

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (a) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour;
- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE U.L.T. AND ITS FOUNDER

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THROUGH its many centres the U.L.T. will celebrate on the 25th of June its own Day. The day of the passing of Robert Crosbie, the founder of the U.L.T., is annually commemorated as U.L.T. Day. Through it he resuscitated the Theosophical Movement. Restoring the broken Lines, he brought the Movement back to the place where the Power of the Original Impulse could be availed of for further progress. That Power lay in the Original Teachings, recorded in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge.

After a Sandhya-period, Robert Crosbie created the U.L.T. in 1909 and for a full decade nourished it with the devotion of his heart, the dispassion of his mind and the labour of his hands. Having passed through much hardship and many vicissitudes, personal as well as organizational, he was able to keep unbroken the Links of his *Guruparampara* chain. Reverencing W. Q. Judge as his teacher, to whom he had gone directed by H. P. Blavatsky, he was a most faithful student-practitioner of the Message recorded by them, and through It he tunnelled his way to the Messengers. His practice of what he studied naturally energized Robert Crosbie to serve the Cause of Human Brotherhood as it is given to only a few to serve.

On this occasion two of his statements seem appropriate as revealing the colour of his ideation and the tone of his words, the spirit which energized him to go on overcoming difficulties

and creating the Path for the use of all future wayfarers. Here are the statements:

(1) We both know that what a man has been through, or has appeared to have *been*, matters not at all; what does really matter is what he is now and what he is trying to do. I think that the attitude at all times should be—fear nothing, doubt nothing, regret nothing, but GO ON.

(2) I have found that doing what comes, with all my heart, mind and strength, in time brought me to another place and opportunity and always to a better advantage. I have seen in many the attitude, "I don't like this," or, "I must have something better," lead to perpetual change, dissatisfaction and poor results, invariably. On the other hand, I have seen those whom neither sickness nor any other cause could deter, nor diminish their courage and efforts, gain success, the reason being that no opportunity was overlooked and no effort too great for them. It was really an unconscious fulfilling of Karma on their part. I think students too often regard their personal existence and predilections as one thing, and their student life as another. It is not so. Both are interwoven and interblended at every point. The student should see clearly that his present existence is his opportunity to live and learn, as well as learn to live to the best advantage; it contains and presents the opportunities which, if rejected, will come before us in one form or another until we realize that a step forward can be taken in no other way than by overcoming obstacles, and thus, defects. How wonderfully and perfectly this works, when seen and faithfully applied, the generality of people do not credit or know; but we, as students, should be able to apply the lessons of life on the basis of the knowledge which has been imparted to us and which we recognize.

In them both we glimpse that the attitude which he recommends us to cultivate and to hold, the attitude which was his, was obtained through hard experiences. This attitude represents his garnered wisdom. It can become that of every earnest aspirant by study, application and service. The capacity "to GO ON," not afraid of our own failings and doubts and not wasting the present hour in regretting and repining, is the supreme faculty which creates the Chela of the Great Gurus.

Without whining, without feeling easy self-satisfaction or quick

despair, to do what Karma brings us to do, convinced that nothing which so comes to us can be beyond us, is "to live and learn, as well as learn to live." From facile habit all the world speaks of life as a school; it is for the student of Theosophy to become a learner in the school of experiences; this will force him to look for the Hidden Wisdom so that he may walk the Path of Probation and learning and by the art of spiritual alchemy transmute himself into a Chela—a Channel of the Thought, Will and Feeling of the Great Ones.

Robert Crosbie gave his best to the U.L.T. and Karma enabled him to do so through a service untarnished by any personal limitations. His personal difficulties were behind him by 1909; he had already emerged out of his attempts which had failed, but which had taught him lessons, to attempt afresh. He had learnt the greatest of lessons—to rely on the God within and on Those who had attained to Self-realization. He copied Their Holy examples to the best of his ability and tried to become the friend of all—not a personal friend but a dispassionate friend, from whom none need shrink as he shrank from none, as he served the Great Cause.

CROWDED, noisy and full of vital power, is modern Society to the eye of matter; but there is no more still and silent, empty and dreary desert than that same Society to the spiritual eye of the Seer. Its right hand freely and lavishly bestows ephemeral but costly pleasures, while the left grasps greedily the leavings and often grudges the necessities of show. All our social life is the result and consequence of that unseen, yet ever present autocrat and despot, called SELFISHNESS and EGOTISM. The strongest will becomes impotent before the voice and authority of SELF.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY (*Lucifer*, October 1887)

THE HAZARDOUS TRAIL

In the "Great Journey," causes sown each hour bear each its harvest of effects, for rigid Justice rules the World.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

A TRANQUIL LIFE and pleasant surroundings hold no great promise for spiritual awakening. The carefree semi-somnolent mind of the lotus-eater, the quiescent and unruffled tenor of the life of the hermit and the recluse conduce neither to the holy strife nor to laborious efforts at self-sacrifice that can raise the person above a selfishness that seeks its own felicity. The fetters that hold him in terrestrial bondage may be of the purest gold encrusted with jewels that gladden the eye, but they nevertheless remain fetters that bind and chains that restrain. Besides these, there are other fetters that bite into the person and are for that reason easily recognizable, and which he has himself forged on the anvil of his life and lives. Pain and penury, misery and its attending dejection are the karmic progeny of one's own making, and it is pathetic to see a person losing all hope of freeing himself from their cruel grasp and succumbing to an apathy that is content to wallow in its own misery. By resigning himself passively to what he calls fate, he accepts his lot, but not its lesson. He thus goes on marking time through long and weary incarnations, unable, and surprisingly, sometimes unwilling, to free himself from his self-imposed bondage. These unfortunate derelicts of life bemoan the crushing burden of their fetters. The seemingly unsurmountable domination of their enduring misery produces in them a helpless indifference to the prevailing life, which in turn imposes on the mind the notion that any effort at liberation would be a waste, a mere assuming of postures that would be crushed under the next wave of a recurring adversity. The Soul remains in profound stupor, surrounded by an apathy that negates hope and paralyzes effort.

The night-time of the soul may bring on pleasing dreams to some and nightmares to others; the soul may build castles and palaces, or it may languish in dungeons, and this may continue so long as the night lasts and the sun is not there to dispel sleep

and darkness. But the sun shall rise at its appointed time, heralding the dawn and scattering the shades of darkness that at one time torment and at another beguile.

When the slumbering soul awakes and shakes off the last tendrils of its chaotic dreams, it by that very act makes a demand on the universal life to adopt a faster and more daring tempo. The soft cadences of somnolence are now replaced by the beat of drums and the martial sounds of a call to arms. The soul shrugs off its erstwhile lethargy. It responds to the gnawing urge to fulfil itself. It desires to abandon complacency and move out of the rigid attitudes that religion and science have foisted on it. It desires to question, to know and to understand the life that breathes all around itself. The thirst for knowledge grows apace—not the knowledge of the superficial and surface aspect of things, but the knowledge of that inner and hidden aspect that resides in the stone and the plant as it indubitably does in the waters, the earth and the rushing wind. The soul cannot run before it has learnt to walk. It needs a Teacher; it seeks for a guide, and, in proportion to its frustration on touching the partial knowledge of the dilettantes of learning, its hunger grows and becomes almost unbearable. Frustrated by its experience, the soul may elect to sink back into its familiar lethargy of the past. On the other hand, the strong soul in its unshakable faith remains true to its search. It does not contemplate or plan retreats. They of the strong soul go on suffering acutely till they learn from that very suffering that no one can lift them out of their gloom save by themselves raising their voice to the plane where the inner Guru awaits the call from his adorer. The soul is its own saviour.

This great truth has not only to be recognized, but has to be lived up to and realized. Then and not till then can this teaching transform itself into an article of faith. By a constant dwelling on this truth, the soul has to find its own strength, has to arouse the powers of the higher mind as also that supreme power that comes through a realization of the great Oneness that pervades all existence. The urgency of such an approach to the realms of soul is easily understandable by him who is sincere in seeking

the upward way; but to achieve even the semblance of an approach to the true and only reality, the fetters of old have to be broken and the cherished baubles of the long-drawn night and the subsequent attachments to the tinsel show of things have to be abandoned—voluntarily. A longing, lingering look behind becomes a retrograde step; a feeling of regret for joys abandoned forges strong adhesive bonds that cling and fasten and, on forcible removal, leave scars and lacerations that sometimes disable and oftentimes disfigure the person.

