 Or claiming eternal unchanging existence —
 Two antithetical views running counter
 To what Buddha meant by the teachings of Voidness:
 (A Path of the Middle, devoid of extremes).

(11)

May all sentient beings cross over the ocean
 Of worldly existence and gain freedom's shore,
 By restraining and lashing their compulsive bad habits
 To the boat of acquaintance with teachings of Dharma,
 Intensive deep thinking and strict meditation,
 While flying the sail of the pure selfless wish

To be able to free everyone from his suffering,
 Propelled by the strong never-slackening wind
 Of continuous effort and joyous hard work.

(12)

To whatever degree I might tame my own mind-stream
 By hearing the teachings, by selflessly giving,
 By keeping the morals of pure self-control,
 And by always according my thoughts, words and actions
 With wisdom that knows what is right and what's wrong,
 May I gain even greater attainments of freedom
 From pride and conceit and all arrogant ways.

(13)

Without being quenched may I hear endless teachings
 At the feet of a Master who does not rely
 On any support but the force of pure logic
 To make the true meaning of scriptures come clear.

(14)

By examining fully with the four kinds of logic
 The meaning of what I have heard, day and night,
 May I cut off all doubts with the critical mind
 I have gained from clear thinking on what should be
 thought.

(15)

When convinced in this way that the teachings are valid,
 Through having explored their deep basis, the Void,
 Then remaining alone, may I put into practice
 The strict meditations in classical form
 With concerted hard effort to sever all ties.

(16)

When I understand fully the Buddha's true purpose,
 From hearing the teachings, reflecting upon them,
 Then practising strict meditation in turn,
 May there never arise in me selfish desires
 For pleasure or profit or fame in this life.

(17)

After banishing miserly feelings forever,
 Not being attached to material wealth,
 May I gather around me a core of disciples
 By offering first the possessions I have;
 Then by giving them further the teachings of Buddha,
 May I satisfy fully their wishes and needs.

(18)

Understanding the meaning of renunciation,
 (Having thought about suffering as well as its cause),
 May I always uphold, till becoming a Buddha,
 The banner of freedom, for which I'd not break
 The most minor rule of pure moral behaviour,
 That I vowed I would keep, though my life be at stake.

(19)

Whenever I see or hear someone provoking
 Who says things annoying to cause me disturbance,
 Or strikes out to harm me, or brings me to shame,
 Or even recalling a person like this,
 May I meditate: "Patience," and quiet my anger,
 By addressing myself to his good points instead.

(20)

Having banished forever the three kinds of laziness,
 Blocking attainment of virtues not gained
 And preventing improvement of those that I have,
 May I work hard with pleasure to practise the teachings,
 (Not feeling that I'm an inadequate person,
 Not being attached to my mindless diversions,
 Not putting till later what I can do now).

(21)

Abandoning all types of mental quiescence
 That leave me still wandering through rounds of rebirth,
 Because they're devoid of the moisture of mercy
 To wake me from rapture to help others out,
 And are lacking the insight to see through to Voidness
 To cut off the root of repeated rebirth.

May I always develop a joint meditation
 (Of mercy, quiescence and insight as well).

(22)

Having fully abandoned distorted wrong theories
 With limited grasp of what Voidness entails,
 That I've made up in fright of its deep implications,
 Mistaking them for its true ultimate sense,
 May I realize that everything, from the beginning,
 Is void of existence inherently real.

(23)

May I yoke to the model of flawless behaviour
 Especially those monks who without any shame
 Ignore the restraints of their pure moral training,
 Not shrinking from conduct the holy despise,
 And who break the monks' precepts while being, in fact,
 Monks in their outward appearance alone.

(24)

May I lead to the path that is praised by the Buddha
 Most quickly all those who have wandered astray
 And have missed the right path, having followed the guidance
 Of wrong-minded Gurus and misleading friends.

(25)

When I've shamed the bold foxes of misinformed speech
 With my lion-like roar of correct explanation,
 Impeccable logic and clear style of prose,
 May I guide and subdue everyone who's mistaken
 By wielding the Buddha's effective skilled methods,
 Upholding the banner of undeclined truth.

(26)

No matter where I may be born in the future,
 Provided that there I've the chance to drink deeply
 The nectar of teachings Sage Buddha has brought,
 May my rebirth take place in a good honest family,
 And may I have wealth, a sound body and wisdom,
 Great power and happiness, health and long life

(So that I may be better equipped to help others
Surmount all their sufferings and gain true release).

(27)

May I fully develop the love of a mother
Towards all sentient beings, especially towards those
Who verbally thrash me and always have harmful
Intentions against my life, body and wealth.

(28)

When the force of sincere meditation on others
As being more dear than myself bears results
In my mind's cultivation of pure selfless wishes
(That I might be able to liberate all),
And I've likewise developed the wish to be Buddha
(To gain skilful means to accomplish this aim),
May I quickly be able to grant those who would harm me
Supreme Buddhahood without any delay.

(29)

Whoever encounters or hears or recalls
These sincere heartfelt prayers that I offer here now,
May he never lack courage to strive to fulfil
The vast ocean of prayers that the Sons of the Buddhas
Send out that all beings may suffer no more.

(30)

When I've mastered in full the Perfection of Prayer
By the force of vast prayers being properly made —
As I offer them all with the pure selfless wish
To be able myself to make everyone free —
May I grant all the wishes of each sentient being.

LABOUR to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial
fire — conscience.

—WASHINGTON

THEOLOGY VERSUS THEOSOPHY

THEOLOGY is placed first in the above title for a reason which none surely can gainsay. Theosophy is never *versus* anything. Theosophy simply *is*. Like the morning light which dispels darkness it contends not but simply reveals. Two acts of utter simplicity. By them Truth annihilates the tortuous complexities of Theology.

Whence came these complexities in the first place? So far as concerns most of us today, living as we do in an age of rampant materialism, they came from those remarkably quarrelsome "good men," the early Church Fathers of the second and third centuries of the Christian era, when various Councils were being held to devise and establish these same complexities, often at the cost of bitter persecution and murder.

Christianity's starting point as a dominant body was the conversion of the Emperor Constantine on his deathbed; it became thenceforth the accepted religion of the western world. And ever afterwards that "Faith, once delivered," as the phrase is, "to the Saints," has been disfigured by persecutions, and massacres, and so-called religious wars; by the Spanish Inquisition, the burnings at the stake in England under Mary Tudor, the shameful enforced recantation of Galileo in Italy, and (to cut short the list of iniquities), by the unhappiness of countless private lives when one or another truth-loving soul was impelled to resist man-made dogmas at the bitter cost of broken family relationships.

