

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to
The Living of the Higher Life

A DAUNTLESS FIGHTER	253
OUR PROBLEMS: POVERTY—SICKNESS—VICE—IGNORANCE	258
JOLTS ON THE WAY	264
"THY WILL, NOT MINE, BE DONE"	266
"VOWED TO THE INFINITE"	272
CHARITY TO ALL THAT LIVES	275
DO MASTERS EXIST?	278
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	284

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- (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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A DAUNTLESS FIGHTER

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Remember, thou that fightest for man's liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time. The holy germs that sprout and grow unseen in the disciple's soul, their stalks wax strong at each new trial, they bend like reeds but never break, nor can they e'er be lost. But when the hour has struck they blossom forth.

—*The Voice of the Silence*

THIS month, on the 25th, falls the [79th] anniversary of the passing of Robert Crosbie, the founder of the United Lodge of Theosophists and the resuscitator of the Theosophical Movement of the century in its darkest hour.

The life of Robert Crosbie and study of his writings remind one of the words from *The Voice of the Silence* quoted above. His Theosophical career was not free from tests and trials, the zigzags and ups and downs of Karma; but his simplicity and sincerity made him bend before all blows, as does the reed before the gale, and emerge unscathed, adapting himself to the new circumstances precipitated by Karma and gaining soul-strength and wisdom to devote himself with greater zeal to the service of the Cause of Masters. It was this ability to "resist without resisting" that stood him in good stead at a time when many a Theosophical aspirant strayed from the Lines laid down by the Teachers. The U.L.T. is the

result of his final emergence from the wreck of the Parent Theosophical Society—a wreck brought about by the negation of Theosophical principles by the very people professing them. Thus emerging, he saved the Movement, making it possible for thousands to follow the Path H.P.B. showed.

The right attitude to be adopted when faced with trying events has been lucidly described in the letters of Mr. Crosbie printed in *The Friendly Philosopher*. The first step is to recognize that difficult circumstances needs must be encountered by *all*; and, if these are used rightly, we can be equally sure that the tide will turn, "even at the fifty-ninth minute of the eleventh hour." For, "when the lesson is learned the necessity ceases." Whatever comes, Mr. Crosbie counsels, there is but one thing to be done, and that is, the best we can, avoiding attachment to results and ever remembering that the Law always works for good, provided we put full reliance on it. He suggested "Even this will pass away" as a good motto to keep in mind when times are hard. "It served many a time to remind me of the transitory nature of all trials and troubles," says Mr. Crosbie. And who can doubt the wisdom of this sage advice of his?—

Kicking against the pricks hurts only the one who kicks; moreover, the pricks seems to enjoy it, for, being kicked, they keep coming back. "Resist not evil and it will flee from you" is a true saying; we give the evil thing power by thinking about it, a power that it would not otherwise have. In fact, many of these things of evil are creations of our own mental state, and have no real existence; yet they are even more distracting than realities would be, because composed of fear and doubt. The thing to do is to take higher ground, mentally; read and think about high themes; regard only the good, the meaning and purpose of Life as a whole. If in earnest in this way, the evil is dissipated like the mists before the morning sun.

This sounds simple enough, yet, being what we are, how many can help being disturbed inwardly when things are not as we would have them? All our studies and our efforts are of little avail if, faced with difficulties, we lose our inner equipoise. Hence the need to

grasp the inwardness of Krishna's words in the *Gita*: "Place all thy works, failures and successes alike, on me, abandoning in me the fruit of every action."

Trying to fight adverse circumstances involves an expenditure of thought and energy which leaves us exhausted. "When we fight we are drawn into the swirl of events and passions," says Mr. Crosbie; "so it is best to lean back on the Self, which is never moved, and look on at the flotsam and jetsam through which 'we' move." We can then take a detached view of the very worst that may happen. Most of us live in the past or the future. Memory and anticipation make us waste many of our present opportunities and hinder the development of the true higher indifference.

If we could only see that "practically all that troubles us is unnecessary, as trouble, but necessary *for experience*," we would not consider the events of life as anything but beneficial exercises and opportunities for growth and service. This must be so if the purpose of life is to learn and serve. Mr. Crosbie reminds us of Mr. Judge's words: "It may be a child's school, but it takes a man to go through it." Others have done so, and so can we.

As we fit ourselves to carry our burdens, always remembering that nothing can come to us which we are not by nature fitted to bear, we help the whole; for, "with the right attitude toward all things, all that we do is constructive." Anxiety and fear, on the other hand, are destructive forces and depress those around us. It is well to bear in mind what Mr. Judge has said, that the essence of eradicating the personal element lies in doing the things we dislike to do. For "it is the Higher Self that pulls us into places and conditions that the personality would run in affright from, if it alone were acting."

Calmness, patience and fortitude should be our watchwords. "Calmness is like a rock; waves of irritation may dash at it, but cannot affect it; it can be attained by seeing the necessity for it, and by endeavour which is constant." It comes from building an Inner Centre of thought, feeling and will, and living in that Centre; and, from that firm position, viewing the outer at its true worth. When that is done, we come to see that nothing can really injure us and that

we are brave and strong enough to endure anything.

Preparation to meet any and all circumstances as and when they arise has to begin now and here. Mr. Crosbie has described for us the kind of preparation we need:

I used to look calmly and dispassionately at the very worst picture I could conjure up as happening to myself, and found it helpful in getting rid of "fear of consequences." I mentally took account of the very worst, saw myself in it with all that it entailed, went through it in all its parts leaving myself *alone*, dishonoured, stripped of everything. Those very things have happened to me, but I knew them, had outlived them, and went on undismayed. Had I not done it, I would not be where I am today.

That which feels perturbed when trials come, is the personality; and this is an indication that there is still work to be done upon it. We know that the instruments we are working with are not strong; we can see their limitations; but they are what the race into which we have come has provided us with, and therefore the best that we can have at present.

Tests and trials have to be encountered as much in our personal existence as in our student life. In fact, both are interwoven and interblended at every point. The history of the Theosophical Movement tells the sad tale of clashes of personalities resulting in many a Theosophical failure. Time and again the truism has been forgotten: "You can't prevent people from doing what they can do." Hence comes the reminder:

The coming together of Theosophists of differing degrees and qualities—yes, of training—is bound to stir up latent personalities, preconceptions and prejudices. The mental and psychic atmosphere engendered by their co-operation must work inwards as well as outwards, and still further must arouse evil forces, for it is a known occult law that every advance made along the path that leads to selflessness arouses the forces that are opposed to that consummation, and this is true individually and collectively. In this immense work which we have undertaken, trials of various kinds have to be encountered, and the

ones by whom we are tried are those of our own household. There are lessons in every event, even the smallest. We have to do the best we can and leave the results to the Great Law.

Mr. Crosbie's life-work was sustained by the determination that "no matter how long it takes, nor what we have to undergo, we look for nothing less than success." Let us emulate his example. In this task we are not deserted. There are always Those who are near us, who see and know and will never fail us, though we may cut ourselves off by failing them. The whole position of the sincere student has been summed up by Mr. Crosbie in these words: "Hold on grimly; have confidence and faith; for faith in the Masters will surely bring victory."

WE need never fear our opportunities, but should always act up to them, relying on the law of our own spiritual being to carry us through anything and everything. The Path is within ourselves, not outside; each of us is the stair to his own development.