“Hasten slowly” is an axiom that has its relevance in all walks of life. Especially is its truth perceptible to the man who sets out on his quest of what Theosophy calls soul-wisdom—the Doctrine of the Heart. This Wisdom comes gradually through a series of progressive awakenings and is acquired through long and arduous service in the cause of human brotherhood and the elevation of the Race. Incarnations may be necessary to make oneself fit to receive its Light and feel the warmth of its beneficence. For, there have been long and weary incarnations during which the Wisdom has been ignored and wrong tendencies have been permitted to saturate the minds of men. These tendencies have polluted the psychic atmosphere of our earth with their dross of ages, and these have now to be neutralized in their effects upon the individual before any real step forward can be taken. Our pasts are always with us, and since Theosophy does not believe in vicarious atonement, our past mistakes demand that they be rectified by ourselves. Theosophy advises its votary to enter upon his responsibilities in earnest and without reservations. Unless the individual so conditions himself, his accumulated debts incurred by his having strayed away from the paths of Truth will weigh heavily upon him, stultifying his efforts and sapping his strength. The enemy within represented by the enveloping ignorance and the inherited disabilities will block the perilous path, and by guile or fear or by mirages that raise false hopes, defeat every endeavour at a new orientation.

False thinking, from which arise all wrongs and vices, springs from selfishness which is nothing but the subordinating of other people's interests to one's own. The offsprings of this selfishness

are the passions, angers and greeds that hem in and enslave a man's thoughts, inciting him to acts of violence and lust. These enemies of men are known and recognized, yet are winked at and tolerated by nations and large bodies of men even when these present themselves in their crude and blatant aspects. The perverted thought and the self-seeking mind can and do assume subtle and pleasing aspects and are capable of wreaking their havoc on humanity, invoking pious and high-sounding sentiments of safeguarding the rights of men and nations. The earnest inquirer and the uncompromising searcher after the true have to come out from among the charlatans of science, the self-seekers of patriotism and the quacks of religion, and become separate. There is no other alternative. The blandishments of power, fame and precedence have to be abjured even when they are offered on a platter. That these will be offered at some stage during the search for Truth is a distinct possibility which has to be guarded against at each stage of progress. For any aspirant to soul-wisdom, the goal is to reach divinity and to see it reflected not only in oneself but in all men as also in all manifested life. In pursuit of that goal, the neophyte has to face and overcome powers and forces that have sway over matter and materiality. These have the fascination to charm away the man in whom the subtle forms of selfishness have not been wiped out in their entirety. The lure of these powers has the strength to root the candidate's feet to the spot, and so incapacitate him from further progress. The subtle selfishness and the hidden ambition thus aroused will concretize and become gross and grosser unless even in his fall he invokes his inner strength and puts his foot upon the dragon's head. There are of course other hydra-headed powers that have to be encountered on the way. These terrify by their malignity and induce a desire to turn back and flee. Only the selfish will succumb; only the self-seeking will flee.

The devoted student will never seek to justify his lapses or put the blame on others for his pernicious and vile actions. But more important still is his attitude to the teachings of the Wisdom-Religion. These teachings are sacred and the pupil has to venerate them during those moments and years when through

lack of moral stature or otherwise he is not able to comprehend them. Truth is a tender flower that wilts at any approach of fault-finding and casuistry and refuses to give its deeper understanding to him who tries to evaluate it with the yardstick of the mere head-learning that passes off as knowledge.

Powers and possessions are the legitimate heritage of the pure soul, but they are different from those which the ordinary man covets. *Light on the Path* gives the following advice:

Desire power ardently.

Desire peace fervently.

Desire possessions above all.

But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united. Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self. The peace you shall desire is that sacred peace which nothing can disturb, and in which the Soul grows as does the holy flower upon the still lagoons. And that power which the disciple shall covet is that which shall make him appear as nothing in the eyes of men.

THE WHOLE COURSE of things goes to teach us faith. We need only obey. There is guidance for each of us, and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word Place yourself in the middle of the stream of power and wisdom which flows into you as life, place yourself in the full centre of that flood, then you are without effort impelled to truth, to right, and a perfect contentment.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

A LAW OF LIFE: KARMA

II

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IN illustration of the Mahatmic condition, it may be well to quote some extracts from *Five Years of Theosophy*, on pp. 214 *et seq.*

The object a Yogi sets before himself is the realization of the oneness of existence, and the practice of morality is the most powerful means to that end. The principal obstacle to the realization of this oneness is the inborn habit of man of always placing himself at the centre of the Universe. Whatever a man might act, think, or feel, the irrepressible personality is sure to be the central figure. This, as will appear on reflection, is that which prevents every individual from filling his proper sphere in existence, where he only is exactly in place, and no other individual is. The realization of this harmony is the practical or objective aspect of the GRAND PROBLEM... It availeth naught to intellectually grasp the notion of your being everything... if it is not realized in practical acts of life. To confuse *meum* and *tuum* in the vulgar sense is but to destroy the harmony of existence by a false assertion of "I," and is as foolish as the anxiety to nourish the legs at the expense of the arms. You cannot be one with all, unless all your acts, thoughts, and feelings synchronize with the onward march of Nature. What is meant by a *Brahmajnani* being beyond the reach of Karma, can be fully realized only by a man who has found out his exact position in harmony with the One Life in Nature; that man can see how a *Brahmajnani* can act only in unison with Nature, and never in discord with it.

To use the phraseology of ancient writers on Occultism, a *Brahmajnani* is a real "co-worker with Nature."... Many have fallen into the grievous mistake of supposing that a human being can escape the operation of the law of Karma by adopting a condition of masterly inactivity, entirely losing sight of the fact that even a rigid abstinence from physical acts does not produce inactivity on the higher astral and spiritual planes... Such a supposition is nothing short of a delusion... There is a tendency, in every department of Nature, for an act to repeat itself. The Karma acquired in the last preceding birth is always trying to forge fresh links in the chain, and thereby lead to continued

material existence; and this tendency can only be counteracted by unselfishly performing all the duties appertaining to the sphere in which a person is born. Such a course also can produce *chitta suddhi* (purification of the mind), without which the capacity of perceiving spiritual truths can never be acquired.

Such a moral standard as this may be considered as the main working factor in the existence of a Mahatma. He exists by, through, and in harmony, and, as Mahatma, is harmony itself. It is impossible to carry these speculations further, for beyond the fact that these considerations are in analogy with the great law of nature, ordinary human intelligence can gain nothing from them. The Mahatma is a Mahatma, and only those who have reached that supreme condition can describe it, and even then it is doubtful whether words would express it. The word Mahatma has been used with some hesitation, as it might possibly require an article of great length to give the least idea of what it means. But some idea of the true position of these exalted beings (known in India and Tibet by this name) may be gathered from the foregoing pages if any conception of the connection of humanity with the law of Karma, and also of liberated humanity with the law of harmony, can be obtained.

In the preceding pages especial reference has been made to the fact that the Mahatma, as such, has no Karma, but it is by no means intended to convey the idea that all who enter Occultism, and even those who have progressed a very long way on the Path of Life, are Mahatmas. Nay, more! There are many of them who are very holy, and even exalted, beings, but who are still subject to the law of Karma, as applied to ordinary humanity. But they have acquired self-mastery to an extraordinary degree, and their whole attention is "fixed on the eternal." Thus, so far as they are concerned, they generate no new Karma in the restricted sense, but only progress towards Universal Harmony.

To put it shortly, they exhaust their old Karma of past lives, and devote themselves to the production of Harmony.

It is important to bear this in mind when the attention is turned to the Karmic condition of ordinary humanity. For we

are at once brought face to face with the old and much disputed question between free-will and predestination.