So much for theology. Let us have done with it. Truth, and Truth only, is our rightful sustenance, pilgrims of eternity as we are, and the basic Truth is precisely that fact of Reincarnation which makes nonsense of theology's threat that for non-acceptance of its doctrines we are on the wrong track from the outset and must eventually suffer retribution in hell.

It is the Christian alone who can make due preparation for the voyage of life. For him only is the channel charted and lighted. The Book of God gives him his sailing directions.

This shocking assertion in a little book of daily readings compiled by one whose editorship of it reveals in many ways a devout and sensitive nature, almost stupefies by its calm implication that the followers of every other Faith are in hopeless case.

If this were true —! But we know of one who had much to say about Truth *truthfully*. Theosophical wisdom illumined the mind of Mr.

Judge, inspired his writings and made him an invaluable, infallible teacher. To him Theosophy was all in all, yet never could we see him putting pen to paper to formulate a credo so intolerant and complacent as the above. "Oh, my friend, direct your thoughts to the Eternal Truth," is what he urges, and it is good to obey, for to dwell on theology merely disturbs and distracts the mind.

It is in theology that we find the roots of a wrong attitude towards religion. "God," wrote Froude the historian, "sent religion into the world. The devil sent theology after it." We see this proven by the behaviour of those early Church Fathers, Eusebius, Tertullian, the so-called "Saint" Jerome, and many others. H.P.B. in *Isis Unveiled* (II. 327) quotes an authoritative reference to the first as having unscrupulously undertaken "to mutilate history" in order to propagate the dogma of the Apostolic Succession. And the late scholarly Dean Inge in his fine book *Mysticism in Religion* quotes a meaningful saying by the Cambridge Platonist Benjamin Whichcote: "The longest sword, the strongest lungs, the most voices, are false measures of truth." False, certainly, but powerful weapons when wielded by unscrupulous men in support of bigotry.

To dwell on these facts, however, is of little profit to us save as showing how far one can be misled by a closed mind. Gladly do we turn to W.Q.J. to find an example of refreshing mental freedom. "You are right in thinking," he tells a correspondent, "that the essential principles of Theosophy are often stated without the use of that name, for it is the only universal fundamental system which underlies the religions of every age. The New Testament, rightly understood, teaches Theosophy, and we know that both Jesus and St. Paul were initiates."¹

This is only one of many instances of Mr. Judge's respect for Christian teachings. (When would members of its church reciprocate with regard, say, to Buddhism — or to Theosophy?) In *Vernal Blooms* we note frequent references to St. Paul, all of them expressing accord with that great Apostle, and there is one at least to James, "the Lord's brother." Jesus Himself, Mr. Judge held in reverence. "Pay the highest respect," he writes, "to the sermons of Jesus, from the remembrance of the fact that in his discourses he but gave forth once again the old doctrine taught to him by the ancient theosophists of whom he was a disciple."² This alone might move orthodox Christians to a fairer and kindlier

¹ *Letters That Have Helped Me*, Indian ed., p. 106.

² *Vernal Blooms*, p. 62.

view of Theosophy. Ah, but of course! As Mr. Judge was a Theosophist, they are unlikely to have read his writings.

Such views as the above are only what might be expected of a man both spiritually minded and secularly cultured, but again the point is the difference between a true Theosophist and the typical church-taught Christian. When would the latter advise paying attention to the *Gita* or the Upanishads or the Aphorisms of Patanjali? In Christian eyes all these are worthless — pernicious, even, because fantastic and unreal — as a Theosophist would soon discover if speaking of them to a good Christian for whom even the most savage portions of the Old Testament are regarded as Holy Writ. To argue with him would be futile. “None so blind,” says the proverb, “as he who will not see.” Even the two great doctrines of Karma and Rebirth carry no weight with those who look for a bodily resurrection, and salvation unto eternal life through the blood of Christ. A pitying smile, a rebuke, a dogmatic fixity from which words rebound with total ineffectiveness, are what the student of Theosophy must expect if such subjects come up in conversation. Yet periodically we learn how lamentably church attendance in the West is falling off, which seems to indicate failure at *some* point sufficiently to convince.

In contrast to the brusque dismissal by the majority of Christians of the deepest wisdom of ancient India, Mr. Judge’s attitude to Jesus and his message is a reverent one, for he regarded him as one of the great Teachers of mankind. So will all Theosophists do readily, rejecting only the doctrine of vicarious atonement, for “his [Christ’s] doctrines are at all times in accord with Theosophy, [but] the beliefs and teachings of Christianity are not all supportable by the words of Jesus.”³ Here is moderation of language which the Church Fathers would have done well to emulate if similarly obliged to point out an error. They would have reaped the benefit of leaving a different impression on the Screen of History.

No, the attacks and the belittlement all proceed from the other side, and a change of view is unlikely, for those who are convinced that they hold the monopoly of divine truth are not going to relinquish it very readily or even admit that there could be an equal amount elsewhere. The divisive element is theology. For, says Mr. Judge, “if we take the words and the example of Jesus as the founder of Christianity, it is at once seen that there is no opposition at all between that form of

³ “Things Common to Christianity and Theosophy,” THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, December 1958.

religion and Theosophy. Indeed, there is the completest agreement. New ethics are not brought forward by Theosophy, nor can they be, as ethics of the right sort must always be the same."⁴

Mr. Judge puts forward these truths repeatedly. But Christians, alas, are unlikely to read them. There is, none the less, some degree of disunity at present among the Churches, even the Church of Rome experiencing some spasms of dissent. There is also, let us not forget, an old saying, not to be despised, namely, Truth will prevail. Truth must be our watchword at all times. It is not a case of mere man-made theories competing, but if Truth is to be recognized we must place our faith in those who are best able to show it to us. One such was Jesus; another, Paul. Paul was not primarily a weighty theologian. He was a Gnostic, with a Gnostic's vision and a Gnostic's experience. Earlier in time there was the Lord Buddha, much of whose teaching was later attributed to Jesus. Those who seek proof of this should turn to *Isis Unveiled* (II. 537-39). In our own day (so to speak) came H.P.B. and W.Q.J., endorsing and illumining teachings prior to their own, but never departing from, or countering, or cancelling them. That was left to the intolerant Fathers of the early Church, whose man-made dogmas were enforced by fire and sword in later centuries.

