

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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MAGIC, BLACK AND WHITE

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

THE word Magic is much misunderstood, because there are various kinds of so-called Magic which are but forms of deception and trickery. But there is a Magic which might be called the unseen and hidden power to bring to pass certain desired results, without revealing its methods. It is a knowledge far beyond any kind of trickery, and is based on the spiritual nature of man. Those who practised it in ancient times were the initiates, the wise, called Magi; hence, the word Magic.

We need to discover the difference between the two systems of magic, known as the Black and the White. And, first of all, let us understand that whatever power has ever been used by any man can also be used by us. All powers exist in every human being. If we do not exhibit the same powers that others do, it is because we do not understand our own natures, and the forces which we do *not* use, and the nature of the universe. We need to lay aside all the prejudices and preconceptions we may have held in regard to man's nature and destiny, and go back to the rudiments of existence—to the common basis of all life. Such a basis cannot exist in a creative being, who could not be either infinite or omnipresent, existing of self outside of other beings. That which is infinite and omnipres-

ent must be within ourselves, as within all other beings; that Supreme must be the common basis—call it Spirit, if you will.

From that Source of Spirit all powers are drawn. In that basis of Spirit are inherent all powers possible—to the very infiniteness of expansion. Every being who uses those powers draws them from that Source, because he is a ray from and one with It in his innermost essence. Now, those *powers* are neither good nor bad, black nor white. They are powers only, the blackness or the whiteness or the goodness or the badness being imparted by the one who uses them. The quality which is given to those actions depends upon the motive with which the being acts. So, along with ridding ourselves of the idea of God as a creative Being, let us rid ourselves of the idea of good and evil being things in themselves. There is nothing "good" and nothing "evil"; the same power that is exerted for good is just the same power that is exerted for evil, the motive qualifying it. All powers of every kind are spiritual in their essence; each one draws from the Highest in everything that he thinks; he draws from the Highest in every power that he uses.

We must understand that Spirit includes the power to perceive, to know, to gain experience; but that power is entirely different from the things perceived and the experiences garnered. And so, the differences in the combinations of experiences and methods of thinking or understanding make individuals appear to be beings separate from all the rest. There is no difference in our essential natures. The basis of every being in the universe is the One Spirit, the One Life, the One Consciousness, and inherent in every being is the law, moving from the Spirit outward, which impels to their unfoldment—the law of evolution. We need not think that Man came to be in any different way than any other being in the universe. ALL is Spirit and Soul, ever evolving to greater and greater perfection, whether in the lower kingdoms where there are minor degrees of consciousness, or in the human kingdom where there are many degrees of development. In a universe of law, evolution must be carried to its highest point and present to our minds the just and true course of growth. So, there are beings above

us who have been men like ourselves, who once turned their faces in the true direction and pursued the course that brought them to their present high condition.

Such beings are our Elder Brothers. They are not separate from us. They understand what we have to contend with—what we are going through. They have all the power that we see expressed in many ways but cannot understand—the power of White Magic—the power won by merit along the line of a universal endeavour to help all beings—the power latent in Them, as now in us, until They gained and understood for Themselves the fundamental ideas of evolution and proceeded on the path that those ideas prescribed. For, law also rules here. One cannot reach a high stage of development by merely wishing for it. A desire is not a condition. The condition has to be complied with. Law operates on Those beings above Man, as it operates on Man: They act and get Their reactions. But there is this difference: They act in accordance with Their knowledge—the knowledge of White Magic; we act much of the time with Black Magic, for our motives are not pure, we must admit.

Selfishness is at the root and base of all Black Magic. The fact that we are always trying and striving to obtain something for our personal selves shows what kind of Magicians we are, and why we have so little power. Those who work for the personal man and his surroundings make a hard concrete sphere about themselves through which great powers cannot come. Through that sphere can be drawn only those minor powers that can be used merely in a personal way. That is why we express ourselves so weakly. A vast reservoir of force lies within us, but we cannot use it because we are selfish, afraid, and want to gain powers without giving anything.

There are beings who can proceed along the line of selfish powers to a greater extent than, perhaps, we can imagine. Their object, being far from the benefit of all, is to keep mankind where it is, and they use every agency that will continue to produce greater confusion among men. It is true that many scientists and the votaries of many religions, while not consciously acting as Black

Magicians, yet certainly are acting as agents for those beings who would keep mankind where it is. Such beings depend on that very condition for maintaining their own existence. In this fact we can see the basis for "the devil."

Now, in reality, there is no "devil" and no "black magician" *outside* that could touch us at all if our motives were pure, if our motives were unselfish, if we acted from the basis of the highest ideas and the intention to live to benefit Humanity. Then, no dark power could touch us at all. The expression of the highest powers in Nature is dependent on the fact that we are rays from and one with the Absolute; hence, all our evolution must be along those lines which work for the benefit of all the others, forgetful of our personal selves but using those personal selves to the best and highest advantage of all. Black Magic is selfishness personified and expressed in its highest degree. On that course may be obtained a great deal of power, intellectually and psychically—power that to us might appear miraculous and God-like—but the intent with which that power is used points to the nature of the beings using it.

What, then, are the White Magicians? Their whole natures, from the inside out, are of one kind. They are all in accord. They never seek anything for themselves. They use all the powers and all the possessions that come their way for the benefit of the rest of the world. In their thought, will, and feeling all the time is the ideal progression of Humanity. By these motives, they naturally draw from the Highest, and everything they do has its effect for good, not only upon their fellow men, but upon the kingdoms below them. Could we understand that, then we would have some idea as to what true White Magic is.

There are duly attested records by most reputable persons as to the wonderful phenomena performed by Madame Blavatsky. We have all read of the so-called miracles of Jesus. These "miracles" have been repeated time and time again by people who made no claim to any special "divinity," but who did possess spiritual knowledge, who had knowledge of the occult laws governing the aggregation of what we call substance. How, for instance, they

could change coarse material into a fine substance, cause its disappearance from visible view and its reintegration in some other place, is explained by the fact that anything is held together by some internal cohesive quality, which can be dissipated for the time being, by one who has the use of the higher powers of the psychic nature. When the power that dissipates is withdrawn by the action of the spiritual will, then the object immediately comes to its former position. Thus objects can be passed through a wall to any distance whatever without any motion, save the action of the spiritual will.

The most wonderful phenomena that ever have been performed can be duplicated by any human being. The most wonderful powers that ever have been used by anybody, "divine" or otherwise, can be obtained by any human being. But they cannot be obtained for selfish purposes; they can be obtained only by *understanding the Teaching and living the life*.

And "living the life" includes our brotherly relations, not only to Man, but to the kingdoms below Man. Man is the plane where Spirit and matter touch. (By "matter," we mean form.) He has evolved for himself a body, powers and consciousness with every stage of condensation of this planet, and has contacted all lower evolved forms that the chain of evolution might be made complete. His is the task of gaining further experience in the new evolution of this planet—itsself the outcome of a previous evolution in which all the beings of this one were engaged, as well as the brotherly necessity of helping raise to his estate the lower lives now occupied in their slow evolutionary journey. The task is to use all the matter below us—to impress it and help it on its way. This we do through our bodies, which are composed of the matter of the earth, mineral, vegetable and animal; we keep those bodies going by the power of transmutation of the lower elements into human form.