We have so long been ruled by political and religious man-made laws that we have come to believe in them. Yet goodness does not need laws. Our laws are based on the ignorance and selfishness and wickedness in men's natures; they are made to restrain the evil which we think is ineradicable and incurable because "we all sinned in Adam and cannot help it." Then, too, because we think we know what is good and what is evil, we are very anxious that everybody else should be made to think in the same way. We want to prohibit those things which we do not desire ourselves; we want other people to eat what we think they ought to eat, and to clothe themselves as we think they should be clothed. We talk much of the "rights" of men. But we have just one right, and that is *the right to do right*. No man was ever made "good" by law; no man was ever made moral by law. Each man must be a law for himself, both moral and spiritual.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

OUR PROBLEMS

POVERTY—SICKNESS—VICE—IGNORANCE

PEOPLE often delude themselves with the notion that the problems of each are unique and different from those of others. It takes time for them to learn that truly speaking there are no individual problems; the same problems have to be faced by all. If we lose that illusion and learn the truth that there are common philosophical explanations to the common problems of all of us, we will have taken a step forward in the right direction. Moreover, half the fear presented by the problems vanishes into thin air when we give up the egotistic attitude that ours are unique problems!

Is there a man or woman without problems of one kind or another? Whatever one's race or religion or condition in life, the earning of one's livelihood, sustaining the health of the body, living a good life in every sense, and a hundred other things constitute the problems of the individual man or woman.

Life seems haphazard to many. We muddle through the days and the years, and for most of us birth and death are mysteries, as are a hundred other processes of Life and of Mother Nature. In the midst of confusion, doubt, even despair, Theosophy brings a message—a constructive message: There is a meaning to life, to all that befalls us; there is a significance to birth, marriage, old age, death; there is a purpose to all events, trivial or important, collective, national, or personal. Proceeding with that message, Theosophy says that the meaning of all problems and all events can be understood; nay more, should be understood, must be understood.

Our own problems really do not exist! Just as a good physician knows about all the diseases and ailments to which the human body is subject, so also there are great spiritual physicians who know about any and every kind of human problem and its remedy—mind problems, heart problems, soul problems, all are known to them, and in their science and philosophy sure remedies are offered. The problems of all of us are common, universal problems, and Theosophy deals with them all.

We must take consolation and courage from the fact that all

human problems, of disease or health, of ignorance or knowledge, recur in every country and in every cycle. Just as the human body, in its process of growth, goes through definite stages, so also all human souls, in the course of their evolution, go through definite stages. Nothing out of the way is happening to any of us. Human egotism is so strong that even in their diseases and suffering people want to feel unique, so that they can talk about themselves or indulge in self-pity!

There is, however, one sense in which the problems of each are his or her own, and no one else's. Each one has to *solve* them for himself or herself; they cannot be solved by another.

Human problems may be divided into four groups—poverty, sickness, vice and ignorance. They are related: poverty results from sickness, sickness comes from vice, and vice in turn from ignorance. This connection is not understood, and therefore people go round and round without arriving anywhere. There is another fundamental connection between these problems: poverty is related to our body and sense life; sickness to the vital currents or *prana* of the body; vice to the desires—*kama* or *tanha*; and ignorance to the mind.

The very first idea to grasp is that diseases can be remedied, and the only way of doing this is by one's own self-effort. A doctor can prescribe medicine, but the patient himself or herself has to take it. A lawyer can give advice, but the client has to follow it. A cook can prepare a dinner, but the one for whom it is prepared has to eat it. Equally true it is that Theosophy can give instruction, but its students have to learn the lessons. Masters can but point the Way; the disciples have to walk it. Help and guidance are available, but one must be ready to receive that help and accept that guidance.

The corollary is equally true: as long as men and women depend on others, friends or friendly societies, governments or institutions, politicians or priests, so long will poverty and sickness and vice and ignorance continue to prevail. We have been conditioned so to depend on others that we have lost faith in self-endeavour. Prayers and appeals to God are of no avail. This is a wrong kind of faith; such faith brings no relief and never will. Theosophy advises us to

take ourself in hand—our whole self—and apply the lessons of this old and glorious Philosophy. But let us make no mistake about it—going through an experience is *not* learning the lesson. That is why people are compelled to go through the same experiences over and over again. We must rather discipline ourselves to learn the lesson.

Can we remove our poverty, sickness, vice and ignorance? Of course we can; and if we do not, no one else can, no one else will.

Why is this? All evolution proceeds from within outward. The body grows from within, and so do mind and soul. The whole of Nature is one mighty movement from within, without. Whatever our conditions or circumstances, whatever vices or virtues we possess, whatever our knowledge or our ignorance, they are all results, all effects. We are responsible for them. The Law of Karma or Action gives this instruction: None other than yourself made you poor and sick, vicious and ignorant; none else can free you from your bondage. Karma does not mean that you are helpless; on the contrary, because you made your own bondage, you, and you alone, can also free yourself.

Unless we have a philosophy of life, we cannot interpret the processes of life. If we believe in a God who made us poor or sick, we must wait till that God frees us—and he does not. If we believe that matter and physical life are the only reality, we are equally helpless; and as we are dust, the earlier we return to dust the better for us! These are false philosophies. We made our own bed of roses or our own bed of spikes, and we alone can change these circumstances. Karma means action, not passive resignation. How shall we act?

Poverty is the first problem. Even the rich will not admit that they are rich; at the most they will concede that they are better off than others! Money sometimes takes to itself wings, making poor those who were rich. None can be sure of being wealthy for ever. We can be sure only of our knowledge and virtue. The saint and the sage, the wise man or the *Jnani*, value money and gold differently. The teaching of Theosophy is that wealth is not for hoarding but for use; again, its use must be for the common good. If we hoard wealth, or if we spend it without proper knowledge and wisdom, we

will soon become both poor and sick. Sickness and poverty have an intimate relationship. By creative activity (*Kriya*) alone can we remove poverty, and by contentment alone can we retain prosperity. There are two aspects to poverty: (1) Poverty is a ghost; it haunts us. The millionaire who is a miser is haunted by that ghost; and the one haunted by poverty is so engaged in running away from that ghost that he wastes his time, does not create, and then really becomes poor. (2) Poverty can be used to advantage; it makes the afflicted seek for Krishna; it builds creativeness and contentment. However poor one may be, if one is contented one can become creative. Contentment produces creativeness, and these two banish poverty. Our civilization accepts the principle of labour and creativeness; if one does not work, one will not eat. Social service, in its most advanced aspects, is all for work and not just for charity; but it is not yet accepting the principle of contentment, and therefore will not wholly succeed. Theosophy says that the remedy for poverty is creativeness and contentment. To be creative without contentment is to become greedy. On the other hand, contentment without creativeness makes one passive, resigned, indolent. The world is not suffering from lack of wealth or of goods; it is highly creative, but lacks the power to really enjoy, which comes from contentment.

Pass on to the next problem—sickness. Theosophy has a somewhat novel doctrine to offer about the roots of all bodily diseases. From a simple headache to the most deadly cancer, all diseases are really rooted in *pranic* currents, currents of vitality which circulate in the astral body or *linga deha*, as blood circulates in our physical body. In the Vedantic classification of *koshas* or sheaths, there is one named *Pranamaya kosha*, the sheath of real breath, and death is closely connected with that sheath. All ailments are but outer marks or signs of inner disturbances. Just as impure blood manifests in skin diseases, etc., so all bodily diseases are rooted in poor, inharmonious currents of *Prana* or vitality. Medical science is coming closer to this great truth, but has not yet been able to accept it, because it cannot accept that which it cannot understand. Therefore medical and surgical science, whenever successful, is so

only on the side of effects; it is not able to touch the root-causes.

