

# 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 GROWTH OF SOUL

[The following stenographic report of a talk by Robert Crosbie was first published in *Theosophy* (Los Angeles) for April 1922.]

FOR many, many centuries man has gone on in this Western World with no understanding of his own nature and no idea of his real responsibility, because he has been taught in a greater or less degree that he is a *created* being, and whatever soul he might have was donated him by the Creator. He has been given fear on the one side, and on the other the promise of reward for what might be called good conduct. The ancients, however, held quite a different idea of soul, and regarded man not as a creature but as himself a creator, with the power to make his instruments better fitted, and with control and guidance over the events of his life. They held that all beings spring from the same boundless, omnipresent Source, which is the root and essence and cause—the One Spirit, the One Consciousness, the One Power to grow, without which at its root there is no form, however high or low.

So Theosophy teaches that behind man and behind all beings is the immortal part, known to us as Spirit. That immortal part is the moving power; that immortal part is that which requires experience. That immortal part provides all the powers, and in it lies hidden or inherent the law of expanding. The power to perceive, to act, to grow, is latent in every form. Whatever may be the nature of that form, and however low to our perceptions, we should know that it could have no existence except for the One Source, the One Power, the One Life within it, which causes its growth through the perception of external



things and external contacts. The true meaning of evolution is the unfolding from within, outward. It is through the acquisition of knowledge gained by experience that a greater desire for a better instrument appears to the perception, and then the soul—of whatever quality—moves on.

Even in the mineral kingdom are forms of many kinds with different qualities. The Spirit is within each form—each expression indicating a certain degree of intelligence, and the intelligence of one kind differing from the intelligence of another. That intelligence has been gained, but let us remember that the root of all gaining on every plane of being is the power to perceive, the power to act, and the power to feel the reactions. In the next, the vegetable kingdom, this power approaches a greater expression. It shows very clearly a different texture, and in the higher grades even the rudiments of a nervous system. The many different kinds of expression in that kingdom represent a different kind of intelligence. Every flower, every plant, every tree is soul in embryo. Coming to the animal kingdom, we find forms there expressing certain qualities gained through observation and experience, through right or wrong impulsions, because in that kingdom are forms inimical to mankind as well as those that are beneficial.

Looking now to the human kingdom, we find something of the same qualities belonging to the three lower kingdoms. There are those beings with the static, immovable perception of the mineral, with a small round of perception and just as small a round of action. Others are of a vegetative character in their attitude of mind. Then there are those of a higher intelligence, a more open mind, a more unveiled spiritual perception. All these are growths of soul. If, as we now stand, having contacted many different kinds of thought and religion in our search for an explanation of the nature of man, his present condition and his destiny, we are prepared to consider any question whatever upon its own merits, apart from any prejudices or predilections we may have, our souls are in the process of further growth. True understanding requires an open mind; it requires that belief and preconception should be thrown entirely out of the mind and replaced by an accurate and intimate knowledge of self-evident truth, before the soul can grow from its present limitations into a wider and deeper atmosphere, a wider range of thought, and a deeper



understanding. True knowledge is soul power, pure and simple. Even false knowledge pertains to soul but it is not of the spiritual nature.

Now we can see the necessity of making a distinction between soul and spirit. Saint Paul makes that distinction in the New Testament, but it is lost to orthodox religions because any idea of an external God destroys the whole idea of Spirit. It is the Spirit that makes the form of the mineral, of the vegetable kingdom, of the animal and human physical existence; it is the same perceiving Power, grown higher with a soul that ranges far above material things, that has been through all our present experiences and passed on to higher planes of being, carrying the knowledge forward without a break. The Spirit in man is the Real part of him. All the rest is due to externalities and to impermanencies. All that can ever be kept is the knowledge which he acquires, and that alone is knowledge which proceeds from and is related to his own spiritual perception. The Perceiver is the Real in man. That is not the soul. That is the Spirit. Then there are those acquisitions of knowledge, of perception, of understanding, of wisdom, which the Spirit assimilates to itself; everything that we perceive, every experience which we go through, all the knowledge that we may gain, is not Spirit. It is the Spirit which is the Knower; the things known are the soul. Spirit is that which is the Seer, not that which is seen. Spirit is at the root, but observation and experience give us a greater and greater realization of the Spirit which we are. Soul is the ever-increasing perception of the Reality of Spirit.

Any kind of experience is soul, even though it is embryonic before the stage of self-consciousness is reached; that is, it does not know itself and cannot distinguish between itself and its acquired round of perception. The lower kingdoms have not the *consciousness* of the soul, and this it is which man has and which makes him different from the lower kingdoms, where it is only latent. We, as men, can stand apart from ourselves and criticize our own actions, our actions in connection with others, our words, our principles, our natures, or anything else. It is evident that if we can do that, these things are not ourselves. We can criticize that which belongs to us. Nothing which belongs to us is, in reality, ourselves. It is our acquisition. So, looking at the soul as a means, a basis and a degree of knowledge acquired by observation and experience, we can see why we find ourselves in our present position. We have gained knowledge through forms, but



all forms decay. This form we now possess had a beginning and must have an ending, will in time pass back to the kingdoms from which it was taken. We are not this form. Nor are we the ideas we have held, are now holding or will hold. We are the holders of the ideas. All mental conceptions as to ourselves may be discarded. We are not the mind, which we can change. We are that which continually takes another position and makes another evolution. Thus, by realizing all that is *not* Spirit, we can conceive and understand the Spirit.

There is no beginning nor ending to us, in reality. There is no beginning to the power to perceive, the power to grow. It always was and is and ever shall be. Soul-growth is not a material thing; it is a growth in perception, in knowledge, in the realization of the spiritual part of man. The struggles which we go through are all self-inflicted because of the ignorance of our own nature due to the false teachings imparted to us, accepted and maintained by us. We have supposed that we were just our bodies; that some Being gave us a soul; that when the body dies the soul goes back to the God who gave it; that life is a donation; that we are not responsible for our coming into life, for our capacities or incapacities or environments. We like to shut our mental eyes. We try to forget the great facts of existence. We try to live in the present and in our desires and pleasures, while we seek to avoid the evils we have so richly deserved. If life were only this, the only possible clue would be suicide and selfishness. But we cannot, as a matter of fact, think of a time when we will not always "be there" under whatever conditions. And as we always work with others, affecting them for good and evil, we must as spiritual beings make restitution in every direction. No one can do that for us—not even those great Beings, our Elder Brothers, who know us, who have regarded our ignorance and our thoughtlessness, and from time to time come to awaken us. No saviour of any kind can save the world. Mankind must save itself.

Among mankind, there are many, many classes. We are not born "free and equal." We are not of the same kind. We are the same in nature, but we differ very much in degree. We may be the laggards of those classes who have existed in many lives with Those who are far, far above us and to whom we were not listening. Having ears to hear, we did not hear, and having understanding, we would not understand. Had we listened and had we understood, we would have



already reached the stage of those Beings. They are souls grown to a universal scope. They know that the powers They have realized, in many are only latent, but the only one to bring about the great perfection—to finish the task set forth—is the man himself. All that They can do is to arouse man to a sense of his own nature so that he himself will take action; he alone can do what is necessary to be done. Realizing the integrity of each soul, the laws that operate through all, They know They cannot change the course for man; They cannot interfere. Their souls having grown to the heights of understanding and wisdom, They can help others to see; They can tell men that such a way lies open to them; They can show the same path that Great Ones have always trod.

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THE SEED is put in the ground, and earth and air and water are placed around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows into a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not Fight," "Assimilation and not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA at the final session of the World's Parliament of Religions, Chicago, September 27, 1893



## KARMA AND REINCARNATION

[One of Mr. Judge's addresses to the Theosophical Congress held at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago World's Fair, September 1893, is reprinted here from the Report of Proceedings issued by the American Section of the Theosophical Society.]

