

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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No, your friends do not and will not forget you, but remember that the greatest and truest friend is the Higher Self. He who has the Higher Self as his friend possesses all things and lacks nothing, and the Higher Self is your friend if you will but receive that friendship. Take courage and be patient: the light is shining in your heart and, if you will but go on, you will find it there, and it will be brighter far than you can now imagine.

—W. Q. JUDGE

P.B. described W. Q. Judge as “the *Antaskarana*,” the Link or the bridge “between the two *Manas(es)*, the American thought and the Indian — or rather the trans-Himalayan Esoteric Knowledge.”

In the Esoteric Philosophy the *Antaskarana* is that constituent in the being of man which links the Higher Manasic Triad to the lower Manasic quaternary. In a more restricted sense, between the Higher Manas and its ray, the lower manas, which forms the basis of the personal “I.” That aspect of the incarnated manas which is not swamped and drowned in the ocean of *Kama-Samsara* has the inherent capacity to turn inwards to seek the guidance of the parent Manas. Ascending towards that higher aspect of itself it secures the Light and returns to the personal habitat to help that aspect of itself which is intertwined with *Kama* and the senses and organs. This particular Organ — rightly described as the Internal Organ — is the most important constituent for the devotee who has resolved to tread the Inner Path of Life Supernal. With the activity of the *Antaskarana* the devotee progresses. It lies

almost dormant and slumbering in vast masses of men, getting activated mostly by the uncommon events of life, especially when affliction falls upon the individual. *Antaskarana* is the organ *par excellence* of the Human-Man, as Kama-Manas is that of the Animal-Man and Buddhi-Manas that of the Divine-Man. *Antaskarana* is the conscience, with its dual aspect — that which is the fruition of the personal lives and the Divine aspect of Conscience which speaks as the Still Small Voice of God.

Applying this knowledge to the straight hint given by H.P.B. about Mr. Judge, we can see how very important a place Mr. Judge and his writings occupy in the life of the aspirant-devotee walking the thorny way of probation.

Mr. Judge himself once wrote that the way to the Supreme Self was most difficult till we should find the bridge — the Masters.

These reflections are jotted down for study during this month of March, the month of the Spring Equinox. On that day in 1896 W. Q. Judge passed away. Also, this number will still be the current one for his birth anniversary, for on the 13th of April in 1851 Mr. Judge was born. It would be appropriate for all Associates of the U.L.T., and especially for aspiring devotees, to take for study and meditation the Symbol of the Link in the Guruparampara Chain, the Bridge between the city of mortals and the Golden-Gated City of the Immortals. Let us keep the Link unbroken!

OUR DUTY is to recognize the great human soul with which we have to deal and for which we should work. Its progress, its experience, its inner life, are vastly more important than all our boasted civilization. That civilization could easily be swept away, and what would be left? Your country could be frozen up solidly in a few weeks were the Gulf Stream deflected from these shores. Mines have honeycombed your land, and a good earthquake might easily shake all your material glories to destruction beneath the sea. What then could remain save the human experience, the experience of the soul? But no cataclysm can destroy your thoughts. They live on. And so all the work that you do for the inner life of man can meet with no destruction even though records and books and all the ingenious works upon this outer plane were swept out of existence. If then you believe in this mighty doctrine of Reincarnation, do not be afraid to tell it.

—W. Q. JUDGE

HAVE ANIMALS SOULS ?

[In *The Theosophist* for January, February and March 1886 appeared H. P. Blavatsky's important article under the above title. We reprint here the first of the three parts; the remaining two will appear in our April and May issues.

The article is perhaps even more relevant now than when it was written, for animals are being "tortured, killed, uselessly shot and otherwise misused" to a greater extent today than ever before — and this in the name of "progress" and "civilization"! More, even countries which at one time held animal life in respect have, through a deterioration of values and a foolish aping of the so-called "developed" nations, come to accept cruelty as necessary to "advancement." In her article, H.P.B. refers specifically to Christian countries, but much that she says is, alas, equally applicable to present-day India. Not only have erstwhile vegetarians become meat-eaters, but worse has happened. We have come to accept vivisection as "necessary" for scientific progress in our own laboratories and have even exported monkeys for experimentation in laboratories abroad. Not long ago there was a hue and cry against the slaughter of cows for food, but we think nothing of starving and ill-treating our cattle and exposing calves to cowpox to obtain smallpox vaccine. In the name of religion, Indians have for ages past contaminated their land with the blood of animals offered as sacrifice; and this has degenerated still further into human sacrifice. Only recently the government has awakened to the need for protecting wildlife, yet the wanton decimation of several species of animals and birds has been going on for years and until now the authorities cared to do little about it. Poaching has been practised on a wide scale and game meat is available in restaurants throughout the country, both in and out of season. There is an increasing demand from fashionable women for crocodile-leather and lizard-skin shoes and handbags. Until recently the export of furs and skins was a flourishing trade. And foreign dignitaries who visit the country have sometimes been "entertained" by organizing hunting expeditions in their honour!