Theosophy says that the remedy is once again dual—patience and control of lusts and passions. Our present bodily diseases are the final manifestation of previous indulgences. The root-cause of all bodily diseases is *Kama*, passion or lust. *Kama* breeds *Krodha*—anger and *Lobha*—greed, and they eat away human flesh, drink off human blood. Our wrong feelings and desires produce new diseases. Therefore pure living is urgently needed, if we are looking for good health. Let us be patient and pure, and bodily disease will begin to disappear; it may take time for those who have indulged long, but the Law is just and infallible. Patience and purity remove all disease.

That brings us to our third problem—vice. We have weaknesses in our character, and these produce wrong vital currents. Weak character as well as vicious character produces ill-health. Egotism and pride are the root cause of all vices. Once again the remedy is dual: perseverance and impersonality. We will have to persevere in fighting pride and egotism; it is going to be a long battle, and unless we have impersonality as our weapon, it is going to be a losing battle.

Just as vice causes diseases, the cause of pride and egotism and all vice is ignorance—the fourth problem. In Vedantic as in Buddhist philosophy, the root-evil is *Maya*—illusion and *Avidya*—ignorance. From ignorance every sin and every mistake arises. This fact is so universally visible, and is recognized in so many spheres of life, that education is regarded as the best of investments, by parents as well as by governments. But we must recognize that just as there are simple-minded peasants who are wise, so also are there learned men who are fools, men who see and describe what they see but do not understand. Mere theoretical knowledge has not helped our civilization. Nowadays scientists are afraid of their vast knowledge, and as one among them has remarked, "Man is ethically unprepared for so great a bounty....The command of Nature has been put into his hands before he knows how to command himself." This is what H.P.B. too said over a hundred years ago. But we could say to science, "Better late than never." The root-ignorance we need

to remove from our own constitution is that about our own selves—about the knowledge of *Atma*, the Spiritual Self; of *Manas*, the Thinking Soul. It is the Science of the Soul which removes the root-ignorance, and thus proves itself to be the most practical of all sciences.

Theosophists are engaged in the task of studying the Soul-Science so that they may fight their weaknesses and eradicate their vices, and then disease and death will cease to trouble them.

To sum up, Soul-Knowledge is the remedy for pride and egotism. Theosophy teaches not only how to persevere but also in what we should persevere. Impersonality should be our guiding principle, and then vice and weaknesses of every description will remove themselves. Thus disease and sickness and ultimately poverty will be eradicated.

All men and women of this world are "poor" in the real sense, even multimillionaires. The truly rich are those who have Wisdom, the Great Gurus. Their wealth never, never diminishes, and they teach us how to be wealthy, not only in mind and heart, but also in creative activity, in patience and perseverance, and above all in true devotion, devotion which kills pride and egotism. Deathless themselves, they alone can teach us how to overcome death. They have experienced all states of birth, decay and death that we are now going through, and have given us the knowledge about the Mystery of Life and Death. They have passed beyond poverty and sickness, vice and ignorance. If we listen to their Wisdom, we, too, in good time, will reach their Land, their Abode.

A WISE man adapts himself to circumstances as water shapes itself to the vessel that contains it.

—CHINESE PROVERB

JOLTS ON THE WAY

OUR life's journey has its jolts or conflicts. The nature of the conflict is determined by the source of the disturbance. Two factors are involved: the external or internal condition contacted and the ensuing reaction, which in turn is conditioned by that aspect of our nature which is chiefly involved in the attempt to resolve the conflict. There is conflict between one's accepted Theosophical standards and one's external and internal conditions. The student of Theosophy is probably more sensitive than his more worldly-inclined brother, because Theosophy presents standards of judgment that are higher than those ordinarily accepted. The acceptance of the practical Theosophical precepts and a sustained effort to practise these undoubtedly cause inner conflict and ensuing suffering.

As an example, the *Gita* insists that we should be indifferent to the pairs of opposites; that we should meet joy and sorrow with equanimity; that gold and stone should be regarded with impartiality. Now of course these are hard sayings and putting them in practice presents difficulties. We appreciate the desirability of reaching such a pinnacle of conduct, but tend to despair of our ability to attain to such a high and noble standard. Thus, for the student of Theosophy the jolt is more severe, unless he has learned to turn to the true source of solace.

Students of Theosophy do not turn for help to any external source. The orthodox religionist turns to his many rituals as aids in soothing the emotional pain caused by jolts as they occur on life's path. He is assured of the services of the priest, who in turn is supposed to intercede for him with a "saviour" who can vicariously bestow whatever merit is needed in the nature of the suppliant. Thus the failure to react favourably to an undesirable circumstance is attempted to be overcome by placing the "burden upon the Lord."

The student-practitioner's problem is a bit more complicated. He realizes that these circumstances are caused by his own deficiencies, his own weaknesses. Further, these experiences must be examined carefully and their causes discovered. Then, proper

action and knowledge must be applied in order to avoid repetitions of the experiences. Within him are sources of strength over and beyond the failing personality. His problem develops from the difficulty involved in remembering these sources while undergoing the pain or stress arising from the disturbance.

Within each one there is a far surer fount of courage and strength than that provided by any external source. The student must learn to *realize* the presence within him of Krishna, the impersonal Self, the only real "saviour." There must be an ever-increasing reliance upon that Inner Self. It must be constantly borne in mind that the self can only be assisted and raised by the Self.

We must dwell upon the fact that all existence is a continuing series of bumps and jolts which are a constant source of pain and suffering, and that these must be endured. They can only be endured by relying upon the Inner Self for knowledge and comfort. Theosophy could never be accused of being a cold philosophy, indifferent to the petty troubles of the personality, if the fund of facts and knowledge presented by it were applied to ourselves with an unwavering faith in the God within.

Every experience, good, bad or indifferent, can increase the knowledge and efficiency of the individual and, through him, benefit mankind generally. Of course, with knowledge we become more critical of the environment we find ourselves in; but whatever the environment, we can be happy and contented with it only if we are convinced that it is just what we in fact desired. Thus the jolts will be encountered with increasing ease as we proceed with knowledge and with faith in the God within, looking to It for sustenance. The occurrence of the jolts may indicate that we are off course, and it is only the Inner Ruler who can put us again on the right path in a constructive, purposeful manner.

In order to arrive at possessing everything, desire to possess nothing.

—ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

"THY WILL, NOT MINE, BE DONE"

OBEDIENCE connotes a vast variety of attitudes and states of the mind. It may be of the enforced variety. On the other hand, it may be totally self-imposed. The person worsted in the fight, the nation overrun by an invader, the feeble groaning under the despotic yoke of the tyrant—all obey through fear and the dread of harm. The labourer, the artisan and the learned also obey and follow a mandate because they are thus able to get the wages for their obedience. In such cases where obedience is the resultant of an outside stimulus, it becomes a thing of barter, a chattel which can be bought and sold in the markets of the world. The effort is akin to that of the hired mercenary who wages another's wars. It is not of such obedience that the disciple is in need. The colour of his obedience has to be different.