MR. CHAIRMAN; brothers and sisters, men and women; members of the Parliament of Religions: The Theosophical Society has been presenting to you but one-half of its work, but one-half of that which it has to present to the world. This is the Parliament of Religions. This is a Parliament of the Religions of the day. Theosophy is not only a religion; it is also a science; it is religious science and scientific religion, and at a Parliament of Religions it would not be possible, indeed it would not be proper, to present the science of Theosophy, which relates to so many matters outside of the ordinary domain of the religions of today. The time will come when religion will also be a science. Today it is not. The object of Theosophy is to make of religion also a science, and to make science a religion, so we have been presenting only one-half of the subject which we deal with, and I would like you to remember that. We could not go into the other part; it would be beyond the scope of this meeting.

Now, we have discovered during the last week, as many have discovered before by reading, by experience, and by travel, that the religions of the world are nearly all alike. We have discovered that Christianity is not alone in claiming a Saviour. If you will go over to Japan you will find that the Buddhists of Japan have a doctrine which declares that anyone who relies upon and repeats three times a day the name "Amita Buddha," will be saved. That is one Saviour of the Buddhists, who had the doctrine before Christianity was started. If you will go among the Buddhists elsewhere you will find that they also have a Saviour; that by reliance upon the Lord Buddha, they claim they will be saved. If you will go to the Brahmins and the other religions of India, you will find they also have a Saviour. In some parts of that mysterious land they say: "Repeat the name of Rama"—God—"and he will save you." The Brahmins themselves have in their doctrines one which is called the "Bridge Doctrine": that which has God for its aim, has God himself as the means of salvation; is itself God. And so wherever you go throughout this wide world, examining the various religions, you find they all have this common doctrine.



Why should we then say that the latest of these religions is the inventor of the doctrine? It is not. It is common property of the whole human race, and we find on further inquiry that these religions all teach, and the Christian religion also, that this Saviour is within the heart of every man, and is not outside of him.

We have discovered further by examining all these religions and comparing them with the Christian religion, that in these other religions and in Christianity are found certain doctrines which constitute the key that will unlock this vast lock made up of the different religions. These doctrines are not absent from Christianity any more than they are absent from Buddhism or from Brahmanism, and now the time has come when the world must know that these doctrines are common property, when it is too late for any people West or East to claim that they have a special property in any doctrine whatever.

The two principles which unlock this great lock which bars men sometimes from getting on, are called Karma and Reincarnation. The latter doctrine bears a more difficult Sanscrit name.

The doctrine of Karma put into our language is simply and solely Justice. What is justice? Is it something that condemns alone? I say, No. Justice is also mercy. For mercy may not be dissociated from justice, and the word justice itself includes mercy within it. Not the justice of man, which is false and erring, but the justice of Nature. That is also mercy. For if she punishes you, it is in order that she may do a merciful act and show you the truth at last by discipline. That is the doctrine of Karma, and it is also called the ethical law of causation. It means that effect follows cause uniformly; not alone in mere objective nature, where if you put your hand in the fire it will surely be burned, but in your moral nature, throughout your whole spiritual and intellectual evolution. It has been too much the custom to withdraw from use this law of cause and effect the moment we look at man as a spiritual being; and the religions and philosophies of the past and the present have the proof within them that this law of cause and effect obtains on the spiritual, the moral, and the intellectual planes just as much as it does on the physical and objective. It is our object to once more bring back this law of justice to the minds of men and show them that justice belongs to God, and that he is not a God who favours people, but who is just because he is merciful.

The doctrine of reincarnation is the next one. Reincarnation, you



say, what is that? Do you mean that I was here before? Yes, undoubtedly so. Do you mean to tell me that this is a Christian, a Buddhist, a Brahmanical, a Japanese doctrine, and a Chinese one? Yes, and I can prove it; and if you will examine your own records with an unprejudiced and fearless mind, afraid of no man, you will prove it also. If you go back in the records of Christianity to the first year of it, you will find that for many centuries this doctrine was taught. Surely the men who lived near Jesus knew what the doctrine was. It was admitted by Jesus himself. He said on one occasion that Elias had already come back in the person of John, but had been destroyed by the ruler. How could Elias come back and be born again as John unless the law of nature permitted it? We find on examining the writers, the early Christian Fathers who made the theology of the Christian churches, admitting, by the greatest of them, Origen, that this doctrine was true. He, the greatest of them all, who wrote so much that men could not read all his books, believed in it. It is said in the Christian scripture that Jesus also said so much they could not record it, and if they had, the volumes could not be counted. If these teachings were not recorded, we can imagine from what he spoke and from what his early followers believed, that this doctrine was taught distinctly by him in words. (Applause.)

It is the doctrine of which the Reverend Mr. Beecher, brother of the famous Henry Ward Beecher, in a book called *The Conflict of Religions*, said, "It is an absolute necessity to Christianity; without it Christianity is illogical. With it, it is logical." And a great writer, the Rev. William Alger, whose book, *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life*, is used in the religious educational institutions of all denominations with perhaps one exception, has written twice in two editions and said that after fifteen years' study of the subject he had come to the conclusion that the doctrine was true and necessary.

Furthermore, we find that in these countries where Christianity arose—for Christianity is not a Western product—reincarnation has always been believed. You ask for human evidence. You believe, in this city, not only in this city but everywhere, in a court of law, if many witnesses testify to a fact, it is proved. Well, millions upon millions of men in the East testify that they not only believe in reincarnation, but that they know it is true, that they remember that they were born before and that they were here before, and hundreds



and thousands of men in the West have said the same thing. That they not only believe it, but that they know it. Poets have written of it all through English literature. It is a doctrine that almost all believe in their hearts. The little child coming straight from the other shore, coming without any defects straight from the heavenly Father, believes that it has always lived.

If the doctrine of immortality which is taught by every religion is true, how can you split it in halves and say, you began to be immortal when you were born and you were never immortal before? How is it possible you did not live before if there is any justice in this universe? Is it not true that what happens is the result of your conduct? If you live a life of sin and wickedness, will you not suffer? If you steal, and rob, and lie, and put in operation causes for punishment, will you not be punished? Why should not that law be applied to the human being when born, to explain his state and capacity? We find children are born blind, deformed, halt, without capacity; where is the prior conduct which justifies such a thing, if they have just been born for the first time? They must have lived before. The disciples asked Jesus, "Why was this man born blind; was it for some sin he had committed?" When committed? When did he commit it if he had never been born before? Why ask Jesus, their master, this question, unless they believed the doctrine, unless, as we think, it is the true one and one then prevalent?

This doctrine of reincarnation, then, we claim is the lost chord of any religion that does not promulgate it. We say it is found in the Christian religion; it is found in every religion, and it offers to us a means whereby our evolution may be carried on; it offers an explanation to the question, Why are men born with different characters? We find one man born generous, and he will always be generous; we find another born selfish, and selfish he will be to the end of his life. We find one man born with great capacity, a great mind that can cover many subjects at once; or a special mind and capacity like that of Mozart. Why was he born so? Where did he get it if not from the character he had in the past? You may say that heredity explains it all. Then please explain how Blind Tom, born of negro parents who never knew anything about a piano, who never knew anything about music, was able to play upon a mechanically scaled instrument like the piano? It is not a natural thing. Where did



he get the capacity? Heredity does not explain that. We explain it by reincarnation. Just so with Mozart, who at four years of age was able to write an orchestral score. Do you know what that means? It means the writing down the parts for the many instruments, and not only that, but writing it in a forced scale, which is a mechanical thing. How will that be explained by heredity? If you say that among his ancestors there must have been musicians, then why not before or after him? See Bach! If Bach could look back from the grave he would have seen his musical genius fading and fading out of his family until at last it disappeared.

Heredity will not explain these great differences in character and genius, but reincarnation will. It is the means of evolution of the human soul; it is the means of evolution for every animate and inanimate thing in this world. It applies to everything. All nature is constantly being re-embodied, which is reincarnation. Go back with science. It shows you that this world was first a mass of fiery vapour; come down the years and you see this mass re-embodied in a more solid form; later still it is re-embodied as the mineral kingdom, a great ball in the sky, without life; later still animal life begins evolving until now it has all that we know of life, which is a re-embodiment over and over again, or reincarnation. It means, then, that just as you move periodically from house to house in the city, you are limited by every house you move into, so the human being, who never dies, is not subject to death, moves periodically from house to house, and takes up a mortal body life after life, and is simply limited a little more or a little less, just as the case may be, by the particular body he may inhabit.