Theology promoted sectarianism, which, to mention only one small country, Scotland, led to the "Killing Times," when men were hanged publicly in its proud capital, Edinburgh, for adhering to their native form of worship, Presbyterianism, as opposed to the differing ecclesiasticism of the Church of England. Theosophy, on the other hand, promotes unity and Brotherhood. Through it Mr. Judge was able in the year 1894 to deliver an address to the Parliament of Religions in San Francisco on "Points of Agreement in All Religions"⁵ — agreement! — just as in the previous year, at the World Fair at Chicago, Illinois, he had given one on "Theosophy in the Christian Bible," which, available today in print, we wish might be read by our Christian friends.

For, the more Theosophy can permeate world thought, the better. Are not we living in the dark age of Kali Yuga? There are troubles enough without divisive sectarianism playing a part in it, which, sad to say, it still does, a persistent, if outdated, bogey from past centuries.

There is a certain object for our united work. Many lesser ones, of

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, February 1969.

course, for each of us personally, as students, as individual pilgrims on the Path, but a very special one set before the Movement as a whole, the ultimate aim and hope of the U.L.T.

Mr. Judge thus describes it. "If our doctrines are of any such use as to command the efforts of sages in helping on to their promulgation, then it must be that those sages — our Masters — desire the doctrines to be placed before as many of the mass as we can reach. Intellectual study only of our Theosophy will not speedily better the world. We should do as Buddha taught his disciples, preach, practise, promulgate, and illustrate our doctrines. . . . Let us, then, acquire the art of practical exposition of ethics based on our theories and enforced by the fact of Universal Brotherhood."⁶

Of that art Mr. Judge was himself a master, and while we can turn to his writings we need not fret over theology, save in so far as we would like to see a truer, and saner, and kindlier attitude prevail among those who hold divergent views on what are sometimes referred to as "the imponderables." Of these the poets have ever been true exponents, and some lines well worth remembering were penned by the late Robert Bridges, Poet Laureate of England in the early years of the present century.

Since that I have seen not and cannot know Him,
Nor in my earthly temple apprehend rightly
His wisdom, and the heavenly purpose eternal,
Therefore will I be bound to no studied system nor argument.

From these last, Theosophy frees us. And the "heavenly purpose" we find in promulgating its teachings of Truth and Brotherhood.

WHEN you have shut your doors, and darkened your room, remember never to say that you are alone, for you are not alone; but God is within, and your genius is within — and what need have they of light to see what you are doing?

—EPICTETUS

⁶ *Vernal Blooms*, p. 55.

A SOUL-SATISFYING PHILOSOPHY

WE HAVE HEARD it repeated a hundred times that the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount are impossible of practice by the worldly man. This is true. The question immediately arises — Is there a guiding star other than that of Bethlehem which can lighten the paths of men in this wilderness of civilized life? Christianity, of all religions, is particularly suffering from the absence of that which in Hinduism is called *Karma-Kanda* — instructions as to what to do in and with life. There is the Sermon on the Mount or nothing. The Roman Church in its instruction and exercise is unspiritual inasmuch as it begets a slave mentality leading to blind belief.

In ancient Hinduism, Religion had two aspects, the *Pravritti* and *Nivritti Dharmas* — Religion for the ordinary bread-winning man of the world, and Religion which results in Second Birth, begetting the true Brahmana. The former instructs its votary as to *what* he should do through *Karma-Kanda*, and *why* he should do so through *Jnana-Kanda*. There are rules of life which are to be observed, and there is an intellectual understanding and appreciation of the scheme to be gained, though there is not actual experience and realization. The other, *Nivritti Dharma*, gives still higher practices of Yoga, Union with Universal and Regenerative Nature, which is the Supreme Spirit, personified as Shiva.

The Sermon on the Mount may be regarded as a fragment of *Nivritti Dharma*, of that higher practical mysticism or occultism which it is difficult, if not almost impossible, for the good worldly man to study and apply.

The ordinary Hindu finds in his book of rules specified instruction as to how to live: what he shall think and say every morning as he puts his foot on mother earth, giving up the horizontal position of his body in sleep; how he shall regard his ablutions and bath; how he shall perform his sacrifices to visible and invisible Nature and her sustaining Lord, Vishnu the Preserver, and His human Incarnations (*Avatars*) Rama and Krishna; and so on through the day till the time comes to read and repeat the sacred verse ere retiring, as preparation for a sojourn in the land of Dreams and Repose. We are not implying that the modern Hindu does all this; alas! not so. Even among the orthodox the inspiring exercises which bring the gifts of Beauty and Bliss are not observed, and the young Hindu will have to throw off his psychic westernization. What we desire to point out is that due

provision has been made in the Brahmanical creed, which the New Testament lacks.

Now men of vision are trying to construct a *Pravritti Dharma* for Christendom, but lack of knowledge of soul verities, of mystic and occult truths, in short, of Universal Theosophy will prove a serious bar in such an attempt. What then should be done? To respond to the spirit of the times let every orthodox religion forget its claim to uniqueness: *e.g.*, let the Christian study the *Gita* and the *Dhammapada* and the *Upanishads*. A Universal Religion, not of blind belief but rooted in knowledge which enlightens, is in demand in both hemispheres. The day of orthodox and separative creeds is done — the era of universal viewpoints is upon us; if the real soul-satisfying philosophy of the ancient Aryans is not presented and accepted, our civilization must go down in the welter of warring nationalism and race prejudice.

IN THE BEGINNING of time, or rather, in the childhood of the fifth Race, "the whole earth was of one *lip* and of one speech," saith chapter XI of *Genesis*. Read esoterically, this means that mankind had one universal doctrine, a philosophy, common to all; and that men were *bound* by one religion, whether this term be derived from the Latin word *relegere*, "to gather, or be united" in speech or in thought, from *religens*, "revering the gods," or, from *religare*, "to be bound fast together." Take it one way or the other, it means most undeniably and plainly that our forefathers from beyond the "flood" accepted in common one *truth* — *i.e.*, they believed in that aggregate of subjective and objective *facts* which form the consistent, logical and harmonious whole called by us the *Wisdom Religion*.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE SEVEN DWIPAS

FROM THE INDIAN PURANAS

I

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It is the opinion of many at the present day that the almost grotesque myths, and fantastic geographical and astronomical descriptions contained in the religious writings of many ancient faiths are not, as they have hitherto been too often considered, mere vagaries and extravagances of the youthful imagination of the early races; but are really deliberately contrived and constructed allegories, by which ancient sages sought to veil, and effectually succeeded in veiling, the sacred truths which could only be declared in the secret recesses of the temples.