There are yet other types of obedience that are undesirable. A person of weakened will obeys because he has lost the strength to refuse. The hypnotized subject obeys because he has surrendered his mind to a more dominant will. Obedience in such cases portrays but the servility of one who cannot but obey—a condition unfit for the religious life. Then there are those who are obedient to their carnal urges. They do sometimes put up the semblance of a fight, but are secretly happy at their own defeat. Religious fanatics and the bigots of science bend their knees to false dogmas and pledge their obedience to men and ideals that abandon them at the gates of death. The truly religious life invites a stern and unflinching obedience to spiritual ideals and universal principles. On the other hand, the urge for self-aggrandizement demands an obedience—equally exclusive—to norms and processes that negate universal cohesion and pander to the personal and vain objectives of a selfish elevation. "Over my dead body" is oftentimes the cry of the latter; "Thy will, not mine, be done," of the former.

Discipline, whether of the right- or the left-hand path, demands the subjugation by oneself of the urge to wander away from the chosen lines of endeavour. It must therefore imply that all ideas, disciplines, dicta, urges which are in conflict with the chosen goal

have to be shunned. The spiritually oriented pledges himself to fight his lower nature, however frequent may be the falls or the degradation. Such an obedience to the laws and rules of his Order raises a conflict within him when acts and thoughts that are antagonistic to those laws present a charmed lure to sidestep "just this once." Happy is he who at each turn pauses to reflect before each action, trying to judge how by each little step he bends his knee to either the shades of darkness or the active forms of day. But whether he pauses to reflect or not, each one continues to make his own choices, and Karma inexorably marks the tally on the right or the left side of his ledger of life.

All through his life he acts thus, making his choices momentarily; and whether he will initiate the action or refrain from it will be according to the dictates of a mind that has been either purified or tainted by the action of all his pasts. Were these choices to be considered final, the future for most would be bleak indeed, for the gates to perdition are high and wide and easy of approach. Reincarnation here plays a merciful part, for the old memories are lost and a new birth with erased memories presents fresh opportunities for confirming or rejecting past choices. But there must come a time in each one's life when the gathered momentum of all his pasts is so strong that a contrary choice is swept clean away, and then obedience becomes absolute to either light or darkness. At such moments, one stands denuded of all power to change the course laid down by atavism and karmic heredity.

If obedience be an imperative adjunct to discipline, in what spheres does freedom exist? Is the disciple (he who undertakes the discipline) bound to surrender his judgement to the personal or impersonal orders and dicta that come to him *via* his teachings and his teacher? Weighty questions these, and their answers should be searched for before the pupil makes his first obeisance to his teacher. The teacher, or, to give him his age-old appellation, the Guru, is, in the words of H.P.B., "always an Adept in the Occult Science, a man of profound knowledge, exoteric and esoteric, especially the latter; and one who has brought his carnal nature under subjection of the WILL; who has developed in himself both

the power (*Siddhi*) to control the forces of nature, and the capacity to probe her secrets by the help of the formerly latent but now active powers of his being...." A chela, therefore, is a student who is accepted by the Guru because he (the chela) "has offered himself or herself as a pupil to learn practically the 'hidden mysteries of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.'" All very true, says the ordinary person, but by what test can the would-be pupil judge of the degree of excellence of his Guru? If the chela is to pledge obedience to his Guru for life and for lives, does he have some yardstick by which to assure himself of a right choice? Or is he left to his own devices, by trial and error to flit from one Guru to another in the hope that in his peregrinations he will chance upon the real Master who is to give him birth in the Hall of Wisdom?

There is a law in Occultism that from the moment the Guru begins really to teach, from the instant he confers any power—whether psychic, mental or physical—on his pupil, he takes upon himself *all* the sins of that pupil, in connection with the Occult Sciences, until the moment when initiation makes the pupil a Master and responsible in his turn. It is for this reason that the "Teachers" are so reticent and the Chelas are required to serve at least a seven years' probation to prove their fitness and develop the qualities necessary to the security of both Master and pupil. Since in such a relationship there can be no royal road by which favourites may ascend, the pupil is left to his own devices to prepare his make-up for the qualifying tests. Can he be obedient to his conscience, his duties, his resolutions? Is he willing to take the bit into his own mouth and learn to obey the guidance of rein and spur? For a true aspirant, the lines of obedience are spelt out in the *Gita*. Says the text: "Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility." When these preliminaries are adopted and made a part of one's life, the wise who know the Truth will be there to communicate it. For, when the disciple is ready, the Teacher is ready also. In order to enter upon such preparation, the pupil is bound to undertake a course of self-discipline as well as adopt a few ascetic rules. The lines of obedience to one's Higher Self become clearly perceptible to him who turns his face to the

Light. But it were useless to strain the eyes at spiritual horizons if the pupil sees humanity not as a vast whole but as so many fragments divided by race, religion or nationality. If the elementary teaching of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity is not understood, the pupil cannot aspire to be a chela of Masters whose one concern is the good of humanity in general.

If we took the trouble to analyse our actions, we would find that we obey an urge, an emotion, a hunger. Not only that, but in the act of surrendering to it we exercise our freedom to relinquish or move out of the orbit of the diametrically opposite virtue. Obedience of the lower order demands servility. Sublimated, it manifests a high form of courage and the force of Will. Men and women at all times require a virile strength to assert their freedom to obey. The average person thinks himself free when in fact he is chained by a hundred cords of desire. To such an one, the spiritual aspirant appears a slave who has signed away his freedom to Teachers whom he may not have even seen in the flesh.

To understand the mechanics of obedience, one has to understand the meaning of freedom. The question has to be put and answered: Does freedom connote a violation of the laws of charity, mercy and justice just because one has the power if he so will of going in the opposite direction? Freedom does imply an unfettered choice to move in any direction open to the individual. It also means that, having so chosen, he has the right to abandon his first choice and opt for something different. New Year's resolutions are thus made and broken. But whatever the position taken, it does mean obedience or alliance with the one and the shunning or excluding of the other. The individual's very freedom binds him. He is free to generate causes. He is not free to choose what effects he will have. His choice made in the exercise of his freedom binds him to a course of conduct to which he pledges obedience. This will last till an alien desire so effects a change in his thinking that he changes masters, and so God and Mammon claim his allegiance by turns. The Jekyll-Hyde combination is not that rare as to be imperceptible in oneself and others. The emplacement of an unshakable obedience is therefore a major factor in the determining of the line of meditation.

A shifting allegiance, a vacillating loyalty, marks the behaviour of the one who moves with the herd. When one for the first time feels the pull towards the True, he feels, be it for a moment, the charmed glow of a vaster life. He basks in it till the time when, oppressed by the spreading of an unfamiliar fog, he too often rushes to the shady slopes of his once familiar hills.

For the guidance of the beginner, a few rules can be given, which, if followed, would test the strength of his obedience and resolve.

(1) All tenets and injunctions that are rooted in the Universal have to be respected and honoured by use.

(2) Rules of charity, justice, truth and non-violence have to be observed on all occasions.

(3) The mandates of patience have to be heeded and a brave endurance of personal injustice practised, regardless of the pain and suffering.

(4) The laws of mental and physical purity have to be made an integral part of one's life.

(5) Obedience to the laws of Brotherhood must be inculcated in oneself and others, and charity must be shown to others' faults and weaknesses. This is a primary duty, obedience to which is imperative.