I could not go through all this subject to answer all the objections, but Theosophy will answer them all. The differences in people are explained by the fact that the character of the individual attracts him to the family that is just like himself, and not to any other family, and through heredity he receives his discipline, punishment, and reward.

The objections to reincarnation are generally based upon the question, why we do not remember. In the West that objection arises from the fact that we have been materialists so long, we have been deceived so long, that we have forgotten; we are not able to remember anything but what makes a violent impression on our senses. In the East and in some places in the West the people remember, and the



time will come when the people in the West will remember also. And I warrant you that the children of the West know this, but it is rubbed out of their minds by their fathers and mothers. They say to the child, "Don't bother me with such questions; you are only imagining things." As if a child could imagine that it had been here before if it had not been. They never could imagine a thing which has not some existence in fact or that is not built up from impressions received. As you watch the new-born child you will see it throw its arms out to support itself. Why should the child throw out its arms to support itself? You say, instinct. What is instinct? Instinct is recollection imprinted upon the soul, imprinted upon the character within a child just born, and it knows enough to remember that it must throw out its arms to save itself from being hurt. Any physician will tell you this fact is true. Whether they explain it in the same way as I do or not, I don't know. We cannot remember our past lives simply because the brain which we now have was not concerned with these past lives. You say you cannot remember a past life, and therefore you don't believe it is true. Well, if we grant that kind of argument, apply it to the fact that you cannot remember the facts of your present existence here; you cannot remember what dinner you ate three weeks ago; you cannot remember one-quarter of what has happened to you. Do you mean to say that all these things did not happen because you cannot remember? You cannot remember what happens to you now, so how do you expect to remember what happened to you in another life? But the time will come when man not so immersed in materiality will form his soul to such an extent that its qualities will be impressed upon the newborn child body and he will be able to remember and to know all his past, and then he will see himself an evolving being who has come up through all the ages as one of the creators of the world, as one of those who have aided in building this world. Man, we say, is the top, the crown of evolution; not merely as one who has been out there through favour, but as one who worked himself up through nature, unconsciously sometimes to himself, but under law, the very top and key of the whole system, and the time will come when he will remember it.

Now, this being the system of evolution which we gather from all religions, we say it is necessary to show that cause and effect act on man's whole being. We say that this law of cause and effect, or



Karma, explains every circumstance in life and will show the poor men in Chicago who are born without means to live, who sometimes are hunted by the upper class and live in misery, why they are born so. It will explain why a man is born rich, with opportunity which he neglects; and another born rich, with opportunity which he does not neglect. It will explain how Carnegie, the great iron founder in America, was a poor telegraph boy before he was raised to be a great millionaire. It will explain how one is born with small brain power, and another born with great brain power. It is because we have never died; we have always been living, in this world or in some other, and we are always making causes for the next life as well as for this.

Do you not know that your real life is in your mind, in your thoughts? Do you not know a great deal is due to your own mind, and under every act is a thought, and the thoughts make the man, and those thoughts act upon the forces of nature? Inasmuch as all these beings come back and live together over and over again, they bring back the thoughts, the impressions of those they have met and which others have made upon them there. When you persecute and hurt a man now, you are not punished afterwards because of the act you did to him, but because of the thought under your act and the thought under his feelings when he received your act. Having made these thoughts, they remain forever with you and him, and when you come again you will receive back to yourselves that which you gave to another. And is not that Christianity as well as Brahmanism and Buddhism? You say, No. I say, Yes; read it in the words of Jesus, and I would have you to show you are right if you say, No. St. Paul, I suppose, is authority for you, and St. Paul says, "Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." I ask you where and when shall he reap that which he has sown? He must reap it where he sowed it, or there is no justice. He must come back here and help to cure that evil which he caused; he must come back here if he did cause any evil and continue to do all the good he can, so he may help to evolve the whole human race, which is waiting for him also. Jesus said: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." When? If you go to heaven after this life and escape all you have done, certainly not then, and you make Jesus to have said that which



is not true, and make St. Paul say that which is not true.

But I believe that St. Paul and Jesus knew what they were talking about and meant what they said. (Applause). So, then, we must come again here in order that God shall not be mocked and each man shall reap that which he has sowed.

It is just the absence of this explanation that has made men deny religion; for they have said: "Why, these men did not get what they sowed. Here are rich, wicked men who die in their beds, happy, with a shrive at the end of it. They have not reaped." But we know, just as Jesus and St. Paul have said, that they will reap it surely, and we say according to philosophy, according to logic, according to justice, they will reap it right here where they sowed it, and not somewhere else. It would be unjust to send them anywhere else to reap it but where they did it. That has been taught in every religion ever since the world began, and it is the mission of the Theosophical Society to bring back the key to all the creeds, to show them that they are really at the bottom in these essential doctrines alike, and that men have a soul in a body, a soul that is ever living, immortal, and can never die, cannot be withered up, cannot be cut in two, cannot be destroyed, is never annihilated but lives forever and forever, climbing forever and forever up the ladder of evolution, nearer and nearer, yet never reaching the full stature of the Godhead. That is what Theosophy wishes men to believe, not to believe that any particular creed is true. Jesus had no creed and formulated none. He declared the law to be, "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you." That was the law and the prophets. That is enough for anyone. Love your neighbour as yourself. No more. Why, then, any creeds whatever? His words are enough, and his words and our ethical basis are the same. That is why we have no form of religion. We are not advocating religion; we are simply pointing out to men that the truth is there to pick up and prize it. Religion relates to the conduct of men; nature will take care of the results; nature will see what they will come to; but if we follow these teachings which we find everywhere and the spirit of the philosophy which we find in all these old books, then men will know why they must do right, not because of the law, not because of fear, not because of favour, but because they must do right for right's own sake. (Applause)

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## IDEALS OF LIFE ACCORDING TO THE GITA

THERE are two classes of beings in the world—those who eke out a living and go through their lives without inquiry into the meaning and purpose of existence, and those who have some purpose, some plan. Culture of one kind or another invests our life problem with a purpose, and gives a meaning to the struggles of existence.

It is now a commonplace of education to teach the young that unless they have a goal to their lives, towards which they should move, pain and discontent await them. Purposeful living requires an objective—a profession, the building of the home, service of the community or of the country, etc. To formulate this purpose, to make it noble, to energize the will and the thought to pursue it, ideals are erected, and the young are given to understand that though they may not altogether reach the goal, realize the ideal, yet all the same one should have a goal and an ideal. Not to discourage the young, this fact of failure is presented indirectly, is glossed over to a considerable extent, and the mighty power of hope is utilized. Their star of hope is pointed out to them in the very distant firmament, and they are told to hitch their wagon to that star. This is more considerate than practical.

It was a maxim with the ancients not to camouflage their ideals with mere emotional hope. On the gateway of many a Temple of Soul-education the fateful words were inscribed: "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." This sounds like a veritable gospel of despair, and it would be that indeed, producing most melancholy results, if the candidate stood at the gateway and did not enter the Temple of Wisdom to learn and to gain *certainty*—true knowledge which brings conviction.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* is not merely a gospel of hope; that is why it starts out with *Vishada Yoga*—the Yoga of Arjuna's despondency. Here we have a book that breathes certainty, not just hope, that emanates authority, not hesitancy. It speaks with calm conviction of a sure result. The *Gita* is for *all*. Its mere verbal repetition, so rhythmic, charms the ignorant and storm-tossed mind. It helps the housewife by making her realize the divinity enshrined in her cooking-pot, the lesson contained in her looking-glass, the meaning spiritual of all her homely duties. It has a message for those who traffic and trade,



those who fight for their country or for a cause, those who teach or administer, those who prosper or suffer, those who have possessions or have none.

That gives us the very first sure ideal without which the life of each one must remain incomplete. That ideal is the solidarity of humanity. Not the brotherhood of caste, of nation or political party, not even of religion, but the brotherhood of humanity. "There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—*Ishwara*" (*Gita*, XVIII, 61)—*every creature*, not just a few select. "I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings" (X, 20)—the first of Krishna's great *Vibhutis* or Excellences. "I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth" (II, 12)—and among the princes Duryodhana is included. Krishna is *all* and all are in Krishna.