We are still working at this task, far from completion, because coming down the stairway of evolution we have become so involved in the process of establishing our bodies that we have forgotten many things in regard to our higher nature. The Soul has

lost the knowledge that its essential nature is bliss itself, and so it is in a state of unrest all the time, moving in this, that or the other direction in order to gain happiness of an impermanent nature. All that we can gain are the fragments of that bliss, which knowingly or unknowingly draws us on, until we at length regain the permanent happiness of the nature of Soul itself. For that, the Beings above us are constantly trying to impress us and deliver the message of the Soul.

White Magic, then, clears away all those mysteries which surround us. It clears away the very cause of suffering. It shows us what we are, in reality, and helps us to understand not only our own nature, but the natures of all others. It places within our hands that great power which can move souls to a comprehension of their own nature, and to spread abroad a beneficence that affects every creature everywhere in the world. Such is the acme of White Magic, but it is brought about only through an unselfish pursuance of a life of service to all others; through a realization of what in reality we are; through the performance in thought and act in line with that realization. We have to come to that point where it is not a question of mere assenting, but of an actual realization. Realization comes from dwelling on the thing to be realized—by thinking and acting in accordance with it, until every cell and fibre in our bodies responds to the eternal and internal Spirit of Man.

It is easier to suppose that the universe has existed from all eternity than to conceive a Being beyond its limits capable of creating it.

—SHELLEY

OUR LIFE-CYCLES

ONE of the fundamental truths of the Ancient Science, the Law of Periodicity or Cycles, is being accepted more and more today in different departments of life. The word "cycle" is related to the word "circle," and the concept was a familiar one among the Greeks as among the Egyptians and Judeans. *Gilgul* among the Hebrew Kabalists and *Kuklos* among the Greeks are terms which denote their familiarity with the concept, and when we study the common idea the words represent we are able to trace them down the grand old ages to Vishnu's *Chakra* in India.

Aryan chronology is well known for its accurate calculations and numerous details; but these are so staggering and bewildering to the modern mind that when the early Orientalists of England, Germany and France came across records of that chronology they could not overcome their prejudice, and so they brushed them aside as wholly unreliable. This prejudice was rooted in their concept of Biblical chronology. If they had been as wise as they were learned, the very Bible figures would have been interpreted by them symbolically, and their minds would have been more receptive to the Aryan or Hindu chronology.

The important fact is that the term Cycle, like the Greek *Kuklos* and the Sanskrit *Chakra*, represents profound truths, and our first task is to obtain a general view of this difficult subject of the Secret Science, or *Guhya Vidya*.

The Law of Cycles is known as the Law of Periodicity, and that appellation tells us that it has to do with the concept of Time, of Duration, of *Kala*. The first metaphysical fact necessary for us to understand is that there is abstract Time, better called Duration to differentiate it from concrete time. Duration is like abstract Space; it is beyond past, present and future. It is Boundless Time, the Avestan *Zervanae Akarnae*, to be differentiated from the trinity of concrete time—past, present, future. Just as there is Abstract Parabrahman, and its manifestation as the Trinity or Trimurti, so there is Abstract Time and its Trimurti—the creative Brahma

which we might call the Past, the preserving Vishnu or the Present, and the regenerating Shiva or the Future. Past, Present, Future are the threefold aspects, concrete and measurable, while Duration is abstract and immeasurable.

The geometric symbol of Time is the circle. There are small and big circles, small circles which are part of big circles, and so the figure obtained is that of the spiral. Abstract Time or Duration is the Serpent of Eternity, *Ananta-Sesha*, ever biting its own tail. He therefore becomes the basis or *upadhi* of Maha-Vishnu. On *Ananta*-Duration, Endless Time, manifested Vishnu reposes. When Vishnu sleeps, there is *Pralaya*, a period of obscuration; when Vishnu awakes, there is *Prabhava*, manifestation. During *Pralaya*, Time—*i.e.*, past, present, future—does not exist; therefore it is said: "Time was not, for it lay asleep in the infinite bosom of Duration." On the other hand, during manifestation there is the Trinity of Time. But what is past and what is future? If we try to divide time into short and shorter periods, and watch the future second as it becomes the past, we will learn the *maya* or illusion aspect of Time, and the reality of Duration. It is in this view of the future becoming the past that we are able to glimpse the practical application of cycles. Past and future meet in the present, so the present is all-important and is called the "Eternal Now."

It is said in Occultism that *Kala* is *Karma*, that Time is Nemesis, *i.e.*, causes generated produce their effects in time. The moment we do something, it is already in the past; the effects are to come in the future. The significant idea is that there are cycles within cycles, small cycles within big cycles, and all enveloped by the longest cycle of manifestation—the *Chakra* of Maha-Vishnu.

The ancient Teachers gave us seven keys to understand the Mystery of all mysteries, the interrelationship, nay, identity, of all beings in Nature with Super-Nature. Man has not only an intimate relationship with Nature; he *is* Nature. The realization of this identity is the aim of all *yoga*, the purpose of all spiritual endeavours. The ancient Teachers, using the profound truth of the Law of Analogy and Correspondence, showed how man-spirit was

God-spirit. The great Cosmos or Macrocosm and the small cosmos, microcosm or man, are related and identical. The astronomical and astrological key is one of the seven keys given by the Teachers, and it unlocks the secret of Time and of Cycles. Like other keys, this one too is lost. But let us get the basic idea—cycles of heavenly bodies are related to cycles of human lives because at the back of both lies concealed the truth about spiritual potencies. Gods, Devas, Rishis, Brahma and his mind-born Sons, *Manasaputras*, move in the spiritual regions, and they cast the shadow of their movements in the world of stars as in the world of men. Sidereal orbs are said to be the habitats of the Gods, and so are human bodies. So let us get the central idea—human life-cycles are closely related to divine Life-Cycles. Men are Suras and Asuras, Rama and Ravana, Krishna and Kansa, Buddha and Mara, Christ and Anti-christ. Let us understand this in terms of our subject of Life-Cycles.

Hindu chronology speaks of four *Yugas* or epochs, and they form the smallest among the astronomical cycles. The Science of Occultism divides a day into four periods, corresponding to the four *Yugas*—*Satya*, *Treta*, *Dwapara* and *Kali*. Our life-cycle is made up of day-cycles, and each day-cycle, from one point of view, is divisible into four cycles of activity which might be called "yugas"—soul-yuga, mind-yuga, labour-yuga, recreation-yuga. What is the *Satya Yuga*, the golden age, of every human day? The soul-period, *i.e.*, the period in which the soul is engaged with its Inner God or Self, in meditation and prayer. Time was when men were like the "gods" and then the soul-period was the long period, but now the period of meditation and prayer and worship has become the shortest! The second period of the day is that in which the individual occupies himself with study, the obtaining of knowledge. In these days, these two daily *yugas* are rolled into one and all the "knowledge" one gets is from the daily newspapers! If we want to obtain the peace and the power of the gods, let us restore in our lives the proper functioning of these two periods of meditation or soul-study, and reading or mind-study. The third period of the day, in our enumeration, is for labour, the earning of one's

livelihood and the helping of one's country's development in numerous spheres. The fourth period is for recreation.