(6) Regardless of falls and failures, a constant battle has to be waged against one's lower nature. In this, obedience to time-honoured rules provides invaluable aid and guidance.

(7) Obedience must be offered to the behests of the Imperishable as opposed to the transient and the perishable.

There are certain areas of action where there can be no doubt or vacillation about the principles of conduct to which obedience is due. Duties that an individual owes to himself, to his Teacher and to humanity are acts that must be performed. Disobedience to their call is sure to result in evil in the shape of malformations of character, perverted thinking and a general degradation of the human element. It is here that the aspirant's mettle is tested long before he even thinks of chelaship. Is he prepared to take the bit into his own mouth, put a curb upon the rampant freedom of the animal

in him and bend the untamed part of himself to his Will? For, as between good and evil, obedience to the behests of one means a summary rejection of the suzerainty of the other. Allegiance to the one must mean the disowning of the other. Therefore, wherever there is a failure of duties, there must certainly exist the act of disobedience to the higher, the bending of knees to the lower. Thus each day succeeds another with its record of obedience or of a falling off from the chosen discipline. It shows the measure of one's stamina to achieve freedom from vice, from the lure and glamour of material things as also from the endless repeating of the same experience because the lesson has not been learnt.

Has the aspirant the faith that his obedience is not misplaced, that, despite all earthly semblances to the contrary, the chosen mentor can never go wrong, can never lead him astray? For, it is on faith and faith alone that the future man is to be formed. It is faith alone that can make obedience unquestioning. It is faith in the impersonal that can make one go through the travails of a new birth in quest of the impersonal. When this faith descends on the individual, obedience transforms itself into reverence, adoration, self-surrender. It is thus that chelas are born.

A ROCK upon which many persons, theosophists as well as others, fall to pieces...is personality. Personality is always an illusion, a false picture hiding the reality inside. No person is able to make his bodily environment correspond exactly to the best that is within him, and others therefore continually judge him by the outward show. If we try, as Krishna directs, to find the divine in everything, we will soon learn not to judge by appearances, and if we follow the advice to do our duty without hope of reward and without trimming ourselves with a desired result in view, the end will be peace.

—*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*

"VOWED TO THE INFINITE"

THE QUINTESSENCE OF THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

But, as often as the heart
Breaks—wild and wavering—from control, so oft
Let him re-curb it, let him rein it back
To the Soul's governance; for perfect bliss
Grows only in the bosom tranquillised,
The spirit passionless, purged from offence,
Vowed to the Infinite.

—*The Song Celestial*, by Sir Edwin Arnold, Ch. VI

ONE of the astounding facts about the *Bhagavad-Gita* is that not only is it a very detailed exposition of the Spiritual Path, but also every individual verse by itself contains the seeds for many hours, days, weeks, months or even years of meditation and practice. The above quotation captures the quintessence of the teachings included in the work. The heart is mentioned, and in Theosophical teaching the heart is said to be the focus of the energies of the Higher Mind. H.P.B. says in one place: "The heart is the centre of spiritual consciousness, as the brain is the centre of the intellectual," and of course, in *The Voice of the Silence* and other Buddhist writings we hear of the "heart doctrine" and the "eye doctrine," representing the spiritual and the intellectual, respectively.

In reply to a question whether the consciousness might not be concentrated in the heart, and so the promptings of the Spirit caught, H.P.B. said that anyone who could thus concentrate would have united Kama-Manas to the Higher Manas. This is the practice of Spirituality in a nutshell.

The most potent words in the lines from *The Song Celestial* quoted above are: "Vowed to the Infinite." They express and suggest so much. If we can "vow" ourselves to the Infinite, this will carry us through all the trials of life; we will have a centre or focus, and we will be less likely to be tossed to and fro on the stormy sea of earthly existence.

Let us look at the definition of the word "vow" in the dictionary. It says: "a solemn promise; an oath; a promise of fidelity as to a

divine power. "The divine power that we make this solemn promise to is no external God but our own Higher Self, and the promise that we make is one of "fidelity." To return to the dictionary, we find that the word "fidelity" is defined as: "faithfulness; trustiness; loyalty; integrity." We need to become loyal to the Divine in us and to prefer it above all the things of the world. It is the only thing in our lives that is permanent; all else changes and fades away. As H.P.B. tells us in her article "Occultism versus the Occult Arts": "The aspirant has to choose absolutely between the life of the world and the life of Occultism. It is useless and vain to endeavour to unite the two, for no one can serve two masters and satisfy both."

Outwardly, this appears rather austere and cold, but there is nothing stern about the Higher Self. All such designations are inventions of the lower mind and when we raise ourselves to higher levels they have no meaning. If we vow ourselves to the Infinite, we are setting ourselves against all the "mind-forged manacles" that hold us back from a direct perception of the True Man in us. This may present many problems in our day-to-day lives, but faithfulness to the Divine will see us through in the end.

An interesting word was used in the above definition of "fidelity," and this word is "integrity." Once again if we make use of the dictionary we learn that "integrity" is "the state of being entire; an unimpaired state; honesty; probity." The state of being entire or "whole" gains significance in the context of our Theosophical studies, because it points to a state of consciousness in which we have abandoned the illusion of separateness and are living at one with the Divine. This state can be said to be "unimpaired" by the follies of lower-mind delusions, and one of complete honesty with ourselves and others. It is a state in which we have realized the purity of the True Self and are committed to living in its Light.

Being "vowed to the Infinite" has to be equated with a state of great bliss, and this "grows only in the bosom tranquillised," as *The Song Celestial* puts it. To quote a Master of Wisdom: "It is upon the serene and placid surface of the unruffled mind that visions gathered from the invisible find a representation in the visible world." This is also expressed in Hindu allegory: "It is in the dead

of night that Krishna is born." So it is essential that we cultivate a tranquil mind amidst the distractions of the world around us if we are to become aware of the Higher Self shining in us. We need to become, as *The Voice of the Silence* tells us, "as deaf to roarings as to whispers," and to learn the nature of *Dharana* which is described in that book as "the intense and perfect concentration of the mind upon some one interior object, accompanied by complete abstraction from everything pertaining to the external Universe, or the world of the senses." This will give us true insight and help us to reach that "passionless" state referred to in the quotation at the head of this article. The words "purged from offence" are also significant. "Purged" means purified in this context, and it is stated in the *Bhagavad-Gita* that there is no purifier in the world equal to Spiritual Knowledge. True Knowledge cannot be obtained from books; it is an awakening to the Divine in ourselves and in others. This is the wonderful teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and it behoves us to study it with reverence and diligence, for in every verse there lie gateways to a deeper understanding of our True Nature. Coupled with insights gained from Theosophical works like *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, etc., it gives us the practical means to live the Spiritual Life and to relate to others with compassion and enlightened understanding.

THE sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.

—HAMILTON

CHARITY TO ALL THAT LIVES

NO one who has read the works of W. Q. Judge can be unaware of the importance of the relations between man and the lower kingdoms of Nature, and particularly between man and the animal kingdom. The universe is a single whole, composed of innumerable, interrelated parts, and hence the well-being of all depends upon the behaviour of each unit towards any other. Many people do not hesitate to accept this proposition theoretically, but it becomes a motive affecting their actions only when they acquire some idea of how it is that all the widely varying units affect each other so strongly and with such palpable results.