If this be so, then valuable truths and revelations of ancient history of great and absorbing interest may be laid bare, if we succeed in removing the veil from these venerable allegories. To understand them completely, demands doubtless a knowledge not at the command of ordinary students; but nevertheless, in studying these myths and making ourselves familiar with them, we find a link which binds us by sympathy to a remote past, and to a phase of the human mind which must have its representative in us, ready to vibrate responsive to these old-world stories.

They bring us back to an epoch which knew not the iron which has since entered so deeply into our souls, when man perhaps saw deeper into the mystery of things, and the universe reflected itself more clearly in his yet undarkened soul.

These old myths, if they contain transcendental truths known to us, and which we can recognize, will open up to us an almost limitless vista in the souls of the ancient sages who inwove their theories therein, and will give us one more proof of the brotherhood of man, wherever born, and in whatever age.

With these reasons in view, we shall try to make our readers familiar by degrees with the great allegories of India, as they appear in the Brahmanas, the Puranas, and the great epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*.

In a recent number, we told the tale of the Rajput supremacy, and of the mighty contest between the Brahman and the Kshatriya, and

the rivalry of Vashishta and Vishvamitra; and at present we shall try to give the history of the seven dwipas, the great divisions of the world in the Puranic cosmogony.

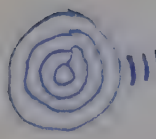
We shall first try merely to reflect faithfully into our pages the picture presented by the Puranas, and afterwards summarize any ideas as to the meaning of the Puranic stories which occur to us.

But there is little doubt that the full import of these stories will not be brought to the light, until they have lain in the minds of mystics for years; until the time when the facts of nature to which they refer reflect themselves again in the minds of men.

The seven dwipas, or divisions of the earth, are said in the *Vishnu Purana* to have been formed as follows:

Priyavrata distributed the seven dwipas, into which the earth had been divided (by Narayana in the form of Brahma) amongst his seven sons; who are the regents of the seven dwipas. Before this, Priyavrata, being dissatisfied that only half the earth was illumined at once, by the sun, followed the sun seven times round the earth in his own flaming car of equal velocity, like another celestial orb, resolved to turn night into day; the ruts made by his chariot-wheels were the seven oceans: in this way the seven dwipas or continents were made.

7 These seven continents are called Jambu dwipa, Plaksha dwipa, Shalmali dwipa, Kusha dwipa, Krauncha dwipa, Shaka dwipa, and Pushkara dwipa.

 These continents, which appear to have lain in concentric circles, with Jambu dwipa in the centre, were separated by annular oceans, said to have been formed of salt water¹, sugar-cane juice², clarified butter³, curds⁴, milk⁵, and fresh water⁶, respectively.

9 Jambu dwipa lay in the centre of all these continents. It fell to the lot of Agnidhara, son of Priyavrata, who again divided it among his nine sons.

In the centre of Jambu dwipa is the golden mountain Meru, 84,000 yojanas high, and crowned by the great city of Brahma.

Then follows a minute description of Jambu dwipa.

Before referring to it, however, let us try to make clear our conception of the Puranic idea so far.

13 Let thirteen concentric circles be drawn: the inner is Jambu dwipa; the annular space next to it is the salt ocean; the next annular space is Plaksha dwipa; and so on. Outside, we have the sea of fresh water

which encircles the whole system.

The subdivision of Jambu dwipa, which is, as we have seen, a circular island, is as follows:

Mount Meru is in the centre.

South of Mount Meru are three mountain ranges; and north of it are three mountain ranges; dividing it into seven strips. These strips are the Varshas, or subdivisions, of Jambu dwipa.

The centre strip is divided further into three parts, a western, central, and eastern division; making in all nine Varshas. Meru is in the centre of this central division of the central strip. This central Varsha is called Havrita. It is divided from Harivarsha, to the south, by the Nishada range; and from Ramyaka to the north by the Nila range. To the west of Havrita, lies the Varsha of Ketumala; while to the east lies Bhadrasva.

Harivarsha is, we have seen, the Varsha directly to the south of Havrita. South of it lies Kimpurusha, separated from Harivarsha by the Hemaketu range. South of Kimpurusha and separated from it by the Himadri or Himalaya range, lies Bharata Varsh.

These three, Harivarsha, Kimpurusha, and Bharata Varsha, are all to the south of the three central Varshas.

To the north of the three central Varshas lie three other Varshas: Ramyaka, Hiranmaya, and Uttara Kuru. Ramyaka is, as we have seen, separated from the zone containing the three central Varshas by the Nila range.

North of Ramyaka, and separated from it by the Shveta range, lies Hiranmaya; while north of this varsha, and separated from it by the Shringin range, lies Uttara Kuru.

This will make sufficiently clear the geography of Jambu dwipa; each division of which was under the rule of one of the nine sons of Agnidhara, the son of Priyavrata.

Bharata Varsha seems to be identical with what we know as India, bounded on the north, as it is by the Himadri, or Himàlaya, and on the south reaching to the extremity of Jambu Dwipa, which is surrounded by the ocean of salt water.

A description of the other eight Varshas follows:

In these, Kimpurusha and the rest, it is said that the inhabitants enjoy a natural perfection attended with complete happiness gained

without toil. There is no change, nor age, nor death, nor fear, no distinction of virtue and vice, and no difference of best, medial, and worst; nor any change resulting from the four ages (yugas).

Again it is said: In those eight Varshas, there is neither sorrow nor weariness nor anxiety, nor hunger nor fear. The people live in perfect health free from every suffering, for ten or twelve thousand years.

Indra does not rain on these Varshas, for they have many springs. There is no division of the time into the Krita, Treta, and other Yugas.

In the *Aitareya Brahmana* it is said of the Uttara Kurus that they are consecrated to glorious dominion; and the following story is told:

Satyaharya declared to Atyarati a great inauguration similar to Indra's; and in consequence Atyarati, though not a king, by his knowledge went round the earth on every side to its ends, reducing it to subjection; Satyaharya then said to him, "Thou hast subdued the earth in all directions to its limits; exalt me now to greatness."

Atyarati replied, "When I conquer the Uttara Kurus, oh Brahman, thou shalt be king of the earth, and I will be only thy general."

Satyaharya replied, "That is the realm of the gods; no mortal man may make the conquest of it."