At this point, therefore, it will be necessary to enter, at some length, on this question, because it has been supposed that the idea of Karma is identical, or nearly so, with that of predestination. Consequently, it will be necessary to attempt a definition of what Free-will and Will are. Will, to the ordinary man, is known according to his experience as the power to do or not to do an action. So far, he is perfectly right, but, as usual, man limits the action of his will to the physical plane, and takes no account of even the mental plane. Even if he does not commit an action, he cannot help thinking about it, because he has desired to do it—even if he has repressed that desire. Nothing is more common than to hear anyone say, "I can't help my likes and dislikes," or, in other words, their attractions and repulsions, desires and the reverse. Consequently, until a man can control his desires, those desires control his will, and predestination appears to rule the day. Thus we find that it is desire which impels man onward on his course, and governs that course to a very large extent, and this is the principle which is at its highest development in mankind as a rule. Now if it be granted that the human personality—a transient thing—has been constituted by man's vanity as the centre of the Universe, it is plain that the combination of this principle of desire with the pronounced personality, will only serve to intensify this personality and bind man fast to it. Man thus constituted is a prisoner, and, more often than not, is so attached to his prison that he prefers to flutter his wings against the bars of his cage, instead of endeavouring to escape. But are there any means of escape, it may be asked? Desire binds man fast to his personality, and intensifies one personality against another. Hence it is productive of strife and discord, and militates strongly against the law of universal harmony, or Karma, in this aspect. Thus desire and Karma would seem to be in complete opposition, and desire cannot be said to be a consequence of Karma. But really this is a confusion of terms, for all this only exists in the world of effects and not in that of causes. Desire is an effect of the accentuated personality, and

in its turn produces that personality. This constitutes the prison, and the only means of escape from this prison of discord is the endeavour to produce harmony in its place. Thus, therefore, we have a definition of will as being not only that which represses a desire, but also an emanation of the one divine principle, and proceeding from the divine in man. In one sense, this will, this harmonizer of the discord, is identical with Karma. As a consequence, we can see that Karma produces punishment. That punishment arises from the fact that the assertion of both desire and will in any man makes him the battlefield of two opposing forces—the desire to do anything, and thus gratify the desire, and the will to repress it. Thus man must be a co-worker with nature and the law of harmony. He has to repress the Typhonic principle of desire and dissipate its energy. If he does not, it will bind him more firmly to his “personal centre,” accentuate his punishment, and hang like a millstone round his neck in the shape of Karmic effects, which generate fresh tendencies and desires.

The real function of will is to promote harmony between man and the great law by repressing desire. Liberation from the effects of Karma will come to the man who grasps his whole individuality firmly (not merely his personality), and, by the force of his awakened *spiritual* will, recognizes this individuality as not himself, but as a thing to use in passing beyond the life of the individuality.

Thus the direction of will should be towards realizing one's aspirations, and so give man “a glimpse into the eternal”; the lower consciousness will mirror these aspirations, even unconsciously to itself, and then itself aspires and is elevated if all is in accord.

But this is not free-will in the ordinary sense of the term; and it does not seem possible that such should exist in view of the ideas of Karmic effects and of reincarnation. It is in these two that lie all the objections to free-will, because too short a view has been taken of human life. In the dim vistas of time, and the countless incarnations which have taken place in them, it will at once be seen that the individual being has generated

innumerable causes, the effects of which are still to be experienced. Thus it is free-will that man has, but not in the ordinary sense; it is free-will limited by countless other free-wills around him—limited too and circumscribed by his own acts. Man makes himself a prisoner, and believes himself free. He is right in his belief in a measure, for in virtue of the will he is free—to aspire and soar into the sublime heights of his own higher nature. He is a prisoner and predestined when he confines himself to his personality. Karma is at once his gaoler and his liberator, and the decision lies in the intensity of his aspirations, and is therefore in his own hands. Thus from the personal view predestination is true, but not from that of the spirit, which is free. From the latter view, and to a reasoning mind, the Calvinistic doctrine sounds little short of blasphemy. It is most certainly a contradiction in terms to speak of God as an all-wise, all-powerful and entirely just God, and then to speak of predestination as one of his laws, a law which, in face of the above qualities, and with that of mercy in addition, dooms countless millions to an eternity of pain and suffering as punishment, and that too before they are even born. When the apparent injustice of the lives of men is viewed and argued, it is because men forget what they have done in previous lives, in which they have violated the law in a very material direction, which leads them into these positions from which they have to escape.

Thus the aspirations of man constitute that which sets man free, and which therefore represent his free-will. It is then well to endeavour to trace these aspirations in man with regard to Karma. The second section of the third part of *Light on the Path*, speaks on this point with no uncertain voice. The Occultist must pluck and eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and step on either the good or the evil path. And to do this knowingly produces great Karmic results. The mass of men walk waveringly, uncertain as to their goal; their standard of life is indefinite; the Occultist cannot be half-hearted, nor can he return when he has passed the threshold. "The individuality has approached the state of responsibility by reason of growth; it cannot recede from it." The one means of escape from Karma is for the Oc-

cultist to live in the Eternal. But below this—the threshold—many men aspire. On this point, we may quote *Five Years of Theosophy*, pp. 225-26:

The unintelligent aspiration towards goodness propagates itself and leads to good lives in the future; the intelligent aspiration propagates itself in the same way, plus the propagation of intelligence; and this distinction shows the gulf of difference which may exist between the growth of a human soul, which merely drifts along the stream of time, and that of one which is consciously steered by an intelligent purpose throughout. The human Ego which acquires the habit of seeking for knowledge becomes invested, life after life, with the qualifications which ensure the success of such a search, until the final success, achieved at some critical period of its existence, carries it right up into the company of those perfected Egos, which are the fully developed flowers only expected from a few of the thousand seeds.

Now, it is clear that a slight impulse in a given direction, even on the physical plane, does not produce the same effect as a stronger one; so, exactly in this matter of engendering habits required to persist in their operation through a succession of lives, it is quite obvious that the strong impulse of a very ardent aspiration towards knowledge will be more likely than a weaker one to triumph over the so-called accidents of nature.

These considerations bring us to the question of those habits of life which are more immediately associated with the pursuit of occult science. It will be quite plain that the generation within his own nature of affinities in the direction of spiritual progress is a matter which has very little to do with the outer circumstances of a man's daily life. It cannot be dissociated from what may be called the outer circumstances of his moral life, for an occult student, whose moral nature is consciously ignoble, and who combines the pursuit of knowledge with the practice of wrong, becomes by that condition of things a student of sorcery rather than of true Occultism.

Thus, so far traced Karma in one of its aspects is, "the ethical law of causation." This law descends in its action below the moral plane, and is observed as the law of compensation on the physical plane. Thus the physical, intellectual and emotional

planes, are all affected by Karma. The key to the situation is the mind; and, as we have seen, the liberation of the mind must be the most difficult task. If the powers of the mind are concentrated on the attainment of the highest ideal, Karma has no basis in which to inhere and consequently the tendency to commit actions from lower motives is annihilated. Even repentance, from this point of view, is a mistake, as it necessarily draws the mind back to the actions and motives repented of. Consequently by the exertion of free will, in the aspiration to realize the ideal, man becomes his own Saviour; and the true way to do this is to look neither for reward nor punishment; to detach the mind from all considerations below that of the spiritual life, and to live only in the Eternal.

—ARCHIBALD KEIGHTLEY, M.B.

SOMEONE has coined the phrase "treating the world with due care and attention" to refer to what must be done to guarantee a happier future. This attitude is, indeed, the only course for, and the responsibility of, the scientist. Such "due care and attention" requires above all correct information about the facts that will govern the world of tomorrow and the day after. Peace is no longer just a pious hope of the future, but an indispensable condition of that future. It cannot be achieved by physical force, the use of which nowadays puts our very existence at risk. The force to which men must now subscribe is that of reason. All our present-day knowledge and skills we owe to the new mode of thought with which the natural sciences introduced the modern era. The task of science now is to cultivate attitudes that will preserve and increase for the future the benefits it has brought to mankind.

—WALTHER GERLACH

HEEDLESSNESS — THE PATH TO DEATH

Vigilance is the path to Life Eternal. Heedlessness is the path to death.

—*The Dhammapada*

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS not only is an exclusive privilege of man; it carries with it responsibility which no man in his right mind can evade. Deliberate wickedness has terrible consequences and, undeniably, such wickedness there has been and there is. Nevertheless, the world today is probably suffering less from the results of wilful evil-doing than from reactions to men's heedlessness. For one poison plant sprung from the seed of malice, there are a thousand weeds that choke effectively the growth of the good grain.