The key to the mysteries involved in this great subject lies with the "elementals." These living centres of response and reaction are everywhere present, in every form, like the veins in a leaf or the nerves in the human body. This means that, "being unconscious, automatic and photographic...the elemental world...reacts upon humanity exactly as humanity acted towards it."

What a responsibility for man! Let us take serious note of the situation. Harmony is the fundamental law of laws. Man strives for perfection, works for humanity to the best of his ability, holds human brotherhood as the high ideal, the realization of which will bring him to the goal, and all the while he is multiplying the causes of unhappiness and disharmony by disregarding the rights and needs of our younger brothers of the animal kingdom! The man whose reaction it is to kill every little creature that flies or crawls into his ken on the vague supposition that it might bite or sting or in some way annoy him, is preparing unavoidable and inexplicable annoyances for himself in the future when the reaction to his conduct reaches him from the invisible world, as reach him it must.

In his article "The Moral Law of Compensation" (*U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 6*) Mr. Judge illustrates how the results of broken harmony come home to roost, to the detriment and discomfort of the soul responsible for infringement of the Great Law. The elemental lives of the animal or flower wantonly destroyed or tortured are impressed with the image of their torturer and, at the

appropriate moment, rush upon him and cleave to him like barnacles to a ship, following him to his next incarnation and bringing about pain and frustration and failure, the source of which he cannot trace.

So long as mankind does not cultivate brotherly feeling and charity towards the whole of creation, just so long will the elementals be without the impulse to act for our benefit. But so soon and wherever man or men begin to cultivate brotherly feeling and love for the whole creation, there and then the elementals begin to take on the new condition. ("Conversations on Occultism," *Vernal Blooms*)

This last sentence gives us hope, and makes us realize the value of the many efforts that are being made to impress the general public with the importance of recognizing the rights of living beings, other than human beings, to live and be free to search for their own variety of happiness. However thick the pall that hangs over our sorrowful star as the special contribution of the vivisectionists and the inventors and users of insecticides that neither deter nor even kill creatures outright, but simply incapacitate them and leave them to die a slow death, still, when and wherever even a few individuals try to strike a new note and to act from the standpoint of gentle service to all that lives, there and then a better day dawns.

Every type of effort helps—injunctions, exhortations, arguments, explanations. All these methods have been used to induce the right attitude as well as, last to be mentioned but not least important, comments and descriptions likely to arouse that sympathy with animal life which will naturally make us hold our hand when the "beast in us" would otherwise leap out to destroy.

We should like to call the reader's attention in this connection to a charming little volume which appeared long ago. Under the title *Shakespeare and the Animals*, Charles A. Westcott has compiled passages from the works of the great dramatist, showing his sympathy for animal life. To quote a few:

....the poor beetle that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great

As when a giant dies.

(*Measure for Measure*, III, 1)

...he shall find

The unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.

(*Timon of Athens*, IV, 1)

On page 35 we find the description of bees beginning,

...so work the honey-bees,

Creatures that by a rule in nature teach

The act of order to a peopled kingdom.

(*Henry V*, I, 2)

Space forbids the reproduction of the discussion in *Titus Andronicus* (III, 3) on the "poor harmless fly" and whether to kill "but a fly" is reprehensible. But we cannot conclude without quoting the prototype of one of the great arguments used now-a-days against experimentation on animals. It is from *Cymbeline*, I, 5. The Queen proposes to try the effect of poisons upon animals, when Cornelius warns her: "Your highness shall from this practice but make hard your heart."

It seems a far cry from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* to the modern anti-vivisection movement. Yet one cannot help wondering, however, whether the seed contained in the words of the physician Cornelius and sown broadcast by means of the theatre at the beginning of the 17th century did not contribute something to the force which finally found expression towards the end of the 18th in the organized protest against the nameless cruelties perpetrated upon helpless animals in the name of science and humanity. "The mills of God grind slowly," and who knows to what far-reaching results apparently insignificant causes may give rise? Be that as it may, the Theosophical student looks hopefully towards the future—"the glorious future"—and goes on calmly doing his bit, upheld by the knowledge that the cycle of human development has taken us beyond our lowest point so that now the evolutionary current distinctly strengthens all efforts to re-establish universal harmony.

DO MASTERS EXIST?¹

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AS far as my personal interest in the Theosophical studies is concerned, it matters little if these beings do exist or not. For, if the teaching satisfies my sense of truth, if the closest scrutiny fails to discover in it anything that revolts my reason, what does it matter from whence it comes? Is truth less worthy of our assimilation because we are not personally acquainted with its promulgator?

But the very plan, constitution, or *policy* of the Theosophical Society demands imperatively as its foundation rock the existence of those advanced beings in order to explain, without superstitious beliefs in supernatural revelations, this new outpouring of old forgotten truths which forms the bulk of its tenets. And if the men of our race and age are ever going to make of Theosophy a practical guide in their daily life and not a mere speculation, an intellectual fad, or a sort of system of mental gymnastics, they must first conceive the Masters as ideals to imitate, as men more advanced on the path of evolution than the best of us, nearer to perfection and freer from the many obstacles that our ignorance of the ultimate forces of nature opposes to the exercise of our will. This conception of what a Master must be should be devoid of superstition and mysticism.

It must not be supposed that they are super-human beings, who, being entrusted with special missions and endowed with supernatural powers, are capable of violating the eternal laws of Nature to suit their own caprice. They must not be considered as exceptions, but as natural products of normal evolution, carried to a point of which we did not dream before. They must be looked upon as men who through a long series of incarnations, by wilful and conscious efforts, whose motive has always been the good of others, and whose characteristic has always been self-sacrifice, have arrived at that state of perfection which would be the condition of a human being possessing at the same time mental qualities far

¹ Address before Vyasa T.S., New Orleans, by Dr. C. J. Lopez.

superior to those of our greater savants, and heart qualities far beyond those of the greatest self-sacrificing heroes who honour the history of mankind. Who shall slander humanity by saying that such attainments are impossible in a long series of incarnations? Who shall deny that there are today many obscure men and women sacrificing themselves for the good of others, doing their full duty and even more than their strict duty, without discrimination, without fear, and without hope; and, on the other hand, that there are many ignored students, consuming their life in the thankless task of pushing a little further the barriers of ignorance which limit today every modern science? And why not believe that these men and women are progressing towards Adeptship, some treading now the path of Knowledge and others the path of Compassion? When a student, after having mastered all the secrets of Nature, not only on its material aspect but in what is called its occult side, shall become also a philanthropist capable of sacrificing himself, not for a particular set of people but for the whole of humanity, then a new Master will have evolved.

Let us see now if there are any proofs of the existence of such Masters at the present time. I will divide these proofs in three classes: logical deductions, actual sensible experiences of reliable witnesses, and direct psychical recognitions.