On the harmonious interblending of these four functions depends bodily health, psychic and spiritual well-being. The danger and the weakness of this cycle is that we are apt to turn too much to ourselves; the beneficence and strength of the cycle is that it gives us opportunities to turn to our Spiritual Self. We turn to the soul, and then to the mind, and then to the body, and when the latter needs repose, turn from it once again to the mind and the soul, making a complete circle. Thus we pass through the four "yugas" every day.

The second prominent cycle is the *Manvantara*, which corresponds to the revolution of the Earth round the Sun, and to a single incarnation of the human individual. The word *Manvantara*—from *Manu-antara*, between two Manus—means several things, but it also implies between two Men or two human lives. The Root-Man is he who is born in a body and who going out of the body takes with him the seed of experience from which new roots will grow. One life's *Manvantara*, like one year, is composed of four seasons—childhood, youth, maturity, old age. Another classification is that of the four *Ashramas*—*Brahmacharya*, *Grihastha*, *Vanaprastha* and *Sannyasa*. This cycle of *Manvantara* is an important one from the practical point of view of our own life-cycles.

When we die, *i.e.*, when we leave a body of flesh and blood, we, as souls, take with us the good seeds of thought, will and feeling, and we leave behind the evil weeds of passion (*kama*), anger (*krodha*), avarice (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*). These evils become in course of time the soil into which the good seeds of thought, will and feeling will be sown and will fructify. If we leave behind no passion, no hatred, no avarice, no delusion, we have a magnificent field to nourish fair flowers and sweet fruits. The Teachers of old devised many ways and methods to instruct men and women so to live that they did not leave behind evil; and more, that they took away with them many, many healthy seeds. By living the four *Yugas* of the one *Manvantara* according to the Law of Holy Writ, men and women can achieve this.

There are two methods: starving out and extinguishing the evil; growing and strengthening the good. Each of these naturally is affected by the Law of Cycles. To take an example : Most of us get what are called moods. All moods—of jealousy, anger, greed, lust, etc.—move in cycles and repeat themselves. They are like seeds; jealousy-seeds, for example, fructify and die out, to fructify again; and so with all other vices. Therefore, unless we overcome jealousy when we are actually in the jealous mood, it will never leave us, but will come back again and again. Return of cyclic impressions is a fact in Nature. Just as in a field what is sown has to be reaped, so also we sow in this life to reap in a future life, as we are now reaping what we had sown in the past.

Applying this, we see how very vital it is to take care of our thoughts, feelings and acts. All education, at school or in life, is dual—starving out the evil, bringing forth the good; and in this we can take the help that the Law of Cycles or Periodicity provides.

In our life, the cycle of studentship and the cycle of the householder are followed by other cycles till our life-*manvantara* is over; death ensues, the body breaks down, and we are on the way to a new *manvantara*, a new incarnation. But there is the *Maha-Manvantara*—the great cycle of many lives. Just as the human personality passes through four stages or seasons in a single life, so the human Individuality or the Immortal Soul passes through four states of consciousness which are named *varna*, castes or classes. And beyond the *Maha-Manvantara* is the Grand Cycle represented by the *Chakra* of Vishnu, corresponding for humans to the long period during which the divinity within us blossoms and we attain to that high state of perpetual youth and never-ending existence—the condition of the Emancipated Soul, the *Mahatma*, the *Rishi*, the *Nirmanakaya*.

Past, present and future affect not these Great Souls. They live in the Eternal Now. They have gone beyond cycles. They can watch the cycles moving, and therefore it is said that to the Great Ones Nature is an open book and that They are the readers of the pages of Destiny. What can we learn from this particular function

of the *Mahatmas*?

We must learn to conquer Time as They have conquered Time. Of course we shall not succeed at once, but we have to begin at some point, so why not begin now and here? Punctuality is neglected and misunderstood. The right time for everything small and great has to be fixed. We shall find that if things go wrong it is because sufficient time has not been allowed, or the right time has not been chosen, or the time fixed has been forgotten. To conquer Time is to conquer Fate; to conquer *Kala* is to conquer *Karma*; and the psychological moments are not so very scarce; for there is a psychological moment for everything. That is what people do not understand. The whole ancient science of astrology was based on psychological moments. The moment of birth is psychological, and so is the moment of death. The moment of waking and that of falling to sleep are psychological. Let us fix our important moments. By regular *tapas* or meditation the Yogis develop their powers. Fixing of regular periods for our meditation, for our study, work, recreation, food, etc., can prove of great help. This done, we shall begin to "live in the Eternal."

Living in the Eternal is not just doing nothing. Aristotle defined it as "activity without motion"—constant, consistent activity; everything without exception to be done at the right psychological moment. For the Mahatma who lives in the Eternal Now, there is no rest but intense action. There is repose because he moves the moments by right knowledge; rather he moves himself in the ocean of moments and hours with a mighty precision. Let us try so to fix our days and arrange our lives that rhythm and harmony persist through them all. Study of the Law of Periodicity or Cycles will help us to do this. In the flow of cycles, there is peace and silence, repose and rhythm; and if we want these we must labour for them and cultivate them. The peace of the Cycle is very powerful; the strength of the Cycle is very blissful. Regular rhythm of Life has to be acquired by constant practice, and once we secure that, we have touched the boundary of the realm of the Eternal Now.

A QUESTION OF PROGRESS

THE student of Theosophy might sometimes wonder, while reflecting upon his life, why he has not advanced further, or achieved more than he thinks he has.

"Why am I no better than I am now?" he asks himself, or his fellows. This is difficult for another to answer. The curiosity, or the despair, evinced in the query cannot be resolved by anyone other than the student himself or herself. This does not mean that no help can be offered. We have all been in that state of despondency and have asked similar questions, in this or in other lives.

Let us ask ourselves: "On what scale can we judge and evaluate ourselves now?" If reincarnation and karma are not considered, then indeed we have no stable reference. If they are, then the scale of reference is one of soul-memory. It is also one that will force us to take stock of ourselves. We innately accept the idea that there is at the centre of our innermost being a stability, a continuity, a sense of identity, which is not destroyed when we sleep, or even when the body dies. No one can visualize a time when his consciousness is destroyed, or breaks its continuity. It has lived in the past and is proceeding towards the future. It is the storehouse of all our experiences, all our memories, all our Karma.

One's past Karma is modifiable by present ideation, present efforts. For this, we need self-examination. The process of setting down the "pros and cons" for all our attitudes and behaviour and actions should become a regular exercise. We need to be honest in our evaluation of our own character. Who knows his own nature better than himself? Who can be more honest about it? "Arouse the inner attitude of attention and caution," Mr. Judge advises us.