“Let it go!” and “What matter?” are the stock in trade of the slipshod workman, the careless inspector and the venal politician. They all constitute a public menace in only less degree than the criminals who prey openly upon society. Why does a man not attend to what he is doing? It is his business to attend.

A commercial firm regrets that something has been done or left undone “through inadvertence” and considers the apology adequate. But inadvertence is not an excuse. It is a misdemeanour; it may be a crime. The driver who drives through warning signals may pay for his heedlessness with his passengers' lives, perhaps with his own. How many other serious accidents can be traced back to some small piece of carelessness, perhaps in something it was thought did not matter or never would be found out!

The worst effect of heedlessness, however, is on the thoughtless man himself. We are continually held back from our higher possibilities by failure to put our minds upon our task, be it a physical accomplishment or a mental problem. Most of our thinking is flabby and aimless, whereas the alert and vigorous mind would thrust straight to the heart of the problem. We are sleepy giants in Lilliput and as ineffective as pygmies in Brobdingnag.

It is no argument for heedlessness that the West, which has

made a fetish of efficiency, has been unable even to evolve a workable social order. The boasted efficiency of the West is the soulless efficiency of the smoothly working machine, whether of steel or flesh. There is always something admirable in the passion for perfection, though it be but for the ephemeral perfection of form and functioning. But such efficiency may not rule out heedlessness; it may only make heedfulness unnecessary. An automaton, be it man or machine, may be brought to a point of "efficiency" where self-conscious direction becomes largely superfluous. "Skill in action is Yoga," but it is the skill that is the expression of deliberate, purposeful action, measured, harmonious, sure. Such action brings the realization of unity with the cosmic rhythm that is Life and Immortality.

QUESTIONING

Why does my heart sink with the dawn,
 As though some meaning is withdrawn —
 As though ahead there only lay
 The pointless passing of the night
 Why does the coming of the night
 Seem to induce a clearer light,
 And softly, silently extend
 As 'twere a promise to befriend
 To calm and reassure and teach
 All that the day kept out of reach?

Is it not that the inner ear
 A timeless teaching then can hear,
 Which strengthens it to journey still.
 Fearing no failure, loss or ill?
 Is it not that in night's dark hours
 A truer, clearer light is ours
 Than shone upon our noonday stress —
 A light with power to heal and bless.
 Seen by the inner eye alone.
 But, on awaking, sadly gone?

THE RELIGIOUS INSTINCT

The Secret Doctrine is the common property of the countless millions of men born under various climates, in times with which History refuses to deal, and to which esoteric teachings assign dates incompatible with the theories of Geology and Anthropology. The birth and evolution of the Sacred Science of the Past are lost in the very night of Time.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 794

The Secret Doctrine was the universally diffused religion of the ancient and prehistoric world. Proofs of its diffusion, authentic records of its history, a complete chain of documents, showing its character and presence in every land, together with the teaching of all its great adepts, exist to this day in the secret crypts of libraries belonging to the Occult Fraternity.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, I. xxxiv

AMONG the problems of psychology, those connected with man's religious instinct are perhaps the least understood. That instinct is responsible for orthodoxy in religion and in it are also embedded the superstitions rampant in a society which boasts of having thrown away priestcraft and dogmatism. The so-called reformed who laugh at priests, seriously act according to the advice of the astrologer, overlooking the fact that the craft of the astrologer is not different from that of the priest. Or, having given up the mummerly of repeating Latin, Sanskrit or Avesta prayers, they repeat some Christian Science, New Thought or so-called yogic *mantrams*. In place of the religious rites for the *manes*, they substitute the rite of sitting in a circle to recall the "spirits of the dear departed," not recognizing that both of them are futile and fraught with danger to themselves. These and numerous other phenomena are manifestations of the religious instinct. Occult science alone is able to explain completely all the expressions of this religious instinct.

The fundamental concept connected with this instinct must first be understood if we wish to evaluate the many psychological and psychological events that are taking place on every side. That fundamental concept is the intuitional belief in God and the soul's immortality.

At the very dawn of human self-consciousness, when mindless man became the thinker, the religious instinct was born, and ever since it has been the governing factor in the evolution of the Race. Rightly guided or misdirected, it is responsible for all the good and evil we meet with in history. To understand how this divine intuition was corrupted we must perceive the Theosophical teaching of the Dual Man, the existence of an immortal spiritual Ego within the mortal material tabernacle. Intuition, the faith of man in God and a spiritual life to come, belongs to our Ego, birthless and deathless, which lives and thinks and feels independently within the physical frame.

This ineradicable feeling of the presence of someone *outside* and *inside* ourselves is one that no dogmatic contradictions, nor external form of worship can destroy in humanity, let scientists and clergy do what they may. (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 435)

The origin of religion on earth is traced by Theosophy through the long past, right back to the time when the process known as the Lighting up of Manas took place. As sense contact with the world rouses into action the latent power of understanding of every infant, so too when the course of human evolution produced the form of man with a brain of better and deeper capacity than that of any animal, the latent principle of thought was energized and awakened into activity by those Intelligences who had become active Manasic beings in prior periods of evolution. The childhood of our humanity was passed in company with, and nursed and tended by, Those who had thus called them forth to intelligent conscious life. This period is referred to in the annals of history as the "Golden Age" when the "gods walked the earth and mixed freely with the mortals." This first race of intellectual humanity is referred to in *The Secret Doctrine* as the Third Root-Race, the Lemurians, to whom were transmitted the great spiritual truths of the transcendental worlds by their Divine Instructors.

What was the religion of the Third and Fourth Races? In the common acceptation of the term, neither the Lemurians, nor yet their progeny, the Lemuro-Atlanteans, had any, as they knew

no dogma, nor had they to believe *on faith*. No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, than the Third Race felt itself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with divine powers, and feeling in himself his *inner* God, each felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the "Sons of Light." Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the slaves of Matter. From "Sons of Light and Wisdom they ended by becoming Sons of Darkness." They had fallen in the battle of mortal life with Life immortal, and all those so fallen became the seed of the future generations of Atlanteans. (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 272)

The first anthropomorphists who worshipped form and matter, which worship degenerated into *self-worship* and phallicism on which the symbolism of every ritualistic dogmatic exoteric religion is based, were the early Atlantean races. These

separated from their earliest tribes into the righteous and the unrighteous; into those who worshipped the one unseen Spirit of Nature, the ray of which man feels within himself—or the Pantheists, and those who offered fanatical worship to the Spirits of the Earth, the dark Cosmic, anthropomorphic Powers, with whom they made alliance.... Such was the secret and mysterious origin of all the subsequent and modern religions... (*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 273, 274)

Besides revealing the birth of Divine Wisdom upon earth, Theosophy also demonstrates how the great Spiritual Teachers are neither inventors nor revealers of *new truths*, but *transmitters* of teachings which are as old as thinking man, the forms and interpretations alone being their own:

Selecting one or more of those grand verities... they revealed these truths to the masses. Thus every nation received in its turn some of the said truths under the veil of its own local and special symbolism, which as time went on, developed into a more or less philosophical cultus, a Pantheon in mythical disguise.

Modern Theosophy has been accused of favouring Hindu and Buddhistic philosophies because it is from these that H.P.B. quotes most often. This is not because of any personal predilection on her part, but simply for the reason that

... archaic Occultism would remain incomprehensible to all, if it were rendered otherwise than through the more familiar channels of Buddhism and Hinduism. For the former is the emanation of the latter; and both are children of one mother—ancient *Lemuro-Atlantean Wisdom*. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 668).

The evolution of the historic religions in their chronological order is also given on page 10 of the first volume of *The Secret Doctrine*.

In attacking the cause of two-thirds of the world's evil and misery, namely, *exoteric religion* under whatever form and among whatever people, in promoting the Second Object of the Theosophical Movement, which is the comparative study of the Scriptures, a *right attitude* is the *sine-qua-non* condition. What is needed is not a tolerant patronage of the religions of others, nor a comparing of the sterling qualities of one's own religion with the superstitions in other faiths, but the recognition of two fundamental principles:

(1) No single one of the existing religions is a complete body of knowledge, but *all* are broken bits whose collective aggregate alone, when blended and harmonized, can produce the beautiful mosaic of Truth.