This is the first ideal. If we do not have brotherhood as the foundation of our home, unhappiness will surely overtake us; if we do not have brotherhood as the base of our country's foreign policy, we must be prepared for wars, righteous or unrighteous; if we do not have brotherhood as the soul of our religion, we shall be intolerant and even fanatical; if we do not possess the spirit of brotherhood in social matters, we shall be weak in our social conscience, competing for our social status, slow in our social reforms. That is why the Master Krishna opens with the majestic and philosophic discourse about the Immortal and Immovable Spirit, the One Impartite Self, the Atman which is present and potent everywhere, in all creatures.

If Krishna had left us with the message of Deity or God as the Self within each one, and not added the doctrine of differences and differentiations, we would find ourselves in a hopeless muddle. The *Gita* fully recognizes that Duryodhana is evil; that Dhritarashtra is blind, that Dronacharya, though a teacher, can err and take the wrong side; that Arjuna and his brothers, even though on the side of righteousness, are puzzled and hesitant and need instruction. Here is presented the problem of the One in the many, and the many in the One; but it is presented in a practical way, not only metaphysically but ethically. We have to keep in mind that fact of life—that we *are* different from one another, that our merits and weaknesses, our qualities and defects distinguish us from other men and women; our community and nation from other communities and nations; and so forth. So each one can make his or her own contribution. The second



ideal is couched in the terms Karma and Dharma—two almost untranslatable words which supplement each other; they are like two wings of the Bird of Progress. Karma is not fate, not kismet, not fixity, but flexibility. It is action which is movement. The *Gita* says that all of us as souls are engaged in a Holy War against our own Karma, and we must wage that war to change our Karma, to improve our status, to better our lot. The war is not with someone outside; it is within ourselves. If the first ideal of brotherhood teaches peace, this second talks of war, and the two put together give us the philosophy of Gandhi—struggle and suffer but do not harm.

So each one of us must improve our Karma, must better our lot, and the ideal of divine discontent must goad us onward. But how? By the power of Dharma, says the *Gita*. Dharma is not religion, certainly, as religion is commonly understood. Real Dharma or true Religion is the property of the soul. Each soul has an inner property or religion which is duty. Dharma is religion and duty. Each one of us is born with duties and the *Gita* teaches above all the Religion of Duty. We are told not to neglect our congenital duties, those duties with which we are born; and we are warned in the Second Discourse and again in the Eighteenth that we must not attempt to do the duty of another, for it is full of danger. This looks like a doctrine of drudgery, static and unprogressive; but it is not so, for it leads to two other ideals put forward in the *Gita*.

How shall we fight Karma and better our lot? How shall we perform Dharma and yet progress and evolve? The next ideal comes in the form of Buddhi Yoga—the right mode of doing duties, of performing actions, which is calculated to bring the whole world to Duty.

The 47th verse of the Second Discourse contains a most practical teaching meant for all: "Let, then, the motive for action be in the action itself, and not in the event. Do not be incited to actions by the hope of their reward, nor let thy life be spent in inaction." Not idleness, but work; not hankering and attachment, but contentment through detachment. This doctrine of Dharma does not call upon us to perform some mighty deeds, but to do our duty, our own Dharma, whatever it may be—but by a change of attitude, without attachment. Krishna instructs Arjuna in how to perform a most obnoxious and revolting duty which has devolved upon him as Karma—to kill his



own kinsmen, his own friends, even his own erstwhile teachers. Do the right, with *Vairagya*, detachment, and do not be concerned about the fruits of actions, says Krishna.

In this performance of duty we are not to lose sight of the Soul, the Spirit, the Atman, the Self hidden in all humans, all things, all events. The *Gita* is an allegory; it is the Song of Life; it is spoken in *mantras*—and *mantras* are grasped by understanding not just the meaning of words but the meaning of sounds—which only means that the *Gita* teaches us to evaluate material things spiritually. We probe *Maya* by revaluing things, each at its proper worth. All material things symbolize something deeper. The home, for instance, is a symbol; if we do not look upon it as such, household tasks become a drudgery—waking up in the morning, breakfast, going to work, marketing, cooking, eating, visiting, eating again, and so to bed! But if we know that food and its preparation are spiritual verities; that while we cook we are learning how to feed the hungry souls of men and women; that the mother in the home is Laxmi; that the man of the house is Ramachandra; that our daughters and sisters are Savitris, Maitreyis, Sitas; that our sons and brothers are Arjunas; that the black sheep of the family, if there be one, is Duryodhana; that if poverty is our lot, we are the hosts and hostesses of Daridranarayana; that if we are wealthy in wisdom, Saraswati is our guest—if we understand all this, we shall find that the home is the one place that is school and factory and club combined, where instruction is gained, where labour earns, where recreation is enjoyed. The home is the pivot of the society, the home is the foundation of the social order, the home is the highest training ground of the soul, but to build the home one requires the Ideals of Unity, of Action, of Duty, of Detachment, of the worship of the One Self in everybody, and these the *Gita* teaches. So let us read and repeat the divine words of the divine Krishna every morning, noon and night; but let it not be mere lip-repetition but heart-repetition in practice and application.

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THOUGH the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong.

—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



## THE ETERNAL NOW

Live neither in the present nor the future, but in the eternal.

—*Light on the Path*

Before thou canst approach the foremost gate thou hast to learn to part thy body from thy mind, to dissipate the shadow, and to live in the eternal. For this, thou hast to live and breathe in all, as all that thou perceivest breathes in thee; to feel thyself abiding in all things, all things in Self.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

HOW many are there who are making a serious attempt to live in and derive strength and sustenance from the Eternal which knows no change? Our thoughts and feelings are so glamoured by the passing pageant, our Soul is so caught up in the illusion of life, that we have forgotten in the midst of its enchantment that "other nature" which is the Root of our own being. The world is never still. All around us there is change, not only of forms, but also of ideas and ideals, of emotions and aspirations. We live in the evanescent, flowery states that bloom and fade, season after season; we are affected by the contrasts of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, honour and ignominy, love and hate. And in the midst of it all we forget that there is That in us which, seeing, is not seen, which, acting, is not the actor, which is eternal and constant.

In the phenomenal world, nothing has real duration, because nothing remains without change. What we call time is an illusion; it has no real existence in the realm of noumena. The divisions of time into past, present and future are created by our finite intellect. These words have been called by a Master of Wisdom "three clumsy words...miserable concepts of the objective phases of the Subjective Whole...as ill adapted for the purpose as an axe for fine carving." The illusion of time is produced by "the succession of our states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration." If we had no consciousness (as on the physical plane when we are asleep) we should not be subject to this illusion. Similarly, if we had all-consciousness (a stage which the individual ego reaches in its evolutionary march when the *maya* of phenomenal existence is dispelled) we should have no time sense. In the experience of the seer and the mystic, past, present and future merge into the Eternal Now.