If we only use the scale of "one life," and do not consider the scale of reincarnation and karma, then we are in real trouble, because everything becomes vague. If we consider that a single life is the total of our existence on earth, then indeed we are helpless creatures, and life is purposeless. The view of evolution that Theosophy presents includes all our past, and it asks us to look forward to a future that stretches beyond one life. It draws our

attention to the many beings in Nature that are not yet at the man-stage of consciousness, and declares that as they are now, so we were in the distant past. It also states that we are now as "gods" to them, and that our influence and impress on them helps or hinders their progress. It stresses the continuity, and in fact the eternity, of the spiritual unit, the "monad," that lies at their and at our core. As to the future, it is the result of our actions now. We are making it all the time. If we seek to harmonize with Nature and all her beings, then we assist our own, and all others', evolutionary journey.

We may for a while experience a sense of futility, of despair. A widening-out of our thought to the universal, and a seeking of our duty, is the panacea for banishing despair. Our innate sense of potential, our innate awareness of our ability, our right to choose, and to decide our own future, is ample evidence of our position as eternal beings that we in fact are. We are not material beings, nor passional or impulsive beings, because these are merely temporary conditions. Nor are we merely intellectual, because our attitude of mind and the direction of our thinking is always under our control. We are "THAT"—as was said in sacred texts of yore—the Eternal Pilgrim.

Let us ask, too, why this uncertainty, this despondency? What is it that worries in us? It is an aspect of our personality, the "mask" that our real self has put on for this incarnation, which feels this despair. It should be noted that this is a *feeling*. A feeling is not knowledge; it sometimes represents an area of ignorance, and therefore of apprehension and fear. It can be overcome by the practice suggested above: of creating for our own personal reflection a kind of "life-ledger" wherein we record and assess our own advantages and disadvantages, our own abilities and the reverse. This opens the eyes of the personality to what we are in terms of character-advancement, and to what we can and ought to be doing to improve things. The sense of eternity is for us a goad to improvement and to self-reform.

Anyone who asks, "Why am I not better?" shows that he knows improvement *can* be achieved. It involves learning, checking,

verifying the accuracy of one's surmises with fellow-students, and then disciplining oneself. Self-sacrificial deeds, "sacred" actions, are enjoined on us. What can be more "sacred" than attuning our lives to the needs of others, and thus harmonizing with Nature around us and the beings who, under Karma, have come into our sphere? Duty is said to be that which we owe to others, a debt which has brought us into relationship with others. These are Karmic debts set up in earlier times, or past lives. Those relationships need to be assessed and, when Karma creates the circumstances, improved by harmonious, ethical responses that are spontaneous to our higher nature.

How does "imperfection" look at "perfection"? First, it is aware of the dissimilarity, of the friction that arises from a difference in viewpoint. Then, there may be the envy of the imperfect for the perfect, and, possibly, the attempt to hide, or mask, the imperfection by a pretence of appearing to be better than one really is. Antagonism to the more perfect can then arise, because of the sense that one is less skilful, less faultless in character and in the discharge of duties than is the other. Resentment is a vice that arises in the personality that is envious of true greatness. Envy can lead to fear, and fear can lead to an attempt to harm, hurt or otherwise obscure the virtues of others. Derogation, detraction and slander may be some of the methods used to achieve this—an attempt by the envious to reduce to the lowest common denominator the one who is perceived to be superior in nature and in character.

Once one has identified for oneself these twistings and distortions of the personality, it becomes possible to do something about it; no one else can do it for us. The best anyone can do for another is to open the door on experience that one has had, and invite the observer or inquirer to look, to verify, and to avail of the opportunity to use for himself that experience. This is why true science is universal and non-exclusive. Nature contains all the laws and all the relationships of the universe. No one has a patent or a monopoly on them.

The searcher for truth is not someone special; he is one who has

made the decision to learn about himself; and, in so doing, to study his relations with others, widening this out to include all Nature. In so doing, he finds himself in the company of fellow seekers. Some are apparently ahead of him in some respects; others have had less experience. He begins to perceive a wide and universal trend. He senses that there are those who have dedicated their lives to this work, and he may decide to enrol himself in their company. They are those whom we refer to as Adepts, Masters of Wisdom, Mahatmas—those who have united their *human* soul with the *divine* soul. This, then, is our true goal, and one that we share with all beings in Nature.

SINCE truth is a multifaced jewel, the facets of which it is impossible to perceive all at once; and since, again, no two men, however anxious to discern truth, can see even one of those facets alike, what can be done to help them to perceive it? As physical man, limited and trammelled from every side by illusions, cannot reach truth by the light of his terrestrial perceptions, we say—develop in you the *inner* knowledge. From the time when the Delphic Oracle said to the enquirer, "Man, know thyself," no greater or more important truth was ever taught. Without such perception, man will remain ever blind to even many a relative, let alone absolute, truth. Man has to *know himself*, *i.e.*, acquire the *inner* perceptions which never deceive, before he can master any absolute truth. Absolute truth is *the symbol of Eternity*, and no *finite* mind can ever grasp the eternal, hence, no truth in its fulness can ever dawn upon it. To reach the state during which man sees and senses it, we have to paralyse the senses of the external man of clay. This is a difficult task, we may be told, and most people will, at this rate, prefer to remain satisfied with relative truths, no doubt. But to approach even terrestrial truths requires, first of all, *love of truth for its own sake*, for otherwise no recognition of it will follow.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

"ACCEPT the woes of birth"—What is the meaning of this terse, epigrammatic, intriguing injunction that appears in Fragment II of *The Voice of the Silence*? At first sight it appears to be a counsel of despair, an abject yielding to the inevitable, a supine surrender to the "must be's" of our existence. But a little consideration of the context in which it appears will enable us to see that it is a dynamic, positive precept. It requires the courage and the stoicism of the brave to accept the woes of birth in a spirit of true resignation. A coward cannot do it.

The truth contained in this aphorism is but a restatement of the first of the Four Great Truths that the Buddha gave us. "Sorrow is"—we cannot close our eyes to this fact and the sensible thing to do is to accept it as a fact of existence. The "woes of birth" are the result of our thoughts and actions in the past. If we had sown the seeds of a pepper plant in the past, we cannot hope for the flowering of roses in the present. By the same token, if we take care to plant the sweet jessamine now, we can be sure that its "silver star" will not turn to "thorn or thistle" in the future.

If we are working out the effects of our past Karma now, we have also the inherent ability, by our power of choice, to build for ourselves a bright and happy future. People who are placed in apparently happy circumstances generally do not think in terms of Karma. They luxuriate in a mood of self-complacency. It is those going through the travails and tribulations of life who at some stage in their career of misfortunes stop to ask the why and wherefore of things.

Theosophy teaches that the purpose of life is to learn, that whatever comes to us is a part of *our* life and subserves the single purpose of awakening us progressively to apprehend the One Reality and the One Truth. If this attitude is brought to bear on our appreciation of the experiences of life, good or bad, we will be able to get on with our evolution more smoothly and we will have lesser difficulties to surmount. Further, when we have learnt all the

lessons that life has to teach us, having lived through repeated incarnations and assimilated their essence, the necessity for further lives on earth is no longer there.

Common sense declares that what cannot be cured must be endured. To quote Robert Crosbie:

Kicking against the pricks hurts only the one who kicks; moreover, the pricks seem to enjoy it, for, being kicked, they keep coming back.... "Even this will pass away" is a good motto to keep in mind, when things come up that are hard to stand. The "easy" and happy times are the periods of rest; the "hard" times are the periods of training—opportunities for gaining strength and knowledge. If we can look at both in this light, we shall not be overcome by either.