The Uttara Kurus are mentioned also in the Ramayana, as "the abodes of those who have performed works of merit," and again "you must not go to the north of the Kurus: other beings also may not proceed further."

In the *Mahabharata*, Arjuna is thus addressed: "Thou canst not, son of Pritha, subdue this city. He who shall enter this city must be more than man. Here are the Uttara Kurus, whom no one attempts to assail. And even if thou shouldst enter, thou couldst behold nothing. For no one can perceive anything here with human senses."

And again, in another place, it is said by Kushika, on seeing a magic palace: "I have attained, even in my embodied condition, to the heavenly state; or to the holy northern Kurus, or to Amaravati, the everlasting city of Indra."

We shall try to point out further what seems to us to be the great value of these texts, when trying to unravel a little of the Puranic mystery.

To make quite certain our identification of the Bharata Varsha of Jambu Dwipa in this cosmogony with India, we shall quote the following text from the *Vishnu Purana*:

The country to the north of the ocean, and to the south of the Himadri, the snowy mountains, is Bharata Varsha, where the descendants of Bharata dwell.

As all our readers know, it was between two divisions of the descendants of Bharata that the Mahabharata war was fought.

The following qualities of Bharata Varsha are noticed:

In Bharata Varsha, and nowhere else, do the four Yugas, Krita, Treta, Dvapara, and Kali, exist. Here devotees perform austerities, and priests sacrifice. In this respect Bharata is the most excellent division of Jambu Dwipa: for this is the land of works, while the others are places of enjoyment.

In the *Bhagavat Purana*, it is said: Of the Varshas, Bharata alone is the land of works; the other eight Varshas are places where the celestials enjoy the remaining rewards of their works.

This is almost all the information we can collect of the Puranic idea of the divisions of Jambu Dwipa. We shall afterwards examine some of these texts, with their bearings; first glancing at the accounts of the other dwipas.

—CHARLES JOHNSTON, F.T.S.

(*To be concluded*)

WHEN your reason or conscience tells you that a thing is unworthy of you, it is folly to waste your mental energy indulging in thoughts about it.

There is no bigger fool than the man who has acquired much learning and preaches the same to others, but who does not control himself.

A fool's entry into an assembly of wise men is like unwashed feet on a clean bed. One fool ruins the character of a whole assembly.

There is no folly so great as the folly that makes men proud of their own wisdom.

It is folly to imagine that by wrapping oneself in cloth, one has covered one's indecency, when the greater indecency of a bad character is still exposed.

—*Tirukural*

TRUE PRAYER

IN matters religious as in all other matters, Theosophy takes essentially a universal and impersonal position. Therefore it is said that a true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all, for he has that perception which enables him to go behind the outer garments which clothe the different expressions of religious philosophy and, discarding them, to perceive the underlying oneness of them all.

It is often said that Theosophists do not believe in prayer. This is a gross misconception, for Theosophy advocates ceaseless prayer, that is, the offering of all actions, with humility of soul and purity of heart, on the altar of the Divine Presence at the very core of one's innermost consciousness. The misunderstanding about the Theosophical position in reference to prayer arises because for most people prayer is a petition, an entreaty to God or gods to have one's own selfish desires fulfilled. The *Bhagavad-Gita*, however, speaks of another type of religious devotee — he who perceives the omnipresence of the Divine Principle of life (represented by Sri Krishna) and the justice and mercy of the Divine Law which is inseparable from that Divine Self. And so a truly religious devotee is not worried about obtaining this or avoiding that. He is only concerned with making his life an expression of his own innermost aspiration, leaving the results of his actions to the Divine Law. That brings a sense of repose and of inner peace and happiness. As Krishna states in the Ninth Discourse of the *Gita*, He bears the burden of the responsibility of the happiness of those who are truly devoted to Him and have the right inner attitude. The Divine Presence within us knows what is best for us, and therefore the right attitude to adopt is: "Let Thy will, not mine, be done." That is true faith.

What goes under the name of religion is in most cases not true religion. Gandhiji was right when he said that India has become irreligious. For a sense of separateness in matters religious divides man from man and makes for dissensions and strife. Only that perception which sees the divine transcendental Self within us as well as in all things outside of us will bring us to the realization of the oneness of humanity. Those who worship "in spirit and in truth," recognizing the unity of all beings, are the truly religious.

When we became human beings on this earth far back in the night

of time, we perceived without the shadow of a doubt that we were all united in the one great Divine Self; we felt the reality of that Divine Presence outside of us — in Nature, in all our fellow men, in the great exalted beings who were there to guide and to protect us — and we felt that Divinity within us. But as time went on, many, many fell from that true spiritual perception and began to form alliances with the anthropomorphic forces and energies which belong to the universe. Such alliance may bring us the fulfilment of our personal desires and ambitions, but there is great danger in this because these inferior forces can also do us incalculable harm.

So from the earliest times we have had these two types of religions — that of the righteous and that of the unrighteous, for it is unrighteous to be selfish and to petition God for favours. The righteous are those who are in attunement with the Highest within them; and no powers of darkness and inferior, lower potencies can harm or affect them. When the Divine Presence is active within us it will lead to a flowering of the inner dormant powers, a flowering which is possible through complete purification of the personality, which then becomes but a living temple of a living God. Those who have achieved this we call great Spiritual Beings, whose very presence is a blessing and a protection to all other human beings. That is the highest achievement of true prayer, when prayer becomes an act of spiritual Will, bringing about tremendous results on the physical plane.

The highest form of prayer is meditation. As H.P.B. has put it: "Meditation is silent and *unuttered* prayer, or, as Plato expressed it, the ardent turning of the soul toward the divine; not to ask any particular good (as in the common meaning of prayer), but for good itself — for the universal Supreme Good' of which we are a part on earth, and out of the essence of which we have all emerged." How different is this idea of true prayer from what ordinarily passes as prayer! When we pray in this true sense we have to turn within and seek communion with the light which is within the heart of each. It unfolds spiritual perception and divine intuition. It makes us self-reliant, for help and guidance can be obtained from within, not from without. And it makes us receptive to the rays of the Divine Light.

Then does our life become a consecrated one, for we are asked to dedicate all that we do to the Highest in us. No longer can we indulge in activities which are motivated by *kama* or desire, by *krodha* or anger, and by *lobha* or greed. Our whole attitude will change, for

we will not only give up wrong actions, but perform all actions as efficiently and as perfectly as possible, so that they are worthy of being offered on the altar of the Divine Presence. Thus will our whole life become a religious life.