All this evokes an outcry from time to time, yet needless cruelty in one form or another continues. And this in the land where the Buddha lived and taught his noble teaching of harmlessness: "Kill not — for pity's sake — and lest ye slay the meanest of created things upon its upward way." And recently we had Gandhiji who reminded us of our ancient tradition of *ahimsa*,

non-violence, but he, too, is all but forgotten except when it comes to paying lip homage.

H.P.B.'s article which now follows was reprinted in *THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT* for August, September and October 1939, but bears repetition.—EDS.]

I

Continually soaked with blood, the whole earth is but an immense altar upon which *all that lives has to be immolated* endlessly, incessantly.

—COMTE JOSEPH DE MAISTRE (*Soirées* I. ii, 35)

MANY are the "antiquated religious superstitions" of the East which Western nations often and unwisely deride: but none is so laughed at and practically set at defiance as the great respect of Oriental people for animal life. *Flesh*-eaters cannot sympathize with total abstainers from meat. We Europeans are nations of civilized barbarians with but a few millenniums between ourselves and our cave-dwelling forefathers who sucked the blood and marrow from uncooked bones. Thus, it is only natural that those who hold human life so cheaply in their frequent and often iniquitous wars, should entirely disregard the death-agonies of the brute creation, and daily sacrifice millions of innocent, harmless lives; for we are too epicurean to devour tiger steaks or crocodile cutlets, but must have tender lambs and golden-feathered pheasants. All this is only as it should be in our era of Krupp cannons and scientific vivisectors. Nor is it a matter of great wonder that the hardy European should laugh at the mild Hindu, who shudders at the bare thought of killing a cow, or that he should refuse to sympathize with the Buddhist and Jain, in their respect for the life of every sentient creature — from the elephant to the gnat.

But, if meat-eating has indeed become a vital necessity — "the tyrant's plea!" — among Western nations; if hosts of victims in every city, borough and village of the civilized world must needs be daily slaughtered in temples dedicated to the deity, denounced by St. Paul and worshipped by men "whose God is their belly" — if all this and much more cannot be avoided in our "age of Iron," who can urge the same excuse for sport? Fishing, shooting, and hunting, the most fascinating of all the "amusements" of civilized life, are certainly the most objectionable from the standpoint of occult philosophy, the most sinful in the eyes of the followers of these religious systems which are the

direct outcome of the Esoteric Doctrine—Hinduism and Buddhism. Is it altogether without *any* good reason that the adherents of these two religions, now the oldest in the world, regard the animal world—from the huge quadruped down to the infinitesimally small insect—as their “younger brothers,” however ludicrous the idea to a European? This question shall receive due consideration further on.

Nevertheless, exaggerated as the notion may seem, it is certain that few of us are able to picture to ourselves without shuddering the scenes which take place early every morning in the innumerable shambles of the so-called civilized world, or even those daily enacted during the “shooting season.” The first sunbeam has not yet awakened slumbering nature, when from all points of the compass myriads of hecatombs are being prepared to salute the rising luminary. Never was heathen Moloch gladdened by such a cry of agony from his victims as the pitiful wail that in all Christian countries rings like a long hymn of suffering throughout nature, all day and every day from morning until evening. In civilized Europe—rapidly progressing in all things save Christian virtues—*might* remains unto this day the synonym of *right*. The entirely useless, cruel practice of shooting for mere sport countless hosts of birds and animals is nowhere carried on with more fervour than in Protestant England, where the merciful teachings of Christ have hardly made human hearts softer than they were in the days of Nimrod, “the mighty hunter before the Lord.” Christian ethics are as conveniently turned into paradoxical syllogisms as those of the “heathen.” The writer was told one day by a sportsman that since “not a sparrow falls on the ground without the will of the Father,” he who kills for sport—say, one hundred sparrows—does thereby one hundred times over his Father’s will!