We should not get depressed by our present circumstances. Apart from the fact that many of the things that we consider evil in the present have no real existence but are the idle creations of our own mental states, even those limitations which really do exist should not be allowed to overwhelm us. By constantly dwelling on them we invest them with a power to affect us for the worse and to a commensurate degree weaken our power to resist them. Mr. Judge says:

I pray you to remove from your mind any distaste for present circumstances. If you can succeed in looking at it all as *just what you in fact desired*, then it will act not only as a strengthener of your good thoughts, but will reflexly act on your body and make it stronger.

Having learnt that the woes of birth are of our own making, that constant thinking of them gives them a power to affect us for the worse, that surrender to the Law is the only way of wisdom, we now come to another aspect of the question—what we should do to avoid the woes of birth in a future incarnation. *The Voice of the Silence* puts it in simple language:

If thou wouldst reap sweet peace and rest, Disciple, sow with the seeds of merit the fields of future harvests....

Step out from sunlight into shade, to make more room for others. The tears that water the parched soil of pain and sorrow bring forth the blossoms and the fruits of Karmic retribution.

Our present woes are the result of ignorance and selfish desire. If we eliminate selfish desire and cultivate the higher indifference or dispassion, which is *Vairagya*; if we eliminate ignorance and reach to Self-Knowledge, remembering that "Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child," if we have a pure motive, patience and perseverance, then we can be said to be getting near to the end of the path.

HAPPINESS has been defined by John Stuart Mill as the state of absence of opposition. Manu gives the definition in more forcible terms: "Every kind of subjugation to another is pain, and subjugation to one's self is happiness: in brief, this is to be known as the characteristic marks of the two." Now, it is universally admitted that the whole system of Nature is moving in a particular direction, and this direction, we are taught, is determined by the composition of two forces, namely, the one acting from that pole of existence ordinarily called "matter" towards the other pole called "spirit," and the other in the opposite direction. The very fact that Nature is moving shows that these two forces are not equal in magnitude. The plane on which the activity of the first force predominates is called in occult treatises the "ascending arc," and the corresponding plane of the activity of the other force is styled the "descending arc." A little reflection will show that the work of evolution begins on the descending arc and works its way upwards through the ascending arc. From this it follows that the force directed towards spirit is the one which must, though not without hard struggle, ultimately prevail. This is the great directing energy of Nature, and, although disturbed by the operation of the antagonistic force, it is this that gives the law to her; the other is merely its negative aspect, for convenience regarded as a separate agent.

—*The Theosophist*, November 1883

ELECTRICITY AND FOHAT

TO approach an understanding of the subject of Electricity, we have to trace this force from the highest plane to that of man, and having done that, to reach back from man to where we started at the uppermost rung of Cosmic evolution.

What is "Electricity" according to the philosophy of Theosophy? H.P.B. answers this in *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*. The question is asked about the relation between electricity and physical or animal magnetism and hypnotism, and the answer given is:

If by electricity you mean the science which unfolds on this plane, and under a dozen various qualifications, the phenomena and laws of the electric fluid—then I answer, none at all. But if you refer to the electricity we call *Fohatic* or *intra-cosmic*, then I will say that all these forms of phenomena are based on it. (p. 136)

The statement stands clarified by H.P.B.'s remarks a few pages earlier:

As you will understand, life and electricity are one in our philosophy. They say life is electricity, and if so, then the One Life is the essence and root of all the electric and magnetic phenomena on this manifested plane. (p. 87)

As to the genesis of electricity, she says: "Electricity is the work of Fohat, but...Fohat is *not* electricity" (p. 121). It is in this light that we are told that electricity can be called an "entity" only when we refer to it as Fohat, its primordial Force. (p. 120)

What then is Fohat which is the parent of all electric force and as an entity represents the sum total of universal Cosmic Electricity? Fohat is the universal Propelling Force, "the aggregate of all the spiritual creative ideations *above*, and of all the electro-dynamic and creative forces *below*, in Heaven and on Earth" (p. 38). The work of this "entitative" Fohat is referred to in *The Secret Doctrine* where we are told:

Some faint idea of the nature of Fohat may be gathered from the appellation "Cosmic Electricity" sometimes applied to it; but to the commonly known properties of electricity must, in this case, be added others, including intelligence. (I, 85)

It therefore becomes pertinent for us to know the relationship of Fohat to the Cosmos. Fohat is the prototype of Eros and becomes on Earth the great power "Life-electricity," or the Spirit of "Life-giving." (*S.D.*, II, 65)

Itself the son and progeny of Fohat, how does electricity work in manifestation?

The primordial Electric Entity...electrifies into life, and separates primordial stuff or pregenetic matter into atoms, themselves the source of all life and consciousness....It is the first Light in Creation...the first Light of the primordial Elohim...or (scientifically) ELECTRICITY AND LIFE. (*S.D.*, I, 76)

A step further downwards, and we come to the manifested plane. We are told in *Transactions*:

All proceeds from the one universal primordial fire, and electricity is on our plane one of the most comprehensive aspects of this fire. All contains, and is, electricity, from the nettle which stings to the lightning which kills, from the spark in the pebble to the blood in the body. But the electricity which is seen, for instance, in an electric lamp, is quite another thing from Fohat. Electricity is the cause of the molecular motion in the physical universe, and hence also here, on earth. It is one of the "principles" of matter; for generated as it is in every disturbance of equilibrium, it becomes, so to say, the Kamic element of the object in which this disturbance takes place. (p. 120)

This latter statement is important inasmuch as it shows the relationship of electricity to Kama and also to Karma. Electricity becomes the "Kamic element" on the plane of thought and action, and thus furnishes the link between the man of aspirations and the spheres above.

We learn that the conscious, intelligent Force that is Fohat

(*S.D.* I, 143 fn.) becomes the source and fountain-head of Electricity. The latter becomes an energy or force and may be seen in its centripetal and centrifugal actions, all of which are directed towards the same point—MAN (*S.D.*, II, 170). Further, Fohat might be considered allegorically as Eros, Divine Love, the electric Power of affinity and sympathy, "trying to bring the pure Spirit, the Ray inseparable from the ONE Absolute, into union with the Soul, the two constituting in Man the MONAD, and in Nature the first link between the ever unconditioned and the manifested." (*S.D.*, I, 119)

The connection with our world is brought out still further in *The Secret Doctrine* where the three Fires are referred to:

"Our earth and man," says the Commentary, *"being the products of the three Fires"*—whose three names answer, in Sanskrit, to *"the electric fire, the Solar fire, and the fire produced by friction"*—these three fires, explained on the Cosmic and human planes, are Spirit, Soul, and Body, the three great Root groups, with their four additional divisions. (*S.D.*, II, 247)

One can trace the genealogy of these three Fires within oneself. *Isis Unveiled* gives hints which find amplifications elsewhere. For instance, differentiating the "blind" or the "brute" electric fluid of the electric battery from the more than intelligent electricity of man, H.P.B. says:

There evidently exists a corresponding electricity produced by the cerebral pile of man; this *soul-electricity*, this spiritual and universal ether...is the *ambient, middle nature of the metaphysical universe*, or rather the *incorporeal universe*. (*Isis*, I, 322)

This but echoes and clarifies the statement of Dr. Jobard of Paris who, as far back as 1856, said: "There are two kinds of electricity; one, brute and blind, is produced by the contact of metals and acids" (the gross purgation);... "the other is intelligent and CLAIRVOYANT!" (*Isis*, I, 188)

Can man, who synthesizes in himself all the forces, operate and call upon the Spiritual through the agency of the animal electricity?