In our efforts to do this, our personality comes in the way. Theosophy recommends the disciplining and mortification of the personality by practising asceticism of the right kind, so that the lower man may become a fit instrument for the inner Real Man, and we may reach the ultimate aim of identifying our individual consciousness with the universal Divine Consciousness. To achieve this we are given four steps:

(a) The entire eradication of selfishness in all forms, and the cultivation of *broad, generous* sympathy in, and effort for, the good of others.

(b) The absolute cultivation of the inner, spiritual man by meditation, by reaching to and communion with the Divine, and by exercises of the kind described by Patanjali, *i.e.*, incessant striving to an ideal end.

(c) The control of fleshly appetites and desires, all lower, material interests being deliberately subordinated to the behests of the spirit.

(d) The careful performance of every duty belonging to one's station in life, without desire for reward, leaving results for Divine law.

All this is indeed very difficult, but not impossible; and every possible help that can be given has been given to humanity in the recorded teachings of the philosophy of Theosophy. We have not only precept but also the concept of those Great Ones, Living Men, who have achieved the goal, in whom the sense of separateness has been killed out past resurrection, and in whom attunement with the Highest is such as to make them forces for good.

GOODNESS is a going out of the self into a union which realizes selfhood.

—VICTOR GOLLANCZ

VOLUNTARY POVERTY

II

Economic thinking has superseded all other forms of thinking.

LIN-YU-TANG tersely put the present state of human affairs in his above statement. Is this the whole of man's destiny? If monetary economy was as important as people generally believe it to be, then it would have solved all problems, personal, national and international. If only one reflects deeply, one will find that money creates more problems than anything else. The enormous volume of crime is attributable mainly to the involvement of money as background motive.

In the Hindu pantheon, the Goddess Lakshmi is said to be the bestower of wealth. Her consort Narayana was termed by Gandhiji "Daridra Narayana" (Narayana the poor). It was one of the glorious incidents of history that Mahatma Gandhi, who could have had everything, embraced voluntary poverty; he was frugal in his food habits, severely limited in his dress, dwelt in ashram huts, travelled third class on railway journeys, etc. His life well illustrates the teaching of Jesus: "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the Kingdom of God." (*Luke*, vi. 20)

St. Francis of Assisi is said to have eulogized "My Lady Poverty." Likewise, Pope John XXIII stated, "I thank God for the grace of poverty; real poverty which sustained me against ever asking for anything."

"Poverty has no natural tendency to engender selfishness, but wealth requires it," says Mr. Judge. (*Vernal Blooms*, pp. 9-10)

"Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and lowliest, and lost," wrote the poet Tagore.

Among the Vedic scriptures, in the category of *Upaveda* or subsidiary Vedas, there are four disciplines, one of which is *Artha Sastra*. According to the *Smriti* of Yajnavalkya, "Artha or material advantage is subject to *Dharma*, the principle of righteousness, and when there is conflict between policies and morality, the latter should prevail."

If non-possession is strictly practised, one can gain knowledge of the mysteries of birth and prior incarnations, says Patanjali in his *Yoga Aphorisms*. (II. 39)

In the *Bhagavata Purana* there is a significant statement attributed to Vishnu in his incarnation as Vamana. After overcoming Emperor Bali, he told him, "When I want to bless a man, I deprive him of his posses-

sions, for by misusing one's wealth, one insults the world and Myself." Thus non-possession can veritably be turned into a blessing.

Gurudev Tagore realized this and wrote:

My desires are many and my cry is pitiful, but ever did'st thou save me by hard refusals; and this strong mercy has been wrought into my life through and through.

Day by day thou art making me worthy of the simple, great gifts that thou gavest to me unasked — this sky and the light, this body and the life and the mind — saving me from perils of over-much desire.

A sensible assessment of the place of wealth or riches in the scheme of things would demonstrate to any right thinking person that there is enough for each living being, to each according to his needs. But greed on the part of a large number of men upsets the economy of the natural order and brings about imbalance, which, in turn, gives rise to opulence, extravagance and waste by the self-indulgent on the one hand, and enforced poverty, misery and destitution of large masses on the other.

History reveals the struggle on the economic front in terms of the rich and the poor, the classes and the masses, the patricians and the plebeians, and in popular parlance, the haves and the have-nots. The poor blame the rich as being the root cause of their misery; the rich decry the lethargy, belligerence and irresponsibility on the part of the poor. But neither the one nor the other reflects upon how far each one himself is responsible for the imbalance.

An understanding of the doctrine of Karma as the law operating in economic matters as in all other aspects of life, will enable one to realize that poverty is an effect; there must be a cause for such effect; such cause must be both in degree and in kind ethical in nature and economic in content. Common sense reveals that there must be a remedy; the ways and means of applying appropriate remedies for different kinds of ills will have to be self-devised and experimented by self-discipline. Thus tackling a disability like poverty becomes a lesson in life.

By and large people do not want poverty; most people want to be rich; they strive and struggle, by means fair or foul, to amass wealth. Why? Because of the illusion that wealth brings them happiness, fame, power and glory — all elusive goals of fruitless quest. Happiness comes from contentment, fame from self-sacrifice, power from public trust, and glory from outstanding achievement for the common weal.

Mere possession of wealth causes jealousy, ill-will, competition, fear, exploitation, etc. If wealth alone could have generated respect from others, the merchant-prince would have become highly respected. On the contrary, rich men are suspect in the public eye.

True wealth is of a different kind. The Buddha taught:

For love to clasp Eternal Beauty close;
 For glory to be Lord of self; for pleasure
 To live beyond the gods; for countless wealth
 To lay up lasting treasure

Of perfect service rendered, duties done
 In charity, soft speech, and stainless days;
 These riches shall not fade away in life,
 Nor any death dispraise.

(*The Light of Asia*)

Dana (Wealth) is described in one of the scriptures as *Agni* (fire), *Vayu* (air), *Surya* (Sun), *Vasus* (deities), *Varuna* (water), etc. These indeed are real riches, available freely to everybody. In this sense everyone is rich. From where does even material wealth arise? Is it not Sun, Soil, Shower and Seed that produce the wherewithal of life? Mother Earth provides in plenty minerals, foods, etc.; all raw materials are derived from the good earth. The manufacturer is merely a borrower; he can create nothing save from the raw materials that nature provides.

Why did the Seers, Sages, Sannyasins and spiritual teachers embrace voluntary poverty? What did they seek for in life? They aspired for freedom, not only in life after death, but also here while alive. Wealth and possessions were a hindrance, causing cares and worries. In poverty they found a peace that enabled them to understand themselves and others as they went along the complex course of life's experiences.