A wretched lot is that of poor brute creatures, hardened as it is into implacable fatality by the hand of man. The *rational* soul of the human being seems born to become the murderer of the *irrational* soul of the animal—in the full sense of the word, since the Christian doctrine teaches *that the soul of the animal dies with its body*. Might not the legend of Cain and Abel have had a dual signification? Look at that other disgrace of our cultured age—the scientific slaughter-houses called “vivisection rooms.” Enter one of those halls in Paris, and behold Paul Bert, or some other of these men—so justly called “the learned butchers of the Institute”—at his ghastly work. I have but to translate the forcible description of an eye-witness, one who has thoroughly studied the *modus operandi* of those “executioners,” a well-known French author:

Vivisection is a speciality in which *torture*, scientifically economized by our butcher-academicians, is applied during whole days, weeks, and even months to the fibres and muscles of one and the same victim. It (torture) makes use of every and any kind of weapon, performs its analysis before a pitiless audience, divides the task every morning between ten apprentices at once, of whom one *works* on the eye, another one on the leg, the third on the brain, a fourth on the marrow; and whose inexperienced hands succeed, nevertheless, towards night after a hard day's work, in laying bare the whole of the living carcass they had been ordered to *chisel* out and *that* in the evening is carefully stored away in the *cellar*, in order that early next morning it may be worked upon again if only there is a breath of life and sensibility left in the victim! We know that the trustees of the Grammont law (*loi*) have tried to rebel against this abomination; but Paris showed herself more inexorable than London and Glasgow.¹

And yet these gentlemen boast of the *grand* object pursued, and of the *grand* secrets discovered by them.

Horror and lies! [exclaims the same author]. In the matter of secrets — a few localizations of faculties and cerebral motions excepted — we know but of one secret that belongs to them by rights: it is the secret of torture eternalized, beside which the terrible natural law of *autophagy* (mutual manducation), the horrors of war, the merry massacres of sport, and the sufferings of the animal under the butcher's knife are as nothing! Glory to our men of science! They have surpassed every former kind of torture, and remain now and for ever, without any possible contestation, the kings of artificial anguish and despair!²

The usual plea for butchering, killing, and even for legally torturing animals — as in vivisection — is a verse or two in the Bible, and its ill-digested meaning, disfigured by the so-called scholasticism represented by Thomas Aquinas. Even De Mirville, that ardent defender of the rights of the church, calls such texts “Biblical tolerances, *forced from God* after the deluge, as so many others, and based upon the decadence of our strength.” However this may be, such texts are amply contradicted by others in the same Bible. The meat-eater, the sportsman and even the vivisector — if there are among the last

¹ *De la Resurrection et du Miracle*. E. de Mirville.

² *Ibid.*

named those who believe in special creation and the Bible — generally quote for their justification that verse in *Genesis* in which God gives *dual* Adam “dominion over the fish, fowl, cattle, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Ch. I, v. 28); hence — as the Christian understands it — power of life and death over every animal on the globe. To this the far more philosophical Brahman and Buddhist might answer: “Not so. Evolution starts to mould future humanities within the lowest scales of being. Therefore, by killing an animal, or even an insect, we arrest the progress of an entity towards its final goal in nature — MAN”; and to this the student of occult philosophy may say “Amen,” and add that it not only retards the evolution of that entity, but arrests that of the next succeeding human and more perfect race to come.

Which of the opponents is right, which of them the more logical? The answer depends mainly, of course, on the personal belief of the intermediary chosen to decide the questions. If he believes in special creation, so-called, then in answer to the plain question — “Why should homicide be viewed as a most ghastly sin against God and nature, and the murder of millions of living creatures be regarded as mere sport?” — he will reply: “Because man is created in God’s own image and looks *upward* to his Creator and to his birthplace — heaven (*os homini sublime dedit*); and that the gaze of the animal is fixed *downward* on *its* birthplace — the earth”; for God said — “Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind” (*Genesis*, I, 24). Again, “because man is endowed with an immortal soul, and the dumb brute has no immortality, not even a short survival after death.”

Now to this an unsophisticated reasoner might reply that if the Bible is to be our authority upon this delicate question, there is not the slightest proof in it that man’s birthplace is in heaven any more than that of the last of creeping things — quite the contrary; for we find in *Genesis* that if God created “man” and blessed “them,” (Ch. I, v. 27-28) so he created “great whales” and “blessed them” (21-22). Moreover, “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground” (II, 7); and “dust” is surely earth pulverized? Solomon, the king and preacher, is most decidedly an authority and admitted on all hands to have been the wisest of the Biblical sages; and he gives utterances to a series of truths in *Ecclesiastes* (Ch. III) which ought to have settled by this time every dispute upon the subject. “The sons of men . . . might see

that they themselves are beasts" (v. 18); "that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth the beasts... a man has no pre-eminence above a beast" (v. 19); "all go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (v. 20); "*who* knoweth the spirit of man that goeth *upward*, and the spirit of the beast, that goeth *downward* to the earth?" (v. 21). Indeed, "who knoweth!" At any rate it is neither science nor "school divine."