Even we, mortals, take no cognizance of the lapse of time when we are completely engrossed in a task, or during periods of unalloyed happiness—just as Devachanees lose all sense of time because their cup of happiness is full to the brim. While one short second of intense agony may sometimes appear to us as an eternity, at other times, even on earth, hours, days and even whole years may seem to flit by like one brief moment. During such periods of true bliss, when we forget the past and the future, we touch the Eternal. But we are unable to live in such a state for long, because memory of the past and anticipation of the future continually engulf us. We look before and after and grieve over what has been and are unduly anxious about what is to be. Thus we miss the opportunities that are ours *now*. To store in the memory a multiplicity of useless and recurring thoughts relating to the past and to look behind and linger there are obstacles to us in the present. Realizing that in the past "Pride ruled my will," we have to take to heart the advice and appeal: "Remember not past years." Equally unwise is it to daydream about what we should like to have in the future. Many intuitive poets have sensed this truth. Longfellow, for instance, enjoins us to

Trust no future, howe'er pleasant!  
Let the dead Past bury its dead!  
Act—act in the living Present!  
Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Mr. Judge has said:

The Past! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as now you exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge." Regret is productive only of error. I care not what I *was*, or what any one *was*. I only look for what I am each moment. For as each moment is and at once is not, it must follow that if we think of the past we forget the present, and while we forget, the moments fly by us, making more past. Then regret nothing, not even the greatest follies of your life, for they are gone, and you are to work in the present which is both past and future at once. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, Indian ed., p. 21)

We do not always realize that what we call the past and the future



are included in the Eternal Now; and so H.P.B. wrote:

The future lies in the present and both include the Past. With a rare occult insight Rohel made quite an *esoterically* true remark, in saying that "the future does not come from before to meet us, but comes streaming up from behind over our heads." For the Occultist and average Theosophist the Future and the Past are both included in each moment of their lives, hence in the eternal PRESENT. The Past is a torrent madly rushing by, that we face incessantly, without one second of interval; every wave of it, and every drop in it, being an event, whether great or small. Yet, no sooner have we faced it, and whether it brings joy or sorrow, whether it elevates us or knocks us off our feet, than it is carried away and disappears behind us, to be lost sooner or later in the great Sea of Oblivion. It depends on us to make every such event non-existent to ourselves by obliterating it from our memory; or else to create of our past sorrows Promethean Vultures—those "dark-winged birds, the embodied memories of the Past," which, in Sala's graphic fancy "wheel and shriek over the Lethean lake." In the first case, we are real philosophers; in the second—but timid and even cowardly soldiers of the army called mankind, and commanded in the great battle of Life by "King Karma." (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 28*, p. 2)

What kind of acts, be they physical, mental or moral, make us forget memories and anticipations? Unselfish, sacrificial, altruistic acts take our mind away from the lower, personal self. We are called upon to overcome "the personal, the transitory, the evanescent and the perishable." Personal memories and hopes keep us yoked to the lower, the mundane, the temporal. When we dissociate ourselves from the temporal by being less selfish, by identifying ourselves less with the personality, by dwelling less on objects of sense and desiring them less; when we go deep within and identify ourselves with our own immortal nature, we proceed towards the Eternal. And sometimes, for a moment or a few minutes, we experience Eternity.

To see a world in a grain of sand,  
And a heaven in a wild flower;  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And eternity in an hour

—are space-time correlates.

"Realization comes from dwelling on the thing to be realized."



Realization of the life of the Eternal Now can be attained by dwelling on the fact of our own undying nature. To live consciously in the Spirit is to live in the Eternal. In the words of the singers of the Upanishads, "This Eternal is not to be gained from books, nor by sacrifices, nor by penances, nor by words, nor by much striving. It is to be gained by affirming: That Thou Art." Mr. Judge says:

...every day and as often as you can, and on going to sleep and as you wake, think, think, think, on the truth that you are not body, brain, or astral man, but that you are THAT, and "THAT" is the Supreme Soul. (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 125)

Through devotion and constant practice we must strive to identify ourselves with the Supreme Soul, to plunge into the mysterious and glorious depths of our own inmost being to find the dim star that burns therein, and to open ourselves to the Eternal which knows no change. Just as a flower, unconsciously to itself, opens its soul to the air, so "it must be the eternal that draws forth your strength and beauty, not desire of growth. For in the one case you develop in the luxuriance of purity, in the other you harden by the forcible passion for personal stature."

The aspirant who has learnt to live in the atmosphere of eternal thought has of necessity killed out all sense of separateness.

Where is thy individuality, Lanoo, where the Lanoo himself? It is the spark lost in the fire, the drop within the ocean, the ever-present ray become the All and the eternal radiance.

This may seem to most a distant goal; but once we fix our gaze on it and make the initial effort, we shall surely attain it.

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THE FACT that burdens are growing heavier cannot be accounted a bad sign; there must be in those to whom burdens come an unused strength that needs exercise.

—ROBERT CROSBIE



## THE SHILA VIRTUE

THE root of *Shila*—"Harmony in word and act...that counterbalances the cause and the effect, and leaves no further room for Karmic action"—is in the mind. We are in search of integrity, of wholeness, where thought, word and act make one harmonious whole, where desire is held in check and used by the mind, and the mind exercises control over words and acts and imbues them with *Dana*, charity and love immortal.

To "govern the lips as they were palace-doors, the King within"; to refrain from slander and untruth; to utter good words, kind words, true words, are all things to be striven after. But *Shila* means much more. Words are the outer expression of emotion-desire-thought, and actions have to become the expression of words, the moulding of thought into matter.

The counterbalancing of cause and effect does not mean that we seek a state of peace in our dealings with people and in our own inner environment. It implies acting and speaking in such a way that the cause and the effect are counterbalanced. If we take the cause as being the circumstances we are placed in, then our reaction to them has to be perfect, neutralizing them, so to say. And lest we think of this teaching as applying to those who act in order to pay their debts to Karma and be free, we are further told that it is Karmic action that we leave no room for, *i.e.*, individual reaction. The motive behind the action we perform and the word we speak is based, it is taken for granted, on the heart quality of brotherliness, and that will rise from the incident as "winged flames" for the good of all.

The law of necessity comes into play: speak what is necessary, do what is necessary. This does not imply inaction but a knowledge of what is necessary at the right time.

Though each action should assail a fault, this is the negative side, as it were; the positive side is to have our words and actions accord with each other. The hypocrite is one whose actions belie his words; the good man is one whose "nay is nay and yea is yea." But in the higher sense action is the working out of words. Therefore we are asked to put our good intentions into practice. As Jesus said, "Not everyone that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is



in heaven."

The will, *Virya*, must come into play, for whatever we say we will do, we must do, or we certainly do not counterbalance the cause and the effect. We are taught exoterically not to take the name of the Lord in vain and not to swear; but we can use such holy words as "Lord" in a constructive sense and "swear," make a vow, to the higher in us. The lower virtues are not to be scorned, for, especially when using holy words, if the speech is impure and actions belie the words, then the disharmony produced may be fraught with evil.

*Shila* is the bridge between *Kshanti* and *Dana*, between mind and action. Let us remember that words need not be actually spoken. We think in words, we plan in words. Therefore the mind has to be stilled. Mind, *i.e.*, lower mind, is ensouled either by *kama*—desire and emotion—or by the heart—devotion. In ordinary usage, the heart stands for both, and we hear that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Complete and absolute devotion to mankind, from the highest and noblest of beings to the lowest and most depraved, is essential and must form the inner character of those "living messengers called words."

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GREAT men are they who see that spiritual is stronger than any material force; that thoughts rule the world.

Hitch your wagon to a star.

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

I see that sensible men and conscientious men all over the world were of one religion.

Shallow men believe in luck.

The faith that stands on authority is not faith.

— EMERSON



## AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF COMPASSION

COMPASSION is a recurring theme in Theosophical literature and is the ideal aimed at by those who follow the path of genuine Theosophy. It is of the utmost importance to the aspirant who wishes to lead the spiritual life and to be faithful to the original programme of the Theosophical Movement. Of course we have to have a clear understanding of the true meaning of Compassion. Most of us will be well acquainted with the definition given in *The Voice of the Silence*:

Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of LAWS—eternal Harmony, Alaya's SELF, a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting right, and fitness of all things, the law of Love eternal.

The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE.

These words are a good starting point for an inquiry into the nature of Compassion.