It is by adopting voluntary poverty that a man can part with what comes to him from the common pool, cheerfully and willingly, knowing that he becomes a custodian for the time being of what eventually has to go to others. With limited desires for creature comforts, one can realize how much of what he calls his own remains as surplus.

Riches destroy the foolish, not those who seek the Beyond.
 By his craving for possessions the foolish man destroys himself,
 fancying he is ruining another.

Let us, then, live happily, we who possess nothing. Let us live like the Shining Ones nourished on joy. (*The Dhammapada*)

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Dr. Carl Rogers entitled the article, which he contributed to the book *Explorers of Humankind*, "Some New Directions: A Personal View." The author, a psychotherapist and resident fellow of the Center for the Study of the Person, in LaJolla, California, urges that "the rich resources of the inner world" be explored and utilized. He writes:

Some have developed to a degree which can only be called psychic: They can sense, physically, when there is unexpressed anger in the group. Others are very sensitive to unspoken attitudes or trends in the group. Perhaps our more primitive capability, our largely unused right brain, is beginning to function again as it so often does in less "civilized" societies. Perhaps this "metaphoric mind" can come to know a universe which is nonlinear, in which the terms time and space have very different meanings.

I have observed incidents, among friends of mine, of what can only be described as telepathic communication. A person I know well "saw" a close relative dying in a hospital bed in another country. A long-distance call confirmed this as a fact. A woman told me of seeing her twin sister in an auto accident. She phoned the state police, describing the car, the person, the approximate location. The officer was greatly puzzled by her call, because they had only just received the report of the accident, which was exactly as she described.

How can we account for these experiences and many others like them which have been reported? Are there unknown waves in the atmosphere, through which visual and psychological messages can be sent and received? I do not know.

Even more mysterious is precognition. A person whom I know very well . . . received a message that a tragic event would occur on a specific date and that a certain family member, John, needed help. A phone call showed that John was doing very well and in no need of help. But two days after the date specified, one member of her family was killed in an auto accident. John was also near death from injuries. By what possible reasoning can this be explained?

I have also been forced to consider the possibility of reincarnation, which in the past I had thought a ridiculous belief. . . .

I do not know how this world of the paranormal may change us. But I believe we are perhaps opening up vast new fields of knowledge and power -- a quantum leap. And every time new

forces or energies have been discovered in our universe, they have changed our perception of reality and have opened new doors and new opportunities for the human being.

Contrary to the belief of many, this expanding discovery of the psychic world is in no way antiscientific.

In physics, the most basic of sciences, creative discoveries are taking us closer to a mystic view of life, to a recognition that the more we know, the nearer our thinking is to that of ancient sages. A book such as Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics*¹ would have been ridiculed even a generation ago. Now it can be shown that modern-day theoretical physics involves a similarity to mysticism; has a place for an overarching spiritual force, a unified cosmic energy; is not unlike the "Way" of Lao-tse and others.

Philip Slater, in his recent book, *The Wayward Gate: Science and the Supernatural*,² shows how science deals with phenomena which lie outside its current system of thought. Only slowly does the scientist come to regard the evidence as "real" and thus subject to scientific investigation. The same slow process is taking place in regard to psychic phenomena.

Itzhak Bentof goes even further. Like Capra, he recognizes that in modern physics physical matter, the more deeply it is understood, is a void permeated by oscillating fields. Building on such scientific knowledge, he constructs a speculative but provocative theory which explains all psychic phenomena, and even reincarnation, in terms of already known scientific facts. Whether one agrees or not, he opens the door to many possibilities.

So what do I conclude from my own personal learnings and from the efforts of others to explain even the most improbable of these phenomena? I have more questions than conclusions. Is the human species evolving in new ways more suitable for transcending our present culture? Perhaps. There seems to be some meaning to the development of our greater self-awareness; to the realization of our potential strength and power; to our ability to form close and harmonious communities; to our recognition that the peak of scientific knowledge is similar to the peak of mysticism.

Perhaps we are entering a transitional stage of evolution similar to that of the first sea creatures who laboriously dragged themselves out of the swampy bogs to begin the difficult and complex task of coping with the problems of living on land. Are we, too,

¹ See "In the Light of Theosophy," May 1978.

² For an excerpt from this book, see "In the Light of Theosophy", June 1978.

evolving into new spaces? Will we discover new energies, new forces, new ways of being? Are we entering new worlds of psychic space, as well as the world of outer space? What is the future of the human spirit? To me these are tantalizing, but definitely hopeful, questions.

One of the significant signs of the times is the growing awareness that "inner space" may be even more important than outer space, and that we can learn to live an important part of our lives in it.

The Government of India has appointed a 10-member committee to recommend legislative measures to protect environment and restore the ecological balance. It is reviewing the existing laws and administrative arrangements and will submit its report to the Government at the end of July. *India Today*, the fortnightly newsmagazine, commissioned Murad Ali Baig, an expert on agriculture, to write a series of three articles on the problems caused by deforestation. We give here excerpts from his report, which appeared in the magazine in three instalments, in the issues for March 16, April 1 and April 16:

At the present rate of consumption which has been estimated by the National Commission of Agriculture at 211 million cubic metres, for 1980, the country is consuming four times as much wood as is being regenerated in the forests and other tree lands every year. As India today only possesses some 2,500 million cubic metres of standing timber wealth, this means that unless there is some immediate action, India's forests will be exhausted by the end of the decade.

The forests are truly in bad shape. Not only have over four million hectares of forest land been officially transferred to encroachers but some 20 per cent of the remaining forests are so badly degraded as to be almost worthless, and 55 per cent of our forests are so heavily encumbered by local rights as to virtually be incapable of any scientific development. True forests under a forest canopy perhaps account for not more than 20 million hectares representing less than seven per cent of India's total land.

The disappearance of the forests is already having very serious ecological consequences affecting India's climate, rainfall and soil fertility. There is visible evidence that with the ruthless cutting of trees, the summer flows in many areas have dried up completely.

In many of the degraded forests, the fertile top soil built over centuries has been washed away in one season, with the result that regeneration of these lands will become a massive undertaking. . . .

The forests are disappearing because of man's greed. Even though depleted, the standing timber wealth in our forests is still worth approximately Rs. 35,000 crore which is an enormously valuable and visible temptation to every villager, contractor and petty businessman. Helped by a pliable administration and strong political lobby, they are able to successfully steal, pilfer and destroy forest produce and wild life from an under-equipped, immobile and impotent forest service. . . .