(2) All Religions without exception are true at their bottom and *false* on their surface.

The original, transcendental and philosophical conception was one. But as systems began to reflect with every age more and more the idiosyncracies of nations; and as the latter, after separating, settled into distinct groups, each evolving along its own national or tribal groove, the main idea gradually became veiled with the overgrowth of human fancy. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 424)

Each student must learn for himself the method taught by H.P.B., the method that will enable him to separate the true

from the false, the everfleeting from the everlasting in the religions of the world. For, then alone will the study of ancient philosophies reveal how

...the striking similitude of conception between all—in their exoteric form very often, in their hidden spirit invariably—is the result of no mere coincidence, but of a concurrent design; and that there was, during the youth of mankind, one language, one knowledge, one universal religion, when there were no churches, no creeds or sects, but when every man was a priest unto himself. And, if it is shown that already in those ages which are shut out from our sight by the exuberant growth of tradition, human religious thought developed in uniform sympathy in every portion of the globe; then it becomes evident that, born under whatever latitudes, in the cold North or the burning South, in the East or West, that thought was inspired by the same revelations, and man was nurtured under the protecting shadow of the same TREE OF KNOWLEDGE. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 341)

The Spirit in man, one with the Spirit of Humanity, is God.

The Mind in man is the Magician who, unified with the Human Spirit, becomes the Priest of the Religion of Light and Love. Overpowered by the carnal and the terrestrial, the mind makes of man the priest of dark evil.

The Body of man is the Temple of Light or Tomb of Darkness—expression of his own religion.

Arouse within you the Desire for Light Universal, for Love Impersonal, and feel in yourself the Power of Divinity.

THERE is no happiness in having or in getting, but only in giving.

—HENRY DRUMMOND

WHAT IS PRAYER?

THEOSOPHY rejects the concept of God as a supreme being or supreme power to whom prayers can be offered and from whom responses can be expected. There is no such being; there is no God in the sense of a personal creator outside of Nature and Nature's immutable laws, who can grant us special favours. And yet Theosophists are not Atheists as is sometimes thought. In fact, as H.P.B. so often explained, Theosophy, as a scientific system of thought, can prove the existence of a divine universal power everywhere present. It does not deny the existence of God or Deity in Nature any more than an intelligent man would deny that of the sun. But it does refuse to admit any and all so-called Gods of orthodox religions.

The idea of prayer as petition to a God or Gods needs to be abandoned. Secondly, what is called congregational worship, a prominent institution of the Christian churches, and followed by some other religions as well, is greatly misused because its dangers are not understood. As in other matters, in this too what Jesus taught and what the churches practise are diametrically opposed to each other. Jesus would not allow his followers to go to public synagogues. He said, "When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are . . . but enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." It is a well-known experience that praying congregations mutter words about one thing, see with their eyes other things, and feel and think not about what they say, but about what they see! It is not only avoidance of hypocrisy, non-concentration, and inattentiveness that underlies the words of Jesus, but also avoidance of something more dangerous and really fundamental, something that every Yogi, every Occultist is aware of. Such forms of worship awaken certain forces, and unless there is knowledge and understanding they had better be left alone.

What then is true prayer?

There are three voices in man: the voice of fleshly desires, the voice of conscience and the voice of the Soul. The subject of prayer can be examined in connection with these three voices.

For, there is a prayer to be performed in reference to our desires, another in reference to our conscience, and a third in reference to our Soul.

Repentance and penance are prayers for freeing ourselves from the Satan of desires.

Self-examination is prayer for the right execution of the injunctions given by conscience.

Contemplation is prayer for aspiring to touch the Soul and to hear its "still, small voice."

The first will help us to avoid the temptations of the voice of flesh; the second, to unfold and strengthen the voice of conscience; the third, to awaken the God within. All three practices—penance, self-examination, and contemplation—are now corrupted and degraded, and we must try to restore the correct method of the threefold prayer in our own individual lives. As more men and women understand and apply the truth about prayer, not only they individually, but also their community and country, will feel the uplift of their wisdom. As in other matters, so in this, real reform will come as individual after individual gives up the false and adopts the true method of prayer.

Let us understand, then, the first type of prayer which all of us need—repentance when we have done wrong. The first truth to grasp is that no outside force, no outside power can master us if we do not wish and do not will it to master us. Our difficulty lies not with the tempter without, but with ourselves who respond from within. Let us make no mistake about it—there *are* forces of evil, of passion, of greed, which, alas! surround humanity. Theosophy teaches the existence of the Astral Light which, like a poisonous snake, coils round humankind. It should be noted, however, that if within our own nature there is no food for that snake, it will not affect us.

People, carried away by their passions and desires, do fall, do make mistakes, and then it is that the power of the first kind of prayer must be used. Repentance is not confession or absolution. No priest, no one however high, has the power to absolve; no Pope can wash us thoroughly from our iniquity. Similarly,

no hocus-pocus of incantation, of muttering of Sanskrit, or Avesta, or Latin will absolve us either. What, then, is right penance? A clear perception of the blunder committed, a courageous and honest acceptance to ourselves that we committed it, and then an intelligent step to counteract the effects already generated. It is not confession to a religious authority, but to ourselves, and to the one whom we may have injured by our blunder. Take a simple example. We deceive somebody by telling a false story. Our conscience pricks us and we confess to ourself that we did wrong. But what next? Prayer offered to some god somewhere will not help. Even our resolve not to tell untrue stories again is not sufficient. These are but false or incomplete methods of prayer. Having noted our blunder, let us ask why we committed it; let us examine our motive, then go and confess to the person to whom we told the story, expose our low motive to him, and finally, take the necessary step to speak the truth in the matter. The prayer of penance, generated by true repentance and true confession, is opposite action to the mistake made. If we merely feel regret and do nothing about it, next time we may do greater evil; in our example, we may tell a bigger falsehood. Of course it is difficult to admit to another that we had deceived him, difficult also to give him the correct story; it will hurt our pride, but if we want to offer true penance it must be done.

We will save ourselves all the trouble in the world if we introduce into our lives the exercise of the second kind of prayer which cultivates conscience. Its name is self-examination. It is a very common phenomenon that people who go to churches and temples, or pray at home, regularly commit mistakes and are no better off than many who never go to a temple or never pray. This is because they do not know of, or do not practice, self-examination. Whether vicious or virtuous, those who do not examine themselves, their motives and ideas, their methods and habits, are like animals. They may live like angry tigers or happy sparrows, but they do not grow, they do not progress. What is self-examination? It has first to do with conscience, and then with the Soul.

The most suitable time for it is at the end of the day. Na-

ture compels us to examine the whole of our life at the time of death. We then see, in full detail, the pictures of our whole life-process. It is a phenomenon in Nature, and wise people adopt its lessons in daily life. All soul-teachers have taught and still teach self-examination as a daily exercise or prayer—a review of all that we have enacted during the day that is just closing. Our activities fall into four compartments—our thoughts, our feelings, our words, and our deeds. Some examine themselves beginning with the first hour in the morning and proceed till they reach the last hour. Others reverse the process; they begin with the last act and go backwards. Others, again, do it in compartments—thoughts, feelings, words, and deeds. It does not matter what method we adopt, how we proceed with our review or self-examination. The important thing is its observance. Examine yourself. Note your good points and your weak ones. Do not make excuses for your slips and blunders. Do not try to explain away your mistakes. Face the situation. Be true to yourself, be honest. Noting the wrongs that can be expiated, do repent and resolve to offer penance in the right way on the next day. On the other hand, do not be elated, but express humble thankfulness, that in some matters you did the right thing, spoke the truth, felt kindly, or thought nobly.