We can understand at the outset that Compassion is linked with Harmony and one of the definitions of Harmony is: "just adaptation of parts to each other." Practically, Compassion can be said to be a desire to bring about a harmonious condition out of a disharmonious one. The "Law of LAWS" seems to be this state of balance which lies at the heart of the Universe and which human beings alone disrupt through an incorrect view of the workings of Mother Nature. We disturb this harmony, and the Law of Karma comes into operation to restore the balance, bringing much grief to all, individually and collectively. In essence, Compassion is the Harmony that reigns over the Universe, but we need to look at it in a practical sense and find out how it can be applied in our day-to-day lives. The whole idea of Compassion is greatly revered in the Buddhist world and there are deities to symbolize the truly philanthropic state of being. We have the symbolism of Avalokitesvara, who is said to be the Lord of Compassion and is shown with a thousand arms. It is said that each of these arms, with an eye in the centre, appeared because of Avalokitesvara's Compassion for all beings. With a multitude of arms he can help all those who suffer, and his many eyes can see this suffering. Poetically it is a very beautiful image, and though its real



meaning is not as simple as it seems, still such images provide spiritual inspiration and sustenance to millions of people in Buddhist lands and throughout the world and have a very important place in the consciousness of humanity. In these troubled times it is certainly advantageous to have positive images and ideas to counteract the many negative ones. Gautama Buddha talked about using "expedient means" to get across the teachings, and this implies that we need to adapt our ways of presenting certain truths to appeal to people at different stages of development. This is why Jesus spoke in parables. If the use of these symbolic images of Bodhisattvas places a soul on the Path of Compassion, then they have not been used in vain.

Many ways may be employed to awaken the soul to an awareness of its solidarity with all other souls. From this springs the realization that if even one being in the entire world is unhappy, then perfect Harmony cannot be said to exist on this earth. We have to understand the feeling that makes us sympathize with one who is suffering. *Why* do the more fortunate wish to rush to the aid of the starving millions of the Third World? *Why* do people put themselves at risk to help someone who has fallen into a river? If there were no connecting link between all human beings, then we would not care what happened to anyone else. We would not be moved by TV pictures of the victims of some natural or unnatural disaster. We would not be incensed by the terrible crimes of violence that are on the increase worldwide. Something deep within us wants to bring all this madness to an end and restore Harmony.

To many, the problem seems insurmountable and they may become depressed and pessimistic. For the Theosophist, a negative outlook will not do. Study and meditation on our true nature engender only the most powerful optimism and help us look beneath the surface at the clear stream of Truth that no act of ours can pollute. But for the man in the street such a vision is unreal and those who place their reliance on things Divine are often regarded as "cranks." If only these people could step back and regard the world as it is! Psychologists are more and more overworked and psychiatrists make a good living out of the many sad cases who are the products of our confused age. Technology has failed to be the saviour that many thought it would be. In fact, in many ways it is proving to be the exact opposite. It might seem that great strides have been made in some spheres, for



instance in medicine and cures for physical ailments; but is it not at the cost of our spiritual welfare? Humanity cannot cope with the amazing influx of electronic gadgetry. It has just been discovered that children are becoming addicted to playing computerized games and that this could lead to serious psychological problems. We are swamped with sophisticated devices that have no bearing on our inner development and that are designed to draw our thought outward.

On the surface, all this may appear to be all right and most of us marvel at the ingenuity of the scientist who develops ever more complex computers which also grow smaller by the year, so that we may soon require magnifying glasses to take in the details of such machines. The deep thinking individual will soon come to the conclusion that all the effort expended in the creation of such things is not worth the end product. If the same effort were directed towards the amelioration of the terrible condition of mankind, then certainly great strides would be made towards establishing that Brotherhood of Humanity which is the dream of all *true* Adepts. Unfortunately, the main concern worldwide is the economic welfare of one's own country. Even for students of Theosophy who dwell upon spiritual concepts, it is sometimes difficult to focus on the plight of Humanity as they may tend to think that things are better than they actually are. What then of the vast majority of people who have never even heard the word Theosophy, and if they have, do not have a clue as to what it means? How do we get through to these? Are we to spend our time preaching to the converted?

"Compassion speaks and saith: 'Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?' " (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 78). It is certain that if we have understood the Path of Compassion correctly, it will be impossible to remain unaware of the terrible agonies that mankind goes through in its ignorance. The very fact that the more we advance on the Path the more we are "melting" into the "BEING" of COMPASSION ABSOLUTE should give us an insight into the tangled webs that we weave as a result of our mistaken views of the nature of existence and the practices that lead us into even greater confusion. Acting in ignorance is certainly the bane of modern civilization. Certainly the injection of a little loving-kindness is sorely needed. The Masters have said: "Mercy alone opens the gate to save the whole race of mankind," and



this is something that all students of Theosophy should note well and weave into the fabric of their lives.

There are many sensitive people in today's society who suffer from depression and a feeling of despair because they can see no possible solution to the dilemma of mankind. They feel that they are like those who try to put out a forest fire with a cup of water; so they may sink back into apathy or even end up insane or as suicides. Their tragic stories are added to the list of horrors that haunt humanity. There must be a message that can be given to all such. They need to be made aware of the limitless energy that would be at their disposal if they but saw themselves at their true worth. In many ways all our lives are tinged with the sadness of an ever-growing problem. We have lost the knowledge that is inherent in us all and this is the direct perception of the fact that we are all inwardly Divine. We mistake the shadow for the substance and the substance for the shadow and are lost in a labyrinth of delusive ideas. We are living in a sea of Light, but have closed our eyes and refuse to see our potential as evolving "gods." Lack of this awareness causes so many problems: depression, loneliness, unbrotherliness, violence, etc. We have to *feel* that we are all emanations of the One Consciousness before we can suggest ways in which the world can be changed for the better. It is easy to see the effects of misapplied "philanthropy." We can also see the horrific results of trying to solve injustices without a true understanding of human nature. It is from separative views that terrorist groups arise, regarding one portion of society as superior to another, or using violence to fight for some "right" or other. Then again the government of one country may feel that it has the right to subjugate another country by force, thereby provoking wars. None of these attitudes is of real lasting value to anyone; only the promotion and practice of true Brotherhood can set the world aright and it is well past the time we realized that fact and went about making it a reality in the world at large.

Compassion, then, in a physical sense, is a reflection of the eternal Harmony at the centre of the Universe. In a practical way, it is the desire in us to see that Harmony firmly established in the world. If we have that innate sense of the divine "fitness of all things," then any disharmony in the world galvanizes us into action. Just as a cut on the leg will cause us to focus attention on it and take all possible



measures to heal it, so will a compassionate person direct his attention to an injury that affects others, whether at the individual, national or global level. So we can safely say that Compassion is related to that feeling of Harmony which is deeply rooted within the Soul of every one of us. It is there if we look deep enough, and it can be employed in a practical manner in our day-to-day lives. It is not some weird mystical force reserved for the "chosen ones," neither is it beyond our reach. We have to learn to put things in perspective and not be engulfed by our comparatively petty problems.

Our minds can be like chattering monkeys and lead us away from a clear vision of what is true. Sometimes it is good to walk out into the countryside, when we feel that things are letting us down, and spend some time getting our thoughts together and seeing things as they are, rather than as our lower mind would like us to see them. Because we do not look inwards, we tend to get very gloomy at times. This is because of a misunderstanding of our divine nature. If we really understood, there would be no such thing as pessimism, even if life did take a downward turn externally. The Inner Self cannot be touched by anything that might come to pass on the physical plane. The *Bhagavad-Gita* speaks thus of the Spirit, which is the dweller in the body:

The weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth it not, the water corrupteth it not, the wind drieth it not away; for it is indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible, and is not to be dried away; it is eternal, universal, permanent, immovable; it is invisible, inconceivable, and unalterable; therefore, knowing it to be thus, thou shouldst not grieve.

The trouble is that we often *do* grieve. We do not make use of this wonderful realization that can come to any of us if we are willing to work for it and live in a way befitting such an exalted Truth. It is said that we squander our lives in pettiness and do so many things in our ignorance that cause pain to ourselves and to others. A Master of Wisdom once wrote to a correspondent: "Shall you help us to teach mankind that the soul-sick must heal themselves?" This is good advice for all of us. We should do our best to awaken the "benumbed" souls of our brothers and sisters to their own Divine potential and wean them away from reliance on intermediaries. We should try to show them the wisdom of responsibility. This stems from the fact that



we are non-separate from everything else, and trying to amass goods, or even knowledge, for ourselves alone can lead us nowhere in the end. In fact, we shall find a growing dissatisfaction with life. Most people do not have the capacity to explain this feeling and may think that it can be kept at bay by accumulating even more "valuables." In the end, they are left stranded on an island of their own making and become increasingly unhappy.