The most commonly used logical proof is that derived from evolution. If we admit that a stone becomes in the course of ages a plant, that this plant becomes an animal, and this animal a man, why shall we be conceited enough to think that men, such as we, are the *ne plus ultra* of terrestrial evolution? To all those who have studied, not read about, the sciences of chemistry, physics, astronomy, and physiology, it is plain that our civilization has wrested from Nature many a valuable secret, but it is equally plain that we only know one aspect of Nature, the physical or grossly material, and that very imperfectly yet, since the ultimate laws upon which those sciences are based are far from being understood. Now we find in each one of those realms of human knowledge some of the greatest authorities, not the lesser lights, frankly admitting that when they reach the very bottom of academical orthodoxy in their favourite science,

they get glimpses of a rich realm far beyond, with new laws more universal and complete in their play than those of physical matter, with new forces far superior and more refined than those hitherto known, and new possibilities far surpassing the wildest conceptions of the most poetical dreamer. Therefore, is it not logical to admit that some men, removed from the hurried struggle for self-gratification of the occidental world, and hence having more time and more energy to devote to the purest investigations of science, communing with nature in its unspoiled grandeur and concentrating their efforts not on self-aggrandizement but on self-improvement—is it not logical to admit that such men, under such conditions, must certainly have mastered these occult sciences of which even we are beginning to stammer the A B C, and that using those sciences practically, as we do those that we know, they are capable of producing effects which we do not understand any more than the Eskimos at the Fair understand the *modus operandi* of the electric plant?

Another logical proof is that derived from the nature of the Theosophical teachings themselves. A doctrine that embraces the Divine Principle, Nature, and man, condensing in one harmonious whole the fragmentary knowledge of the Orient and the Occident, of the ancient sages and prophets, the mediaeval philosophers and seers, the modern scientists and metaphysicians; that explains satisfactorily all the physical, psychical, and spiritual phenomena; that covers the triple ground of science, philosophy, and religion, not only without omissions and shortcomings but, on the contrary, filling the gaps that we had found in that triple realm of human knowledge and uniting the three in one—such a doctrine cannot be the invention of ordinary men, and much less the offspring of unscientific minds like those of Sinnett, Madame Blavatsky, and Col. Olcott. What else can it be? The revelation of a personal God, the inspiration of dead personalities, or the instruction of perfected living human beings, such as the Masters are. The first supposition is untenable because a personal God is an absurdity; the second is untenable also because death is no initiation and the fact of dying cannot by itself confer superior knowledge; therefore by the simple

logical process of *reductio ad absurdum* the existence of the Masters is proven by the very nature of their teachings, just as a tree is recognized by its fruit.

But there are still more material proofs in the testimony of trustworthy witnesses. Without counting hundreds of Hindus to whom their existence is a simple matter of fact, we have the volunteer affirmations of Sinnett, Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, Countess Wachtmeister, Annie Besant, William Q. Judge, and many others, some of whom have seen them several times even in their physical bodies, and one of whom (Olcott) has still a material tangible object given to him by a Master as a proof that he was not dreaming. Note that all these people are well known and trustworthy, that they have repeated their experiences and asserted the same thing for eighteen years, that they cannot possibly mistake, and that, therefore, they are either lying or telling the truth. Why should they lie? There is no material interest involved; they have nothing to gain by their assertions except the unenviable position of targets for every scoffer's ridicule.

In fact, their social standing would be rather ameliorated by a contrary assertion, for then they would appear as mighty reformers and not as mere instruments.

Is it possible that they lie for the sake of disowning the authorship of books which are in the hands of thousands of admiring readers? If such were the case it would be more wonderful than the existence of the Masters, and certainly there is no court of justice that would not render a favourable decision upon such testimony.

Unfortunately we have to deal not with frank deniers, but with reserved doubters, whose favourite argument is that the experience of others cannot be proof for them.

To these I will dedicate my last series of proofs, and I will say that the Masters have never refused to manifest their existence to those who place themselves in the proper conditions.

They do not show themselves promiscuously to curiosity seekers; they do not mix with the ordinary daily life of men, because they would have no object in doing so and no good would ever come out of it; but they do not hide themselves or try to monopolise the

state of Adeptship by preventing others from reaching them. Quite the contrary; there are no obstacles outside of ourselves on the path that leads to them; there are no barred doors, no whimsical initiations; they have affirmed several times that they are ready to help those who seek to approach them with purity of motive by raising themselves up to them, that is to say, by following the same route which they formerly traversed.

There is such a thing as direct apprehension of a fact or a truth without any intervention. The occidental world is beginning to make its first blundering experiments in psychometry, mesmerism, clairvoyance, etc., and already there are sufficient scientific facts to formulate the opinion of a possible psychical intercourse between *kindred* souls without any physical or even astral manipulations. This faculty is not the property of any man or set of men. It is common to all, it is latent in all human beings, and the only obstacles to its development are our own wrong habits and accumulated impulses in a more material direction.

As we are free agents, all that we have to do, if we want to remove the mist of our own manufacture which beclouds our higher perception, is to cultivate more our better and more elevated faculties and live *less* within the narrow limits of our personality.

Of course the process is a long one, not always achieved in one earthly life. Of course there are dangers to be encountered, but are there no dangers in physical training? How many would-be athletes have broken their necks? How many chemical experimenters have been diseased for life by poisonous fumes or maimed by unexpected explosions? How many electricians have been killed by the subtle current? These dangers arise mainly from precipitateness, lack of accuracy, and imperfect knowledge. Let us learn thoroughly, let us be accurate in every act and thought, let us progress with patient coolness, let us be unselfish in the sense of being always actively at work for the benefit of others, purifying our own lower planes so as to give no hold to those astral influences which have converted so many weak mediums and unprepared wonder-seekers into moral wrecks or silly maniacs, and I think that we shall naturally evolve, step by step, until our highest perceptions (call

them intuitions if you will) shall be sufficiently open to permit to us a direct cognizance of the Masters' existence.

Bear in mind that they have reached their present high state of evolution mainly by active altruism and self-denial, that their only aim is to help humanity as a whole; therefore, if we imitate them as best we can, we will become in our humble way *kindred* with them, and then, and only then, shall we *know* their existence.

Let us wipe out the vapours of selfishness which dim the mirror of our higher consciousness, let us become willing and efficient co-operators in the Masters' altruistic work for the sake of humanity as a whole, let us do the work assigned to us by our Karma well and thoroughly, without hope of personal reward, and the Masters will reveal themselves to us, not by wonderful physical phenomena but by simple, direct communion through the highest planes of our being, those planes which are the true field of their activity.

THEOSOPHY is synonymous with *Gnana-Vidya* and with the *Brahma-Vidya* of the Hindus, and again with the *Dzyan* of the trans-Himalayan adepts, the science of the *true* Raj-Yogis, who are much more accessible than one thinks. This science has many schools in the East. But its offshoots are still more numerous, each one having ended by separating itself from the parent stem—the true Archaic Wisdom—and varying in its form.

But while these forms varied, departing further with each generation from the light of truth, the basis of initiatory truths remained always the same. The symbols used to express the same idea may differ, but in their hidden sense they always do express the same idea. Ragon, the most erudite mason of all the "Widow's sons," has said the same. There exists a sacerdotal language, the "mystery language," and unless one knows it well, he cannot go far in the occult sciences.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Derek Burke, one of Britain's most experienced advisers on biotechnology, recently warned scientists to learn not to dismiss opponents of new technology as irrational simpletons. Speaking at the British Association's annual function in Leeds, he said that many scientists came across as arrogant, and that this undermined the authority of their advice, making people sceptical of it. "Scientists are too often driven by their love of new technology, are unaware of the dehumanizing effect of their innate reductionism, and so regarded as distant and uncaring," he said.

Burke, a molecular biologist and former vice-chancellor of the University of East Anglia in Norwich, believes that the main problem is a clash of value judgments coupled with the assumption of many scientists that their value judgments are superior to all others. Burke told fellow scientists that "not everyone sees the world as they do," and reminded them that they were members of a democratic society.