But there will be one more difficulty. In some cases we are not sure whether it was right or wrong that we did. It is comparatively easy to note the right, and to face the wrong, avoiding both elation and depression, but what shall we do when we are not sure, when we are in doubt? Even when we are sure of our position we often find later on that we were wrong! It is very necessary therefore that we always have a good basis, a logical basis, a reasonable basis, to justify or to criticize ourselves. Do not be an advocate or a lawyer, do not try to get your client, your lower self, to escape the punishment of his misdeeds, nor make excuses for him. Be a judge, impartial, wise, who decides, not according to his feelings, but according to Law. And that brings us to a most important point. To be a good judge, to deliver correct judgments, we must possess knowledge. It is here, at this place and juncture, that we see the great value, the uttermost neces-

sity, of study. Our review, our self-examination, will be somewhat barren without knowledge and understanding of the laws of life, of growth, of good and evil. Therefore the Buddha taught his *Bhikkhus* to examine their conduct by the light of the Divine Paramitas, the Virtues inherent in Nature, which can be understood by a study of the Laws of Nature. Just as paying heed to conscience and obeying its dictates saves us from falling prey to the voice of flesh, so on the other hand, putting our mind *en rapport* with great and noble ideas, and especially with the Laws of Nature, which are just, infallible, and unalterable, we are drawn towards the higher voice of our Heart, the voice of the God within us. This is the third kind of prayer—communion with the inner Divinity.

THE THOUGHTLESS, the ignorant, and the indolent, seeing only the apparent effects of things and not the things themselves, talk of luck, of fortune, and chance They do not know the darkness and the heartaches; they only see the light and joy, and call it "luck"; do not understand the process, but only perceive the result, and call it "chance."

In all human affairs there are *efforts*, and there are *results*, and the strength of the effort is the measure of the result. Chance is not. "Gifts," powers, material, intellectual, and spiritual possessions are the fruits of effort; they are thoughts completed, objects accomplished, visions realized.

The Vision that you glorify in your mind, the Ideal that you enthrone in your heart—this you will build your life by, this you will become.

—JAMES ALLEN

ON PROPAGANDA

IT MIGHT SEEM curious at first blush that the modern apotheosis of advertising should have left propaganda still in ill repute. The distinction between advertisement and propaganda, however, is real, if somewhat subtle. Roughly we may differentiate between them thus: Propaganda as generally understood is the deliberate dissemination of ideas, tenets, doctrines. Advertisement in the usual sense is giving public notice of the availability, for a consideration, of goods or services. In general the lines are clearly drawn.

The instinctive popular reaction is friendly to advertising, hostile to propaganda. Why? Even otherwise intelligent people are guilelessly susceptible to advertising craft. They read advertisements with an indulgent eye and let their minds toy with alluring and extravagant rival claims of dentifrices, soaps, and travel routes. They may be vexed to see fair landscapes marred by advertising bill-boards, but subconsciously they register the products advertised, and perhaps purchase them.

An advertisement is selfish, but it is frankly so. Even Simple Simon can read in it, "Show me first your penny." He can understand and appreciate the Pieman's motives in advertising his wares. The average man tacitly accepts as a working hypothesis Mark Twain's composite picture of the human race as "a man with an axe on his shoulder proceeding toward a grindstone." A claim to disinterested motives arouses his suspicion at once: the offer of anything free evokes his contempt. He may never have heard of the Eastern doctrine of Karma, but he has seen the moral law in action all his life; something for nothing is outside his ken. The instinctive reaction to a gift out of season or disproportionate to the mutual relationship is to question the underlying motive, "What does the giver want from me?" *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (*Isaiah, lv, 1*)

It is not of record that the invitation of the old Hebrew prophet was accepted with more alacrity than it would be today. Suspicion of propaganda is not a modern trait—it is innate in man.

We are all open to currents of ideas. They flow through the mind and colour the thoughts of the sturdiest independent. But there is a difference between, for example, a country's welcoming an occasional foreign cruiser that touches at its shores and acquiescing in the permanent occupation of its waters by an alien fleet.

Resistance to propaganda is not inspired primarily by the urge to safeguard ideas already harboured, for frank agnostics are no less resentful than bigots at any attempt to rush their defences. It springs from each man's instinct to defend the right to think for himself. An advertisement does not arouse it. No advertisement can make us lifetime converts to a particular breakfast food or toilet preparation. If we try what it offers and do not like it, we are proof against advertisements of that preparation in future. No penalty attaches to its rejection.

“Embrace Islam or die!” That was propaganda *pur sang*, undisguised and to point. A child offered that choice could grasp the desirability of turning Muslim. The Christian missionaries disguise the sword, but fundamentally their message is, “Believe or be damned.” Accept the premise and the conclusion is inevitable that blind belief is the lesser of two evils. Hence the general wariness of propagandists' premises.

The sincerity of the propagandist is often in inverse ratio to his personal stake in the success of his efforts, but quite apart from that, implicit in all propaganda proper is a threat of violence to mental integrity. “We alone have the truth. Our teacher is unique. Everything outside our doctrines is lies and delusion”—thus the dogmatists in every faith, the followers of this, that, or the other leader. “Do as we do. Accept our pet cranks and practices or you can never become pure, never reach the heights”—thus the food faddists. Propaganda is deservedly suspect. The popular instinct to shy at it is sound.

But if the name of propaganda be given to proselytizing activities, where the attempt is to force beliefs on others willy-nilly, some other designation must be found for the disinterested effort to let those who will share what has been tried and found good by some. The propagandist hammers seed into reluctant soil. The wise man lets his seeds of truth fall gently where he finds the soil prepared.

WHEN it becomes undeniably proven that the claim of the modern Asiatic nations to a Secret Science and an esoteric history of the world, is based on fact; that, though hitherto unknown to the masses and a veiled mystery even to the learned (because they never had the key to a right understanding of the abundant hints thrown out by the ancient classics), it is still no fairy tale, but an actuality—then the present work will become but the pioneer of many more such books. The statement that hitherto even the keys discovered by some great scholars have proved too rusty for use, and that they were but the silent witnesses that there do exist mysteries behind the veil which are unreachable without a new key—is borne out by too many proofs to be easily dismissed No human-born doctrine, no creed, however sanctified by custom and antiquity, can compare in sacredness with the religion of Nature. The Key of Wisdom that unlocks the massive gates leading to the arcana of the innermost sanctuaries can be found hidden in her bosom only: and that bosom is in the countries pointed to by the great seer of the past century, Emanuel Swedenborg. There lies the heart of nature, that shrine whence issued the early races of primeval Humanity, and which is the cradle of *physical man*.

—*The Secret Doctrine*, II. 795, 797

LITERARY JOTTINGS

ON CRITICISM, AUTHORITIES, AND OTHER MATTERS

BY AN UNPOPULAR PHILOSOPHER

[This article by H.P.B. appeared originally in *Lucifer*, September 1892.—EDS.]

THEOSOPHISTS and editors of Theosophical periodicals are constantly warned, by the prudent and the faint-hearted, to beware of giving offence to "authorities," whether scientific or social. Public Opinion, they urge, is the most dangerous of all foes. Criticism of it is fatal, we are told. Criticism can hardly hope to make the person or subject so discussed amend or become amended. Yet it gives offence to the many, and makes Theosophists hateful. "Judge not, if thou wilt not be judged," is the habitual warning.

It is precisely because Theosophists would themselves be judged and court impartial criticism, that they begin by rendering that service to their fellow-men. Mutual criticism is a most healthy policy, and helps to establish final and definite rules in life—practical, not merely theoretical. We have had enough of theories. The Bible is full of wholesome advice, yet few are the Christians who have ever applied any of its ethical injunctions to their daily lives. If one criticism is hurtful so is another; so also is every innovation, or even the presentation of some old thing under a new aspect, as both have necessarily to clash with the views of this or another "authority." I maintain, on the contrary, that criticism is the great benefactor of thought in general; and still more so of those men who never think for themselves but rely in everything upon acknowledged "authorities" and social routine.

For what is an "authority" upon any question, after all? No more, really, than a light streaming upon a certain object through one single, more or less wide, chink, and illuminating it *from one side only*. Such light, besides being the faithful reflector of the *personal views* of but one man—very often merely that of his special hobby—can never help in the examination of a question or a subject from all its aspects and sides. Thus, the authority

appealed to will often prove but of little help, yet the profane, who attempts to present the given question or object under another aspect and in a different light, is forthwith hooted for his great audacity. Does he not attempt to upset solid "authorities," and fly in the face of respectable and time-honoured routine thought?