The evident answer is, he cannot. Just as, in human evolution, the Monad could not be grafted on to the lower in the absence of the two cementing principles of Kama and Manas, so also the spiritual force of Fohat-Electricity cannot work consciously on matter through man save through the medium of the awakened human Manas. The only awakener is Kama made pure. Kama must reach upward toward Eros before the Higher can see through the eyes of the lower. It is the purpose of evolution that human Kama ultimately reflect naught but the Divine Eros. The ONE through transmutation becomes the TEN.

If Divine Electricity is thus all-important, can it help us mark the stages between the Universe and Man as also between the Planetary worlds and the world of humans? There can be no doubt that the focal points of Cosmic Electricity (the occult planets in their totality) themselves have their respective focii in man. The Regents of the Planets radiate a palpable influence on each man psychically and spiritually, just as the visible orbs dominate and guide him physically. The electro-magnetic threads from the Central Spiritual Sun and the Planets pass through him.

But even this is metaphysical and remains meaningless unless it be translated into the language of action and behaviour. It is at this stage that the question of human and animal magnetism, the odic influences, the osmotic effects of thought and action, the power of the spoken and the chanted word, the great influence of colour (light or inaudible sound) have to be considered.

Man has the power to put himself in communion with the Powers and Hierarchies of the hidden realms. Yet the power needs must remain latent if the prerequisites be lacking. As we have seen, just as the Monad remains senselessly imprisoned in the flesh unless Kama and Manas be added, so also in the case of man's relationship to the super-human powers. Unless Kama and Manas remain in harmonious blend and attract consubstantial forces in the lower self, the soul can mirror naught but earthly lights. Bodily or physical vitality and pranic vibrations have an "electricity" of their own. It is when these are purified and the senses under control that

further practice can be undertaken in comparative safety.

The reference back of one's actions to the newly created spiritual focus generates a fire which is other than terrestrial. Further, it suffuses with a new magnetism the entire personality of the man. The electricity of the Cosmic centres permeates the centres of the man's body.

It is, however, all of no avail until man approaches the great Spiritual Sun. Till then, he has to rise from ray to ray until he "is drawn into the one and highest beam of the Parent-SUN." (*S.D.*, I, 639)

WHAT heaven has conferred is called *The Nature*; an accordance with this nature is called *The Path* of duty; the regulation of this path is called *Instruction*.

The path may not be left for an instant. If it could be left, it would not be the path. On this account, the superior man does not wait till he sees things, to be cautious, nor till he hears things, to be apprehensive.

There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself, when he is alone.

While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of *Equilibrium*. When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of *Harmony*. This *Equilibrium* is the great root from which grow all the human actings in the world, and this *Harmony* is the universal path which they all should pursue.

Let the states of Equilibrium and Harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.

—CONFUCIUS

MORAL OBLIGATIONS

You borrow everything you give so long as you are conscious of giving.

In truth you can give naught which is yours. You only give to men what you keep in trust for men.

—*The Book of Mirdad*, by MIKHAIL NAIMY

THE ordinary person and even some students of Theosophy, who give of their possessions to another, expect thanks and appreciation from the recipient; a return and future reward for their gift.

Then there are those who give freely from what they possess, and without expectation of any compensation for their generosity. Having imbibed the teaching of the *Gita*, they look not for a reward and are unattached to the fruit of action. They have learnt that the motive for action is in the action itself and not in the event.

But there is another and still higher way to share with others what are generally called one's "possessions," namely, to give, out of a sense of duty or the fulfilment of a moral obligation, "that which we owe to our fellow-men, neighbours, family, and especially that which we owe to all those who are poorer and more helpless than we are ourselves." H.P.B. defines duty as "that which is due to Humanity." From the Theosophical point of view, we are trustees of everything we have received under Karma, debtors to the whole of Life, and it is our bounden duty to share with others what we have received. If we neglect to pay our debts, if we repudiate our obligations, we generate a Karma that will bring to ourselves adverse consequences. H.P.B. is very emphatic on this point. She says in *The Key to Theosophy*, with reference to what we owe to Humanity, that "this is a debt which, if left unpaid during life, leaves us spiritually insolvent and moral bankrupts in our next incarnation."

Why do we not realize that, in fact, we can call nothing our own, that in reality we do not possess anything, but are merely trustees of the common property of the whole of Humanity? Because we look upon ourselves as isolated beings, instead of as

parts of the integral Whole. Selfishness and the want of self-sacrifice, the notion of "mine" and "thine," is the result of the mistaken belief in the separateness of the human soul from the One Universal Soul. The basis of Theosophy is that Humanity is a unit and the weal or woe of one is *our* weal or woe. Therefore, "it is only by the close brotherly union of men's inner Selves, of soul-solidarity, of the growth and development of that feeling which makes one suffer when one thinks of the suffering of others, that the reign of Justice and equality for all can ever be inaugurated."

The sharing with others of what we have Karmically received is thus but an opportunity to render a service, due to them, which calls for no acknowledgment, no recompense. Says Marcus Aurelius:

What more dost thou want when thou hast done a man a service? Art thou not content that thou hast done something conformable to thy nature, and dost thou seek to be paid for it, just as if the eye demanded a recompense for seeing or the feet for walking?

The same idea is expressed by Mikhail Naimy in his *Book of Mirdad*:

Is not this world a common treasury wherein each man, each thing, deposit all they have for the maintenance of all?

Does the lark lend you its song, and the spring its sparkling water?

Does the oak loan its shade, and the palm its honeyed dates?

Does the sheep give you his wool, and the cow her milk for interest?

Do the clouds sell you their rain, and the Sun, his warmth and light?

What would be your life without these things and myriad other things? And who of you can tell which man, which thing, have deposited the most and which, the least in the treasury of the world?

THE GREATEST OF THE EXILES

[This article by G. Hijo, one of Mr. Judge's close associates, appeared in *Theosophy* (formerly *The Path*) for May 1896.]

Those who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the dead nor for the living. I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be.

HOWEVER philosophical we may endeavour to be, and however firmly we may try to live our teacher's great precept that we are that Self which is eternal, changeless and ever present, we still miss the physical presence of a near and dear friend—aye—to many of us, the nearest and dearest friend. We miss the kindly act, the considerate thought, the unselfish help, the loving sympathy, and whether it be theosophical or untheosophical, we mourn our departed companion.