Forests are indeed the neglected step child of India's agricultural planning and it is significant that the total investments into forestry during the entire Fifth Five-Year plan were less than the investment on the Bakhra Nangal project alone. Forests are looked upon as some sort of endlessly exploitable resource for energy, food and building materials and it is appreciated how valuable and how vulnerable they really are. . . .

If India is to save its forests, it will have to take immediate steps to augment production of hard-woods to at least 2.5 cubic metres per annum on about 40 million hectares, and increase production of fuelwoods to at least 5 cubic metres per hectare on a minimum of 20 million hectares, in addition to fuelwood grown on other tree lands through social forestry. With such steps and with restraint on consumption, India will be able to restore its ecological balance and build a valuable asset of timber which will become more and more valuable every year. This will, however, require all-out efforts initiated without delay because there is very little time left before India's forests reach the point of no return.

It is only forest canopy that can protect the top soil from the impact of raindrops, the force of the wind and the drying heat of the sun. It is the canopy that keeps the soil moist and fertile with the decay of millions of tonnes of leaves and grass. Remove the canopy and the dusty soil is easily washed or blown away and the living hills are soon reduced to dead rock. The thinning hills threaten the plains with flash floods, siltation, and the stoppage of steady summer flows of rivers and streams. The climate soon alters with extremes of heat and cold. Plants which are the best converters of energy of the sun into food and fuel are also the only regenerators of the oxygen in our atmosphere. The de-

struction of India's forests therefore has an immediate and lasting effect upon our ability to sustain life itself. Ecology is no fad but a matter of life and death.

The dangerous trend of plundering the forests has been in progress for many decades. While once it took millennia, or at least centuries, to deplete forest wealth and turn fertile lands into wastes, modern history offers a striking example of how man can effect it in only a few decades. We complain much today of "natural calamities," but they are the just and inevitable results of our reckless policy in the past, pursued in defiance or culpable ignorance of the warnings of those who know better. Let us improve our ways. Nature has provided the means for human development, and her laws can never be violated without disaster.

Animal experiments _____

Under the title "The Scientist as Good Shepherd," *New Scientist* (England) in its issue for March 27 publishes Dr. Jeremy Cherfas's report of a conference in Durham on the ethics of experiments on animals.

People use animals in all sorts of ways [he writes]: as food, as entertainers, as companions, as surrogates, as tools. Each of these uses poses moral and ethical problems that have increasingly been aired in public, with varying amounts of clarity and understanding. At the forefront of the debate recently have been the scientists who experiment on animals, using them as tools in the search for knowledge and as surrogates for man himself. The scientists have been pilloried and villified, depicted as evil monsters who gleefully perform unmentionable acts of sadism on pussycats and puppydogs stolen from old-age pensioners. The truth is far from this, but some sections of the research community have lamentably failed to answer the charges directly. All too often these scientists adopt a "we know best" stance that gives further fuel to their critics and does nothing to assuage public suspicions. Nor have these animal users given any evidence of having examined their behaviour. Are they causing animals to suffer simply to follow a fashion in experimentation? Could the job be done without animals? Few discuss these issues with colleagues, let alone with outsiders.

So it is refreshing that one or two learned societies, whose members are by no means big consumers of animals, have embraced the public debate and used it in an attempt to raise the

level of awareness of their members. The Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB) is one of the societies. It has formed an ethical committee that will advise members about research plans that may be unsound, and will also ask the editor of the society's journal *Animal Behaviour* not to publish papers that report results from ethically questionable experiments. Last week, in an exercise of soul-searching, ASAB held a one-day conference in Durham on the ethics of animal experimentation. . . .

ASAB

hide!?

Obviously many scientists do think about the value of their research and the suffering they cause. One speaker at the conference was worried not about causing suffering — he was adamant that his work caused his animals no distress — but about taking life. What, he asked, should I do with my rats when I've finished with them. Financial constraints mean that one cannot afford to pension off rats who've served their time, and the pet market will not absorb many. So is it right to just kill them? . . . In the end, this particular researcher said that he was prepared to kill animals that did not regard one another as individuals. He was satisfied that rats do not treat other rats as individuals with, as he put it, "that telling word, personality," and so he felt justified in killing them. If someone could prove that he was mistaken, he would, he said, have to stop killing rats.

Ian Vine, a philosopher at the University of Bradford, told the meeting that he saw an evolutionary dimension to morality. More evolved societies, he believes, extend their moral systems to encompass ever larger groups; other tribes, other races, and eventually other species, may be "offered" moral status. If students of animal behaviour continue to question the probity of their experiments, the worst excesses of animal abuse *in that field* will be eliminated, and the popular spectre of the mad, cruel scientist will have to move on and haunt other, less evolved, specialities.

H.P.B. has written at some length on this subject in her article "Have animals Souls?" which appeared in *The Theosophist* for January, February and March 1886 and was reprinted in THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, March, April and May 1970. She states therein:

Evolution starts to mould future humanities within the lowest scales of being. Therefore, by killing an animal, or even an insect, we arrest the progress of an entity towards its final goal in nature — MAN; and to this the student of occult philosophy may say "Amen," and add that it not only retards the evolution

of that entity, but arrests that of the next succeeding human and more perfect race to come. . . .

Verily when the world feels convinced — and it cannot avoid coming one day to such a conviction — that animals are creatures as eternal as we ourselves, vivisection and other permanent tortures, daily inflicted on the poor brutes, will, after calling forth an outburst of maledictions and threats from society generally, force all Governments to put an end to those barbarous and shameful practices.

Researchers at Ohio State University, U.S.A., have made the finding that old-fashioned tender loving care (TLC) can reduce heart disease. "This is one of those gee-whiz experiments," says principal investigator Robert Nerem. "We don't have any mechanism to explain it." (January-February *Science* 80, published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science)

Several studies report findings consistent with the conclusion that TLC counts. For example:

— A nine-year study of 7,000 California residents recently found that among people with the most social ties — to spouses, friends, and religious and community groups — there were two to three times fewer deaths than there were among socially isolated residents. In both groups, heart disease was the primary cause of death.

— According to a survey of men under stress from losing their jobs, the more supportive affiliations they have with their wives, friends, and relatives, the lower the levels of cholesterol in their blood.

— A British report found that death from heart disease is far less common among married men than it is among men recently widowed.

TLC, indeed, could prove effective for more than heart disease!