Friends and foes! Criticism is the sole salvation from intellectual stagnation. It is the beneficent goad which stimulates to life and action—hence to healthy changes—the heavy ruminants called Routine and Prejudice, in private as in social life. Adverse opinions are like conflicting winds which brush from the quiet surface of a lake the green scum that tends to settle upon still waters. If every clear stream of independent thought, which runs through the field of life outside the old grooves traced by Public Opinion, had to be arrested and to come to a standstill, the results would prove very sad. The streams would no longer feed the common pond called Society, and its waters would become still more stagnant than they are. Result: it is the most orthodox "authorities" of the social pond who would be the first to get sucked down still deeper into its ooze and slime.

Things, even as they now stand, present no very bright outlook as regards progress and social reforms. In this last quarter of the century it is women alone who have achieved any visible beneficent progress. Men, in their ferocious egoism and sex-privilege, have fought hard, but have been defeated on almost every line. Thus, the younger generations of women look hopeful enough. They will hardly swell the future ranks of stiff-necked and cruel Mrs. Grundy. Those who today lead her no longer invincible battalions on the war-path, are the older Amazons of respectable society, and her young men, the male "flowers of evil," the nocturnal plants that blossom in the hothouses known as clubs. The Brummels of our modern day have become worse gossips than the old dowagers ever were in the dawn of our century.

To oppose or criticize such foes, or even to find the least fault with them, is to commit the one unpardonable social sin. An Unpopular Philosopher, however, has little to fear, and notes his thoughts, indifferent to the loudest "war-cry" from those quar-

ters. He examines his enemies of both sexes with the calm and placid eye of one who has nothing to lose, and counts the ugly blotches and wrinkles on the "sacred" face of Mrs. Grundy, as he would count the deadly poisonous flowers on the branches of a majestic *mancenillier*—through a telescope from afar. He will never approach the tree, or rest under its lethal shade.

"Thou shalt not set thyself against the Lord's anointed," saith David. But since the "authorities," social and scientific, are always the first to break that law, others may occasionally follow the good example. Besides, the "anointed" ones are not always those of the Lord; many of them being more of the "self-anointed" sort.

Thus, whenever taken to task for disrespect to Science and its "authorities," which the Unpopular Philosopher is accused of rejecting, he demurs to the statement. To reject the *infallibility* of a man of Science is not quite the same as to repudiate his learning. A *specialist* is one, precisely because he has some one specialty, and is therefore less reliable in other branches of Science, and even in the general appreciation of his own subject. Official school Science is based upon temporary foundations, so far. It will advance upon straight lines so long only as it is not compelled to deviate from its old grooves, in consequence of fresh and unexpected discoveries in the fathomless mines of knowledge.

Science is like a railway train which carries its baggage-van from one terminus to the other, and with which no one except the railway officials may interfere. But passengers who travel by the same train can hardly be prevented from quitting the direct line at fixed stations, to proceed, if they so like, by diverging roads. They should have this option, without being taxed with libelling the chief line. To proceed *beyond* the terminus on horseback, cart or foot, or even to undertake pioneer work, by cutting entirely new paths through the great virgin forests and thickets of public ignorance, is their undoubted prerogative. Other explorers are sure to follow; nor less sure are they to criticize the newly-cut pathway. They will thus do more good than harm. For

truth, according to an old Belgian proverb, is always the result of conflicting opinions, like the spark that flies out from the shock of two flints struck together.

Why should men of learning be always so inclined to regard Science as their own personal property? Is knowledge a kind of indivisible family estate, entailed only on the elder sons of Science? Truth belongs to all, or ought so to belong; excepting always those few special branches of knowledge which should be preserved ever secret, like those two-edged weapons that both kill and save. Some philosopher compared knowledge to a ladder, the top of which was more easily reached by a man unencumbered by heavy luggage, than by him who has to drag along an enormous bale of old conventionalities, faded out and dried. Moreover, such an one must look back every moment, for fear of losing some of his fossils. Is it owing to such extra weight that so few of them ever reach the summit of the ladder, and that they affirm there is *nothing* beyond the highest rung *they* have reached? Or is it for the sake of preserving the old dried-up plants of the Past that they deny the very possibility of any fresh, living blossoms, on new forms of life, in the Future?

Whatever their answer, without such optimistic hope in the everbecoming, life would be little worth living. What between "authorities," their fear of, and wrath at the slightest criticism—each and all of them demanding to be regarded as infallible in their respective departments—the world threatens to fossilize in its old prejudices and routine. Fogeyism grins its skeleton-like sneer at every innovation or new form of thought. In the great battle of life for the survival of the fittest, each of these forms becomes in turn the master, and then the tyrant, forcing back all new growth as its own was checked. But the true Philosopher, however "unpopular," seeks to grasp the actual life, which, springing fresh from the inner source of Being, the rock of truth, is ever moving onward. He feels equal contempt for all the little puddles that stagnate lazily on the flat and marshy fields of social life.

—H.P.B.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The danger of a nuclear war can no longer be viewed with an easy-going optimism; such a war is not only possible but probable. As nuclear arms get diversified and the number of men who will be in operational command of these weapons increases, not all the precautions that can be taken to eliminate error and accident will be sufficient.

A report released in May by the World Health Organization warns of a holocaust of such dimensions in the event of an all-out nuclear war that half of the world's population of 4.5 billion would be "immediate victims." According to the international committee of scientists who have prepared the report, the grim scenario of approximately 1.15 billion dead and 1.1 billion injured "does not include the extreme views." It warns that the chances of injured survivors receiving any medical attention are "next to nil," and voices doubt that "even a comprehensive civil defence policy would reduce significantly the number of casualties."

The report says that, after an all-out nuclear war,

devastation to the advanced economies of the world would be virtually complete. All of Europe, North America, and the Soviet Union would be heavily targeted, and sources of oil, gas, raw materials, shipping and industrial centres would be included in the destruction Money, banking, investment, and all the trappings of advanced economies would disappear.

The post-war period would be marked by hunger and millions would starve to death in the first few years. Smoke from huge conflagrations "could envelop much of the northern hemisphere," reducing the amount of sunlight reaching the earth's surface.

This darkness and cooling effect could persist for many weeks, directly impairing agricultural activity in the northern hemisphere if the war took place during the growing season.

The dangers of nuclear warfare cannot be overemphasized. What is required is the will to unite minds and hearts to combat the absurd slogan that "Might is Right." Not fear but the moral realization of the unity of mankind is the unassailable "deterrent." The campaign against nuclear warfare, worth-while as it

may prove, yet needs as its soul a campaign for understanding man's relation to all Nature. Matter is not dead, nor force blind. There is consciousness of its own kind and degree in everything, and nuclear energy can best be understood as sentient points of life, affected not merely physically, but also "metaphysically." The equilibrium that renders reaction inevitable to action must operate at all levels. Vibrations, whether on a cosmic scale, or those of petty, humdrum individual actions, must return again at the same time to their originators. The statement, "Ye reap what ye sow," is also a scientific one. Without this view-point, brotherhood, peace and all the rest are based on limited reason or emotional feeling. Can all those who are warning against the stockpiling of nuclear weapons see in the fact of the Universe as one intelligent whole the moral foundation of constructive brotherhood and true power over Nature?

In an article in *The Sciences* for March-April 1983, physicist Charles J. Lumsden and biologist Edward O. Wilson speculate on the origin of mind and the dawn of human intelligence. This is, in their own words, the "missing link in human evolution," a mystery of surpassing importance," about which modern science knows mighty little. How did the mind come into existence? Why did it come into existence?