So it is important to understand that both the victims of poverty and the victims of wealth are equally worthy of our compassion. The wealthy need to be taught the true meaning of responsibility. It may seem illogical to follow courses of action that bring us ultimate grief, and to ignore those that make us feel at peace with ourselves and with the world around us. Yet such is the illusion promoted by the "great dire heresy of Separateness" that we do what we should not, and do not do what we should. We are too short-sighted to take note of the effects of certain ways of thought and action on our lives and we think only of the personal self and the gratification of its basic desires, often to excess. We should think of ourselves as part of the Whole and try to bring about a balance between the various parts of that Whole. We add to the *imbalance* and then wonder why we are so unhappy.

We are ill at ease because we alienate ourselves from the ocean of Light that pervades the whole Universe. We make ourselves into spiritual orphans when we should be trying to become children of this Light. Even physically we know that a child who grows up without parents is likely to feel insecure and have various mental and emotional problems. How much more so with those of us who live unaware of our spiritual parentage? As the Master K.H. says: "...it is 'humanity' which is the great Orphan, the only disinherited one upon this earth, my friend. And it is the duty of every man who is capable of an unselfish impulse, to do something, however little, for its welfare." It is our duty, because no matter how much we should like to at times, we cannot separate ourselves from society in general. We are part and parcel of it and we can find true peace and bliss only by working for the collective spirit of humanity. If we are honest with ourselves and are willing to admit this, then we are ready to develop those traits that can help us to relate to each other with a natural spontaneity instead of *unnatural* suspicion and doubt.

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## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

The recent bomb blasts in Bombay, Calcutta and some other cities caused enormous loss of life and brought suffering to the injured and to others whose lives were disrupted. Yet amidst all this there was a ray of sunshine with reports of how the people of these cities responded with humanity and compassion to help those who were affected and to restore normalcy within a short time.

This, writes the Dalai Lama in his comment in *The Sunday Times of India* (April 11), reaffirmed his belief that, "despite the violence and inhumanity that man heaps on man, there are, in fact, far more acts of altruism and compassion in the world":

Without the love and caring we have each received, we would not have survived. It begins from the love that our parents and family give us when we are born, at a time when we are so fragile and vulnerable. If we really think about it, we will realize that our very survival, even today, depends upon the acts and kindness of so many people....

I believe that we must consciously develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. We must learn to work not just for our own individual self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the best foundation both for our personal happiness and for world peace, the equitable use of our natural resources, and, through a concern for future generations, the proper care for environment....

Real love is based not on attachment, but on altruism. In this case your compassion will remain a humane response to suffering as long as sentient beings continue to suffer. Undiscriminating, spontaneous and unlimited compassion for all sentient beings is obviously not the usual love that one has for friends or family, which is alloyed with desire, attachment and ignorance. The kind of love we should advocate is this wider love that you can have even for someone who has done you harm....

A useful result of training ourselves to cultivate altruism is that it diminishes the magnitude of our own problems. When faced with a calm and clear mind, problems can be successfully resolved. On the other hand, when our minds are filled with hatred, selfishness, jealousy and anger, we lose our sense of judgment. To be happy oneself, one must help others; and to do this, a genuine feeling of compassion must be developed.



I do not believe in creating movements or organizations to promote an idea. Doing so implies that only one group of people is responsible for achieving the goal—the rest are exempt. In the present circumstances, no one can afford to assume that someone else will solve our problems. Each of us must take on his or her own share of universal responsibility. Positive changes cannot come quickly. We need an ongoing effort for determined application which can accomplish even the most difficult objectives. When we transform ourselves, it affects those we come in contact with in positive ways; they in turn influence others, and so on. Every action that each of us takes makes a difference, even though we cannot always obviously see or understand the consequences.

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The personal life of most of us is full of regrets, even if we choose not to acknowledge them. Regret is the pain we feel when something in our lives does not work out as it might have. If left unchecked, regret can spread like a malignant tumour affecting our personal and professional lives. But if we confront it realistically, writes Rajan Kapoor (*The Times of India*, May 1), we can avoid its negative effects and instead convert it into a positive tool to make effective life choices.

When regret over past events takes over our lives, it leaves us stuck in the past, racked with self-blame, unable to make positive decisions.... Properly utilized, it can help us learn from our previous mistakes, re-examine our personal values and goals in life, and come to terms with the need to balance different aspects of our lives....

The degree of pain accompanying feelings of regret is closely related to the amount of self-blame we feel. But self-blame over the *past* leads to depression in the *present* and poor decisions in the *future*.

While we can't change an event in the past, the one thing we *can* control is our attitude and reaction towards it in the present. Even if we did once make a bad decision, we are not fated to continue on the same path forever. If we use our regret to understand what we did wrong, then we can hope to do better next time, irrespective of others' comments and opinions....

There are a number of specific ways to harness regret as a help



for making better future decisions, rather than let it turn into a nagging malignant tumour of remorse or recrimination:

*Help others:* Do something positive for other people. Then you can feel genuinely good about yourself and partly make up for the past occasions when you may have wronged others. Even if you were the wronged one, the pain suffered would make you empathize with others' misfortunes....

*Humour:* Past situations become easier to bear when we view them through the prism of humour instead of the prison of regret....

*Try to live in the present.* Make the most of every opportunity you are granted to savour new experiences....

*Surrender the need to always be right.* Don't confuse surrender with weakness. If you're willing to take the first step towards repairing a relationship—even if it bruises your ego a little now—you'll feel less regret and guilt later....

*Reframe your perspective* to view a situation in a new light. Instead of thinking, "I wasn't good enough for him/her," shift to "What I had to offer wasn't appreciated."

To avoid future regret, think now about how today's decisions are likely to affect anticipated future situations. The better your decisions, the less regret you're likely to feel. Begin thinking about what you need to do—now and later—to be ready for it.

"To regret is waste of energy," says Mr. Judge. Not only that, but regret is a thought, and "if we turn its tide upon the past, it plays upon the seeds of that past and vivifies them; it causes them to sprout and grow in the ground of the mind." So it is best to "cast all regret aside." In *Letters That Have Helped Me* Mr. Judge further says:

The Past! What is it? Nothing. Gone! Dismiss it. You are the past of yourself. Therefore it concerns you not as such. It only concerns you as you now are. In you, as now you exist, lies *all* the past. So follow the Hindu maxim: "Regret nothing; never be sorry; and cut all doubts with the sword of spiritual knowledge." Regret is productive only of error. I care not what I *was*, or what anyone *was*. I only look for what I am each moment. For as each moment is and at once is not, it must follow that if we think of the past we forget the present, and while we forget, the moments fly by us, making more past. Then regret nothing, not even the greatest follies of your life, for they are gone, and you are to work in the present which is both past and future at once. So then, with that absolute knowledge that all your limitations are due to Karma, past or in this



life, and with a firm reliance ever now upon Karma as the only judge, who will be good or bad as you make it yourself, you can stand anything that may happen and feel serene despite the occasional despondencies which all feel, but which the light of Truth always dispels. (Indian ed., p. 21)

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The ancients seldom wrote down history as we understand historical writing, conforming to the format and pattern familiar from the last few centuries, or from models borrowed from particular societies such as ancient Greece. Therefore it has often been assumed that they had no historical consciousness. Romila Thapar's essay "Social Origins of Myths," which forms part of her book *Interpreting Early India*, stresses the fact that historical consciousness is not always visible and has to be looked for in sources which tend to conceal it. The form it takes varies from society to society and also within the same society as it undergoes change over a period of time.

This perhaps requires a distinction [Romila Thapar writes] between what might be termed "embedded history"—forms in which historical consciousness has to be prised out—and its opposite, "externalized history"—which tends to bring embedded consciousness into the open, as it were, and to be more aware of its deliberate use of the past. The need for such a deliberate use suggests a changed historical situation....

Each version of the past which has been deliberately transmitted has a significance for the present, and this accounts for its legitimacy and its continuity. The record may be one in which historical consciousness is embedded: myth, epic and genealogy; or alternatively it may refer to the more externalized forms: chronicles of families, institutions and regions, and biographies of persons in authority....