It is a privilege to give a few incidents of my relationship with Mr. Judge that will serve as a testimony of my love and his greatness. I met him nearly ten years ago, when the T.S. Headquarters was a little inside room in an office building in Park Row, not ten feet square, without a window, with little light and no ventilation. It was crammed full of books, pamphlets and extra copies of the first few numbers of *The Path*. The books were mostly publications of the Indian Section, as in those days neither London nor New York had become active centres and there was little of the Theosophical bibliography which is now so extensive. There was just room in the confusion for Mr. Judge and myself to sit down, and there he initiated me into the Society, giving me the signs and passwords which were then a part of that formality. I was considerably impressed and remember to have been delighted with Mr. Judge's smile. All my recollections of him teem with impressions of that exquisite smile. For some years, residence in the West prevented frequent intercourse, though I remember once in Chicago in 1888 or '89 he dropped in upon me most unexpectedly. We spent the day together and as a result I was thereafter a better man.

In the summer of 1894 we were privileged to have him stay at

our house for several weeks, and since then he spent at least one evening a week with us until his illness forced him to leave New York. Of the "Row" itself I cannot speak, but one result of it I know and that is the effect the bitterness and strife had upon the health and vitality of Mr. Judge. Day after day he would come back from the office utterly exhausted in mind and body, and night after night he would lay awake fighting the arrows of suspicion and doubt that would come at him from all over the world. He said they were like shafts of the fire piercing him; and in the morning he would come downstairs wan and pale and unrested, and one step nearer the limit of his strength; but still with the same gentle and forgiving spirit. Truly they knew not what they did. He wrote me not long before he died that if it were not for the love and sympathy of his friends he could not keep up the fight. These tended to counterbalance the evil thoughts that reached him, but he was the battle ground of the contending forces, and the strain was too much for his physical health.

Mr. Judge's nearest friends care as little for phenomena and phenomenal happenings as he did, but for purposes of record an account of a few incidents may not be amiss. He would cautiously, but still quite frequently, give evidence to the observant that he was, when he desired, quite aware of your thoughts, and of what happened at places where he was not.

Perhaps the nearest little thing of the kind was once when my wife had been discussing with a friend the date of the invention of writing. Two or three hours later Mr. Judge came in, greeted them, took up a piece of paper and wrote on it: "Was writing known before Panini?" and handed it to my wife before he had said a word or been spoken to beyond greetings. This well-known article in *Five Years of Theosophy* was found to cover just the obscure points of the discussion.

While staying with us in the country in 1894 he would take me out for a 15 or 20 minutes' walk just before bedtime, and when in a talkative mood would describe to me the things he then saw interiorly; elementals of all kinds, pictures in the astral light, some

trivial, some most interesting and in the nature of prophetic visions. I recollect a series of visions he described to me which represented the condition and future of a certain person prominent among those attacking him, and although this happened in August, 1894, long before the Convention in Boston, everything described has come true. He told me that the Master quite frequently informed him of important matters by means of allegorical pictures, as one picture would contain as much information as pages of a letter or message, and he described how he could tell these pictures from those of an ordinary astral character.

It seems so strange to me, who have known Mr. Judge for years, to think that any Theosophist could honestly doubt that he was in constant communication with the Masters, or that he himself was not an advanced occultist, for his whole life proved both these things. Perhaps the most striking evidence of his greatness was the wisdom with which he treated different people and the infinite knowledge of character shown by him in his guidance of his pupils. I do not believe he was the same to any two people. Looking back now over many years of intercourse, tracing my own growth and change, and the part Mr. Judge played in it, I am convinced that not only did he thoroughly understand me, both inside and out, but that during all those years he was working with a definite purpose in view, trying to guide me along a certain path in a definite direction, to attain a definite result. I believe it was the same with all his pupils. We play different parts in the world and in the movement, and he knew it and allowed for it, and directed accordingly.

His most lovable trait was his exquisite sympathy and gentleness. It has been said of him that no one ever touched a sore spot with such infinite tenderness, and I know many that would rather have been scolded and corrected by Mr. Judge than praised by anyone else.

It was the good fortune of a few of us to know something of the real Ego who used the body known as Wm. Q. Judge. He once spent some hours describing to my wife and me the experience the Ego had in assuming control of the instrument it was to use for so many

years. The process was not a quick nor an easy one and indeed was never absolutely perfected, for to Mr. Judge's dying day, the physical tendencies and heredity of the body he used would crop up and interfere with the full expression of the inner man's thoughts and feelings. An occasional abruptness and coldness of manner was attributable to this lack of co-ordination. Of course Mr. Judge was perfectly aware of this and it would trouble him for fear his friends would be deceived as to his real feelings. He was always in absolute control of his thoughts and actions, but his body would sometimes slightly modify their expression.

Mr. Judge told me in December, 1894, that the Judge body was due by its Karma to die the next year and that it would have to be tided over this period by extraordinary means. He then expected this process to be entirely successful and that he would be able to use that body for many years, but he did not count upon the assaults from without and the strain and exhaustion due to the "Row." This and the body's heredity proved too much for even his will and power. Two months before his death he knew he was to die, but even then the indomitable will was hard to conquer and the poor exhausted, pain-racked body was dragged through a miserable two months in one final and supreme effort to stay with his friends. And when he did decide to go, those who loved him most were the most willing for the parting.

I thank the Gods that I was privileged to know him. It was a benediction to call him friend, and the devotion of a lifetime to the movement he gave his life to would be but a partial expression of the gratitude of

G. HIJO

WE make our fortunes and we call them fate.

—DISRAELI

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

A big nuclear war is no longer a major threat, but ethnic and religious diversity is creating painful conflicts around the world. Finding ways to become unified despite diversity may be the world's most urgent problem in the years ahead, writes Harlan Cleveland in his article, "The Limits to Cultural Diversity" (*The Futurist*, March-April 1995). "Equality is not the product of similarity; it is the cheerful acknowledgement of difference." Cultural and ethnic distinctions are not going to disappear; how to live peacefully together in spite of them is what needs to be learned, observes Cleveland, a former U.S. assistant secretary of state and ambassador to NATO.

The problem does not seem to be culture itself, but cultural overenthusiasm. Cultural loyalties, says one European, have the makings of a runaway nuclear reaction. Without the moderating influence of civil society—acting like fuel rods in a nuclear reactor—the explosive potential gets out of hand. What's needed is the counterforce of wider views, global perspectives, and more-universal ideas....

The required solvent for civilization is *respect for differences*....We need to learn *how to be different together*.

Civilization will be built by co-operation and compassion, in a social climate in which people in differing groups can deal with each other in ways that respect their cultural differences. "Wholeness incorporating diversity" is philosopher John W. Gardner's succinct formulation....

For the twenty-first century, this "cheerful acknowledgement of difference" is the alternative to a planet-wide spread of ethnic cleansing and religious rivalry. The challenge is great.

In recent decades, much has been learned about the resolving of disputes. It is acknowledged that the goal is to achieve "wholeness incorporating diversity," at the national level and worldwide, but do we quite know how to create such "wholeness"? The beginning needs to be made by men and women in their own intimate settings, in their own neighbourhoods, congregations,

schools, etc. The principle of unity in diversity should be taught in every educational system. The destructive possibilities of hatred are limitless. Only a concerted attempt to check the trend can create for us a better future.