The authors emphasize the role of genes and culture in shaping mind, and conclude:

The long-sought prime movers nudged the human line forward until gene-culture coevolution ignited and became a self-sustaining reaction. The driving force then propelling the human species from the *Homo habilis* level to the *Homo sapiens* level was not war, sex, climate, or hunting on the savanna, but gene-culture coevolution. Its products and its instruments are one and the same: advanced tool use, language, and long-term memory. Cultural innovations acted as a new class of mutations that accelerated evolution and pushed the species forward to its present genetic position

To look for a physical explanation of the circumstances that

set our ancestors on the human trajectory may seem to the student of Theosophy a futile exercise. How man came to be endowed with mind is explained at length in the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine*. Mr. Judge, in the chapter on "Manas" in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, puts it succinctly, in simpler terms:

The course of evolution developed the lower principles and produced at last the form of man with a brain of better and deeper capacity than that of any other animal. But this man in form was not man in mind, and needed the fifth principle, the thinking, perceiving one, to differentiate him from the animal kingdom and to confer the power of becoming self-conscious. The monad was imprisoned in these forms, and that monad is composed of *Atma* and *Buddhi*; for, without the presence of the monad, evolution could not go forward. Going back for a moment to the time when the races were devoid of mind, the question arises, "who gave the mind, where did it come from, and what is it?" It is the link between the Spirit of God above and the personal below; it was given to the mindless monads by others who had gone all through this process ages upon ages before in other worlds and systems of worlds, and it therefore came from other evolutionary periods which were carried out and completed long before the solar system had begun. This is the theory, strange and unacceptable today, but which must be stated if we are to tell the truth about theosophy; and this is only handing on what others have said before.

The manner in which this light of mind was given to the Mindless Men can be understood from the illustration of one candle lighting many. Given one lighted candle and numerous unlighted ones, it follows that from one light the others may also be set aflame. So in the case of *Manas*. It is the candle of flame. The mindless men having four elementary principles of Body, Astral Body, Life and Desire, are the unlighted candles that cannot light themselves. The Sons of Wisdom, who are the Elder Brothers of every family of men on any globe, have the light, derived by them from others who reach back, and yet farther back, in endless procession with no beginning nor end. They set fire to the combined lower principles and the Monad, thus lighting up *Manas* in the new men and preparing another great race for final initiation.

The preservation and promotion of national and cultural identities was among the questions raised at Unesco's World Con-

ference on Cultural Policies, held last year in Mexico. *Unesco Features* (No. 783, 1983) publishes an interview with Nikita I. Tostoi, who explains the growth of interest in folklore throughout the world:

As man ages he gathers experience and wisdom; with age he recalls with increasing pleasure his childhood, his youth, even the difficulties he faced and his erstwhile lack of experience. In this there is something pure, something natural, I would even say something ethically vital. Folklore becomes an artistic, a philosophical and a mythological expression of a nation's childhood, its ethos.

Every nation and every human being strives to retain their particular identity. This, however, is not possible unless they retain a memory of their cultural origins. Folklore does not reject or deny other forms of culture, but has the remarkable peculiarity of being able to complement them and enrich them.

The upsurge of interest in folklore also reflects the somewhat paradoxical phenomenon of a rejection of too much subjectivism. We tend to forget that the 20th century has turned out large numbers of authors who have consistently attempted to impose their personal "I" upon society. I am far from denying the usefulness of the subjective approach; however, in our enthusiasm over "geniuses" we frequently forget that the true source of creative life lies within the people. Folklore rises above "the flow of individual world views"; it becomes an ocean which by absorbing and mingling the dark and the living waters of all streams, brings forth the eternal essence and slakes the thirst of mankind.

The significance of folklore does not stop here; it goes deeper still, and Theosophical literature amply bears it out.

No mythological story, no traditional event in the folklore of a people has ever been, at any time, pure fiction, but every one of such narratives has an actual, historical lining to it. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 303)

Popular folklore and traditions, however fanciful at times, when sifted may lead to the discovery of long-lost, but important, secrets of nature. (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 48)

The habit of telling stories is one of the most primitive and universal characteristics of the human race. The most ancient civilizations of which we have any knowledge have yielded to investigators clear traces of this practice. The specimens of their narratives that have been gathered from all the ends of the earth and from the remotest times of which we have written record show traces of purpose, now religious and didactic, now historic and patriotic.

The oldest of the stories are the myths. To assume, as so many "civilized" and "learned" persons do, that myths are the outpourings of infant humanity face to face with Nature, which it was trying to understand and interpret, is wrong. Myths are *not* the babblings of an infant race; and the more ancient myths contain keys to real knowledge.

Joseph Campbell, who has travelled the world in search of ancient and present myths and has devoted a lifetime to their interpretation, is considered to be one of the world's foremost scholars of mythology. In an interview with Bill Moyers (*Span*, May 1983), he expresses himself on what a myth is and what it tries to convey:

A mythology is a system of images that incorporates a concept of the universe as a divinely energized and energizing ambience within which we live Myths are not invented as stories are. Myths are inspired. They come from the same realm that dream comes from Myth is a public dream and the dream is the private myth There is in the myth a kind of message from the unconscious to the conscious. And it takes only a little training to be able to understand the language of this vocabulary. Now when people try to interpret what I call a spiritual symbol, an image that refers to a psychological potentiality within an individual, when you interpret that image as though it referred to a concrete fact, you've lost the message

Myths primarily are for fundamental instruction. The great civilizations of the world were built on myths Myths serve basically four functions. The first I would call the mystical function . . . realizing what a wonder the universe is, and what a wonder you are, and feeling awe before this mystery. That's the mystical dimension. The second is a cosmological dimension—the dimension with which science is concerned. Showing you

what the shape of the universe is, but showing it in such a way that the mystery comes through. Now one of the things that scientists tend to do is to say, "Oh, we've got the answers." But the good ones say, "No, we haven't got the answers. We're telling you how it works—what is it?" The third function is the sociological one—supporting and validating a certain social order. And here's where the myths vary enormously from place to place The fourth function of myth, I would call the pedagogical—that is, to guide the individual through the normal crises of a lifetime decently and harmoniously.

Mr. Campbell considers myths to be "Productions of the human psyche." Theosophy goes further: Myths are the carefully conceived work of the old-world Sages and Seers. They convey profound truths, cosmic and anthropological facts, and are often truer than history.

Indeed, there are few Myths in any religious system worthy of the name, but have an *historical* as well as a *scientific* foundation. "Myths," justly observes Pococke, "are now proved to be fables, *just in proportion as we misunderstand them; truths, in proportion as they were once understood.*" (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 339)

. . . . there is "history" in most of the allegories and "myths" of India, and events, real actual events, are concealed under them. (*Ibid.*, I. 304 fn.)

The history of the early races of humanity, the former continents, their civilizations and their cataclysmic changes; the deeply occult truths as to man's evolution and final goal; secrets of nature; scientific laws, moral verities; the profound religion of our forefathers—the key to all these and other problems which today puzzle our greatest intellects is to be found in ancient myths, legends and folklore.

Next to myths come fairy tales, which reveal an aspect of the human subconscious, the psychic nature of man. Similarly, fables convey truths about social science and social behaviour.

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The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

THE policy of this Lodge is independent devotion to the cause of Theosophy, without professing attachment to any Theosophical organization. It is loyal to the great founders of the Theosophical Movement, but does not concern itself with dissensions or differences of individual opinion.

The work it has on hand and the end it keeps in view are too absorbing and too lofty to leave it the time or inclination to take part in side issues. That work and that end is the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles of the philosophy of Theosophy, and the exemplification in practice of those principles, through a truer realization of the SELF; a profounder conviction of Universal Brotherhood.

It holds that the unassailable *Basis for Union* among Theosophists, wherever and however situated, is "*similarity of aim, purpose and teaching*," and therefore has neither Constitution, By-Laws nor Officers, the sole bond between its Associates being that *basis*. And it aims to disseminate this idea among Theosophists in the furtherance of Unity.

It regards as Theosophists all who are engaged in the true service of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, condition or organization, and

It welcomes to its association all those who are in accord with its declared purposes and who desire to fit themselves, by study and otherwise, to be the better able to help and teach others.

"The true Theosophist belongs to no cult or sect, yet belongs to each and all."

Being in sympathy with the purposes of this Lodge, as set forth in its "Declaration," I hereby record my desire to be enrolled as an Associate, it being understood that such association calls for no obligation on my part, other than that which I, myself, determine.

The foregoing is the form signed by Associates of the United Lodge of Theosophists. Inquiries are invited from all persons to whom this Movement may appeal. Cards for signature will be sent upon request, and every possible assistance furnished Associates in their studies and in efforts to form local Lodges. There are no fees of any kind, and no formalities to be complied with.

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