I shall consider some forms of embedded history, such as the prevalent myths in the *itihasapurana* tradition, which encapsulate features of what might be seen as historical experience; the eulogies and hero-lauds which were gradually expanded into epic literature; the genealogical sections or *vamsanucarita* of the Puranic texts which, by implication, carry a commentary on the social status of ruling families....

The deepest layer of the embedded form is myth....The



significance of myth to the historian lies more in its being the self-image of a given culture, expressing its social assumptions. The role of myth in this context is often explanatory.

Myths, however, have several roles and their interpretation is a vast subject. In *The Secret Doctrine* and elsewhere H.P.B. brings out that ancient myths not only have a historical value; they also convey spiritual verities.

The so-called "myths," in order to be at least approximately dealt with in any degree of justice, have to be closely examined from all their aspects. In truth, every one of the *seven Keys* has to be used in its right place, and never mixed with the others, if we would unveil the entire cycle of mysteries. (*S.D.*, II, 517)

Allegory and a mythical ornamentation around the kernel of tradition, in no wise prevent that kernel being a record of real events....All the so-called myths of the Hindu, Grecian, Chaldean and Jewish Pantheons are found to be built on fact and truth. (*Ibid.*, II, 235-6)

Dr. M. M. Bhamgara, Director, Health Science Trust, Bombay, writes of the "Spiritual Dimension of Health—the Neglected Dimension" in *Jam-e-Jamshed Weekly* for April 25, 1993. As a practising physician he has come to the conclusion, he says, that after a routine examination of a patient—feeling his pulse, examining his chest with a stethoscope, taking his blood pressure reading, palpating his abdomen, seeing his tongue—he can know just two per cent about that patient. By ordering X-rays of the affected parts of the body, blood examination and other pathological tests, the doctor can know perhaps two more per cent about the patient. After special investigations such as sonography, angiography, MRI, C-T scan, etc., what the doctor comes to know is no more than another two per cent. Even when he hears the patient talk about his mental problems, his financial and family problems, his secret fears, frustrations, anguish, hopes, etc., he may not know more than another 20 per cent about that patient. Even close association with a person for a length of time reveals only a little more about him. What is more, very often the patient himself does not know more than one-third about himself, his



total self.

Like an iceberg, only a small part of us is above the surface. We live an invisible life of thoughts, dreams, aspirations, frustrations, fears, and numerous other feelings behind the facade of the visible self as seen by others. Health is not a purely medical issue. A physician may succeed in ameliorating the patient's symptoms, but a complete cure, says Dr. Bhamgara, is a different matter altogether and is difficult to achieve without the patient's co-operation. Even at the level of the body, no disturbance remains strictly confined to a single organ. Also, the body has its own language; it sends us signals all the time and tells us what is right and what is wrong in our living patterns. In Dr. Bhamgara's words:

We thwart the healing power of Nature by trying to be smart. We forget that we are a part of Nature and, therefore, can never be superior to the whole, which Nature is. When we suppress one ailment by drugs, out crops another—perhaps a worse one. Often, modern medical methods and drugs bring on disease, which is even worse than the original disease for which the treatment was undertaken....And the harm is not only physiological; it is psychological as well. Modern medicine is breeding escapists....

Health is not merely absence of disease; it is a state of vibrant well-being. It is a state in which all our organs and all our systems—respiratory, circulatory, nervous, digestive, excretory, endocrine, etc.—as well as mental faculties, are working efficiently.

Mental health consists of several qualities and capabilities. The American Medical Association has given a list of these as follows: (1) Emotional stability; (2) Maturity of character; (3) Ability to recover from the paralysing stresses of life in a quick time; (4) Ability to judge reality accurately; (5) Ability to foresee; (6) Ability to love and sustain affectionate relationship with people around; (7) Ability to work cheerfully and productively; (8) Ability to gratify hunger, thirst and sex urges in such a way as not to hurt others or oneself; (9) Having an effective conscience.

According to Yoga Shastras, the life-stresses (*kleshas*) which cause ill-health are: (1) *Avidya* or ignorance; (2) *Asmita* or egotism; (3) *Raaga* or desires; (4) *Dwesha* or aversions; and (5) *Abhinivesa* or fixations.

At a workshop held in Bangalore some time back under the auspices of the World Health Organization to discuss the spiritual



components of health, one participant gave the following characteristics of a spiritually ill person: (1) greed and miserliness, leading to misery; (2) violence, an offshoot of which can be ill-temper and a whip-lash of the tongue; (3) fear which engenders tension and inhibits love; (4) doubt or a suspicious nature; (5) impatience or lack of equanimity, leading to intolerance and frustration. Unfortunately, a vast majority of us are caught in one or the other symptom of spiritual illness. The spiritually healthy person, on the other hand, is calm, balanced, considerate, loving, giving, understanding, careful and caring; he has faith in his own Divinity.

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Until recently, those espousing the vegetarian cause endured much ridicule for their beliefs—but no more so. Vegetables, "once the side order," are today the "stars of the show," writes Michael Bateman in *The Sunday Review* (U.K.) for April 25. Supermarket sales, especially of the fancy varieties of vegetables, are booming. According to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Bureau which monitors figures, "it is an explosion." "Up to six million people in Britain do not eat meat," says Colin Spencer, who has just published a history of vegetarianism, *The Heretic's Feast*.

Vegetarian publishing, too, is booming. The trickle of books became a flood in the 1980s, and now hundreds are published each year. "Vegetarian books are even written by meat-eaters," Spencer observes, "a strange anomaly that would have struck the founders of the movement as immoral but which now arouses no comment." Supermarkets, restaurants and skilful advertising must also take a share of the credit for the changing perception of vegetables.

Those desirous of adopting a purer diet, but hesitating to take the step from apprehension of possible ill effects upon health, will be reassured by the pronouncements of some leading authorities upon diet. All evidence supports the viewpoint that meat is not necessary in the human diet; further, that those who consume meat will improve, rather than suffer, by cutting it all out of their diet. The incidence of certain diseases, it has been reported, is higher among meat consumers compared to the vegetarian population—a fact that H.P.B. noted as far back as 1889, in her *Key to Theosophy*.

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# THEOSOPHICAL PUBLICATIONS

## By H. P. Blavatsky:

ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.  
THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.  
INDEX TO THE SECRET DOCTRINE  
THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY  
TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE  
THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY  
THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE  
FIVE MESSAGES TO THE AMERICAN THEOSOPHISTS  
RAJA-YOGA OR OCCULTISM  
SHE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH  
THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS  
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

## By William Q. Judge:

THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY  
LETTERS THAT HAVE HELPED ME  
THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
NOTES ON THE BHAGAVAD-GITA  
THE YOGA APHORISMS OF PATANJALI  
VERNAL BLOOMS  
THE HEART DOCTRINE  
ECHOES FROM THE ORIENT  
AN EPITOME OF THEOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY GENERALLY STATED  
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

## By Robert Crosbie:

THE FRIENDLY PHILOSOPHER  
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON THE OCEAN OF THEOSOPHY  
UNIVERSAL THEOSOPHY  
A BOOK OF QUOTATIONS

## Other Publications:

LIGHT ON THE PATH  
THROUGH THE GATES OF GOLD  
THE DHAMMAPADA  
THE LIGHT OF ASIA  
SELECTIONS FROM THE UPANISHADS, AND THE TAO TE KING  
"BECAUSE—" FOR THE CHILDREN WHO ASK WHY  
THE ETERNAL VERITIES  
THE TELL-TALE PICTURE GALLERY  
STUDIES IN "THE SECRET DOCTRINE" (BOOKS I AND II)  
LIVING THE LIFE  
THE BUILDING OF THE HOME  
"THUS HAVE I HEARD"  
THE ZOROASTRIAN PHILOSOPHY AND WAY OF LIFE  
U.L.T.—ITS MISSION AND ITS FUTURE  
TEXTS FOR THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS  
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"  
IN MEMORY OF HELENA PETROVNA BLAVATSKY, BY SOME OF HER PUPILS  
U.L.T. PAMPHLET SERIES, NOS. 1-36  
H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES



# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

**T**HE 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."*

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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.