The end of the cold war was not only *not* an end to international conflict, but the beginning of many new conflicts that diplomats were unprepared to cope with. And the future will require international negotiations to have even more specialized skills and knowledge of cultures in conflict, according to Richard H. Solomon, president of the United States Institute of Peace.

"There are more issues to work on than at the height of the cold war; there are more countries dealing with one another, but there is little formal training in negotiation skills," Solomon told participants at the Institute's recent conference on "Managing Chaos: Coping with International Conflict into the Twenty-first Century." The Institute has begun a major new international programme for training in peace skills, meant for professionals in both the diplomatic community and nongovernmental organizations.

For such a project of education for peace to succeed, the main energies need to be directed against the moral causes of conflict, which lie within ourselves. Conflict resolution depends on a change of inner attitudes.

With right knowledge, or at any rate with a confident conviction that our neighbours will no more work to hurt us than we would think of harming them, the two-thirds of the World's evil would vanish into thin air. Were no man to hurt his brother, Karma-Nemesis would have neither cause to work for, nor weapons to act through. It is the constant presence in our midst of every element of strife and opposition, and the division of races, nations, tribes, societies and individuals into Cains and Abels, wolves and lambs, that is the chief cause of the "ways of Providence." We cut these numerous windings in our destinies daily with our own hands, while we imagine that we are pursuing a track on the royal high road of respectability and duty, and then

complain of those ways being so intricate and so dark. We stand bewildered before the mystery of our own making, and the riddles of life that *we will not* solve, and then accuse the great Sphinx of devouring us. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 643)

It is an accepted fact that there are many problems facing humanity in general in various spheres of life, as we approach the end of the century. To solve these problems we should look at the way they interact with one another rather than at individual problems, according to the *Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential*, now in its fourth edition, filling three large volumes. This unique compendium of predicaments is the project of the Brussels-based Union of International Associations, a non-profit research institute founded in 1910. The new edition focuses on "chains and cycles of problems" and how they aggravate one another. For instance:

Alienation causes youth gangs, which cause neighbourhood control by criminals, which causes psychological stress of urban environment, which causes substance abuse, which causes family breakdown, which causes alienation.

This way of looking at problems as interrelated certainly makes better sense than trying to solve them individually.

The part played in nature and in human life by the law of cyclic return of conditions, events and impressions is engaging increasingly the attention of science. The latest claimant for attention is the seven-year cycle as it affects both human and astronomical events. An aerospace scientist from Hyderabad and former chairman of Bharat Dynamics, Dr. R. Gopaldaswamy, has conducted a study on the life history of some 150 people to find out how biorhythms and recurring cycles can help improve human resource development programmes. The study revealed that as in nature so in humans there existed a seven-year energy rhythm which profoundly affected the course of their lives—their performance,

well-being and happiness.

According to a PTI report in *The Economic Times* for April 3, Dr. Gopaldaswamy is of the view that by understanding this seven-year life-cycle in a scientific way one could have greater insight into the ups and downs of life and better capacity to face them. It would also enable social and economic institutions to be more sensitive and effective in human resource development policies and programmes.

Presenting his paper at a recent astrological conference, he said that living forms on planet Earth were most susceptible to "circadian" rhythms related to the impact of electromagnetic energies from the sun in alternating periods because of the Earth's rotation. Rhythmic fluctuations in body temperature, secretion of growth hormones, heart beat, pulse rate, brain's electrical impulses and other physiological processes have been observed and recorded with scientific measuring instruments and statistical techniques, and applied for practical uses; but rhythms in feelings, moods and thoughts, as manifestations of mental energies, could only be felt subjectively, he said.

According to the report:

Dr. Gopaldaswamy observed that studies on rhythms had definitely helped in medicine, agriculture, climatology and forecasting of natural calamities like earthquakes. However, perennial rhythms, extending through one human life-cycle, have not been studied sufficiently well because of the problems of organizing such long-term studies.

Rhythmic change cycles in man, as in other living organisms on earth, appear to be impelled by biological and astronomical clocks, he added.

The universal energies embodied in a human being appear to be systematically mutating at seven-year intervals. At nodal points, each desynchronization pulse leads on to release mental energies at the expense of physical and vital energies. The precise causal factors for this are still unknown, he said.

Elaborating on the causal periods of desynchronization, he said that they were invariably accompanied by mild to severe

turmoil and crises for each person, with outcomes like change of place, residence, job or assignment in a job, and others like illness and changes in socio-economic conditions.

Knowledge of the existence and onset of such transition periods of evolutionary desynchronization might help individuals, and their families, friends and professional institutions could also lend a helping hand in tiding over the difficult transitional periods.

Mr. Judge has traced clearly the working of the law of cycles in our moods (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 24*). It is natural that it should manifest also in alternating periods of physical and mental vigour and lowered vitality. Every observant individual can see for himself an alternation, marked or slight, between peak and depression in his own physical energy and mental powers. There are even certain hours in the day when physical energy is greatest, as there are times when spiritual ideation and creative mental effort are most fruitful; and also times when they are least potent.

The apparent flaw in this theory is its over-rigidity. It overlooks the fact that *we make our own cycles*. It is impossible that the return of the individual cycle of physical or mental energy should be at the same interval for all persons. The biorhythm theory seems also to imply that there is nothing we can do about the negative cycles when our powers are at low ebb. Are we to relax effort in those periods, to sit and wait for the favouring breeze? Not so, says Theosophy. There is no standing still. If we let ourselves drift for a while, we drift back, inevitably. There should be no relaxing of effort under the notion that the cycle is unfavourable. All activities, physical and mental, must be deliberate and purposeful. Mr. Judge has indicated how a recurring undesirable mood may be mitigated and ultimately counteracted by linking with it a good impression to accompany the bad one on its return. A corresponding effort must be made with thought.

Most people recognize that what they eat affects their health and their risk of disease. But many ignore the effects food can have

on moods and thought processes, says Elizabeth Somer, consulting nutritionist in Salem, Oregon, U.S.A. In her recent book, *Food and Mood*, she sheds light on emerging research in the ways that food regulates moods. The following is adapted from the book:

Repeated poor food choices can interfere with the production and activity of nerve chemicals (neurotransmitters) in the brain that regulate emotions, hunger, moods and behaviour. Four neurotransmitters—serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine and acetylcholine—are manufactured directly from food components. Both the levels and activities of these neurotransmitters are sensitive to food intake....

Extreme depression, fatigue and other emotional problems often are signs of a serious underlying illness that requires medical attention. But for many people, making a few simple diet changes could be all it takes to feel better. And even if there is another reason besides diet for your negative mood, improving your nutritional status will give you more energy and help you feel better and fend off illness.

One more proof of the fact that physical disorders are linked to mental disorders is provided by a team of German scientists who have found that depression may cause osteoporosis, weakening of the bones. It has long been known that depression increases secretion of the stress hormone cortisol, and cortisol reduces bone density. But it took a controlled study of 80 depressed patients reported in the *American Journal of Psychiatry*, to confirm the link. "Physicians need to educate the public" regarding the link between mental stress and disorders of the body, says Ulrich Schweiger, M.D., of the Max Planck Institute in Munich.