For instance, many people sympathize with groups that oppose genetic engineering—a hot topic today. Whereas scientists see a human gene as a simple chemical, Burke observed, many members of the public view it as something with a distinct, almost "sacred," quality. Such differences in outlook mean that the typical scientist's assumption that everyone will back a given technology is mistaken.

We would add that the arrogance of modern science, its pride and prejudice, is also evinced in another manner—the immense scorn shown by it for ancient science. And this in spite of the fact that many teachings of archaic knowledge now stand vindicated. As H.P.B. says of exact science, it is "'exact,' chiefly, in finding itself inexact every leap-year." And she adds:

We know the day is approaching when an *absolute reform* will be demanded in the present modes of Science by the scientists themselves....Till that day there is nothing to be done....Science will be as far from the solution of its difficulties as it is now, unless it comes to some compromise with Occultism and even with Alchemy—which supposition will be regarded as

an impertinence, but remains a fact, nevertheless. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 495-96)

Charles Krauthammer's essay in *Time* magazine (March 16) comments on what he calls "the ultimate cloning horror—human organ farms":

Last year Dolly the cloned sheep was received with wonder, titter and some vague apprehension. Several weeks ago the announcement by a Chicago physicist that he is assembling a team to produce the first **human** clone occasioned yet another wave of Brave New World anxiety. But the scariest news of all—and largely overlooked—comes from two obscure labs, at the University of Texas and at the University of Bath. During the past four years, one group created headless mice; the other, headless tadpoles.

For sheer Frankenstein wattage, the purposeful creation of these animal monsters has no equal.... You don't have to be a genius to see the true utility of manufacturing headless creatures: for their organs—fully formed, perfectly useful, ripe for plundering.

Why should you be panicked? Because humans are next. "It would almost certainly be possible to produce human bodies without a forebrain," Princeton biologist Lee Silver told the London *Sunday Times*. "These human bodies without any semblance of consciousness would not be considered persons, and thus it would be perfectly legal to keep them 'alive' as a future source of organs."...

When prominent scientists are prepared to acquiesce in—or indeed encourage—the deliberate creation of deformed and dying quasi-human life, you know we are facing a bioethical abyss. Human beings are ends, not means. There is no grosser corruption of biotechnology than creating a human mutant and disemboweling it at our pleasure for spare parts...

The time to put a stop to this is now.... The deliberate creation of headless humans must be made a crime, indeed a capital crime. If we flinch in the face of this high-tech barbarity, we'll deserve to live in the hell it heralds.

What was stated in *Lucifer*, December 1890, by way of comment on what was described in the newspapers of that time as a surgical "horror"—the grafting of a portion of a living dog's foreleg in a boy's leg—is even more relevant to the experiments being conducted today:

We sometimes hear it said of communities that they have "no backs to be thrashed and no souls to be damned"; but *they have*, and when the rock descends it breaks them to powder. The proofs are only too abundant. The rock is already swaying: let us not shout too loud or we may bring it on our heads!

The recent incident in the U.S.A., in which two Arkansas boys aged 11 and 13 shot down four schoolmates and a teacher and injured several others, has stunned people all over the world. By all accounts the shooting was "senseless," and experts have but theories to explain it.

Almost the world over juvenile crime is on the increase. Psychologists say that there is no one reason why youngsters turn killers. They implicate, among other things, violent movies, TV shows, video games, lack of parental involvement, inadequate male role models, and ready access to firearms. Criminologists believe that the real curse of life is "growing up without loving, capable, responsible adults who teach you right from wrong" or, worse yet, "growing up surrounded by delinquent and criminal adults." Most important, say the psychologists, children should be taught how to resolve conflicts peacefully.

Children reflect the adults and the world they live in. When those surrounding the child do not represent certain values and commitments to life, it becomes harder for the child to discover a true image of himself and to set limits of behaviour. There is also the wider environment of the outside world which shapes the child's behaviour. The entire society needs to do soul-searching and ask itself where it has gone wrong.

It is the total situation, the child in the process of adjusting himself or herself to the outside world, that has to be understood.

What is needed is going into the real nature of the child with sympathy and intelligence. Psychologists and social workers who overlook the fact that children are old souls returning in new bodies, and are drawn to a particular environment and born to a certain set of parents under Karma, can hardly be expected to be in a position to find an effective solution to the problem of juvenile crime. They need to pause and consider why it is that, on the one hand, children brought up in decent homes and given a good environment and opportunities for sound education sometimes perform violent acts, while, on the other hand, those who live in deprived areas and are exposed to values which almost encourage crime do not automatically become juvenile criminals. Even children belonging to the same family are often found to be diametrically opposed to one another in their attitudes and behaviour.

A Jain ascetic's year-long fast has aroused much wonderment the world over and has been hailed as an "extraordinary event." Sixty-four-year-old Sahajmuni Maharaj started his fast in the city of Bangalore from May 1, 1997, and for a full year survived on just a glass of water a day and not a single morsel of food. He calls it a self-purificatory fast. His weight was reduced to less than half, and though weak physically, he managed to remain alert mentally. The doctor monitoring his health has no explanation to offer and admits that he is baffled how Sahajmuni could live so long without sustenance. All his internal organs, says the doctor, were functioning normally.

Such feats of fasting are not unknown among yogis and ascetics. In an editorial comment to a letter published under the title "Can a Man Live Without Food?" it was stated in *The Theosophist* for October 1882: "Do we not know, for a *certainty*, of Yogis who pass months and years without eating...?" The rationale of such phenomena is given to us in the *Supplement to The Theosophist* for December 1883 (p. 32): "Akasa is the mother of all phenomena and the source of nourishment of him who knows how to use it."

Humans continue to pollute their environment thoughtlessly—to their own detriment. The following abstracts and news items culled from British journals bear this out. It should be noted that much of what is said about conditions in Britain is also applicable to conditions obtaining elsewhere.

Air pollution kills up to 24,000 people each year in Britain, according to a report commissioned by the government. The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants says that low-level ozone, created by sunlight acting on vehicle exhaust fumes, causes 12,500 premature deaths each year. Sulphur dioxide claims another 3500 lives. The number of hospital admissions caused by air pollution is also going up. (*New Scientist*, 24 January 1998)

Tough new regulations governing the use of pesticides on fruits and vegetables are being drawn up because it is feared that their potential dangers to human health and the environment have been underestimated. The government has set up a committee to reassess the effects on humans of organophosphates, which are used on crops. It is feared that river life too could be damaged by traces of organophosphates in the water. (*Pollution*, January 1998)

New research shows that sea-level rise caused by global warming could have serious impacts on coastal areas in the next century. The research was funded by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, as part of a range of studies on climate change and its possible impact on natural vegetation, water supplies, food supplies and coastal resources. (*Pollution*, December 1997)

According to another British study, 1997 has been the world's hottest since global records began in the 1860s. Experts say that 1997 has been a year of floods, forest fires, and unusual warmth in regions from the eastern seaboard of the United States to Siberia. Global temperatures were well beyond natural variability. (*Pollution*, December 1997)

Again and again and in various ways the message comes home to us that man and his environment are inextricably interwoven.

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ISIS UNVEILED. A photographic facsimile of the original edition of 1877.
THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.
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THE THEOSOPHICAL GLOSSARY
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THE BROTHERHOOD OF RELIGIONS
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H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

The United Lodge of Theosophists

DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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