Were the object of these lines to preach vegetarianism on the authority of Bible or Veda, it would be a very easy task to do so. For, if it is quite true that God gave *dual Adam*—the "male and female" of Chapter I of *Genesis*, who has little to do with our henpecked ancestor of Chapter II— "dominion over every living thing," yet we nowhere find that the "Lord God" commanded that Adam or the other to devour animal creation or destroy it for sport. Quite the reverse. For, pointing to the vegetable kingdom and the "fruit of a tree yielding seed," God says very plainly: "to you (men) it shall be *for meat*." (I, 29)

So keen was the perception of this truth among the early Christians that during the first centuries they never touched meat. In *Octavio*, Tertullian writes to Minutius Felix: "We are not permitted either to witness, or even hear narrated (*novere*), a homicide, we Christians, *who refuse to taste dishes in which animal blood may have been mixed*."

But the writer does not preach vegetarianism, simply defending "animal rights" and attempting to show the fallacy of disregarding such rights on Biblical authority. Moreover, to argue with those who would reason upon the lines of erroneous interpretations would be quite useless. One who rejects the doctrine of evolution will ever find his way paved with difficulties; hence, he will never admit that it is far more consistent with fact and logic to regard physical man merely as the recognized paragon of animals, and the spiritual Ego that *informs* him as a principle midway between the soul of the animal and the deity. It would be vain to tell him that unless he accepts not only the verses quoted for his justification but the whole Bible in the light of esoteric philosophy, which reconciles the whole mass of contradictions and *seeming* absurdities in it, he will never obtain the key to the truth; for he will not believe it. Yet the whole Bible teems with charity to men and with mercy and love to animals. The original Hebrew text of Chapter XXIV of *Leviticus* is full of it. Instead of the verses 17 and 18 as translated in the Bible, "And he that killeth a beast shall make it good, beast for beast," in the original it stands— "life for life," or rather

“soul for soul,” *nephesh tachat nephesh*.³ And if the rigour of the law did not go to the extent of killing, as in Sparta, a man’s “soul” for a beast’s “soul,” still, even though he replaced the slaughtered soul by a living one, a heavy additional punishment was inflicted on the culprit.

But this was not all. In *Exodus* (Ch. xx, 10, and Ch. xxiii. 2 *et seq.*) rest on the Sabbath day extended to cattle and every other animal. “The seventh day is the sabbath... thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy... cattle”; and the Sabbath year: “the seventh year thou shalt let it (the land) rest and lie still... that thine ox and thine ass may rest” — which commandment, if it means anything, shows that even the brute creation was not excluded by the ancient Hebrews from a participation in the worship of their deity, and that it was placed upon many occasions on a par with man himself. The whole question rests upon the misconception that “soul,” *nephesh*, is entirely distinct from “spirit” — *ruach*. And yet it is clearly stated that “God breathed into the nostrils (of man) *the breath of life* and man became a living soul,” *nephesh*, neither more nor less than an animal, for the soul of an animal is also called *nephesh*. It is by development that the *soul* becomes *spirit*, both being the lower and the higher rungs of one and the same ladder whose basis is the UNIVERSAL SOUL or spirit.

This statement will startle those good men and women who, however much they may love their cats and dogs, are yet too much devoted to the teachings of their respective churches ever to admit such a heresy. “The *irrational* soul of a dog or a frog divine and immortal as our own souls are!” — they are sure to exclaim: but so they are. It is not the humble writer of the present article who says so, but no less an authority for every good Christian than that king of the preachers — St. Paul. Our opponents who so indignantly refuse to listen to the arguments of either modern or esoteric science may perhaps lend a more willing ear to what their own saint and apostle has to say on the matter; the true interpretation of whose words, moreover, shall be given neither by a theosophist nor an opponent, but by one who was as good and pious a Christian as any, namely, another saint — John Chrysostom — he who explained and commented upon the Pauline Epistles, and who is held in the highest reverence by the divines of both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches. Christians have already found that experimental science is not on their side; they

³ Compare also the difference between the translation of the same verses in the *Vulgata*, and the texts of *Luther* and *De Wette*.

may be still more disagreeably surprised upon finding that no Hindu could plead more earnestly for animal life than did St. Paul in writing to the Romans. Hindus indeed claim mercy to the dumb brute only on account of the doctrine of transmigration and hence of the sameness of the principle or element that animates both man and brute. St. Paul goes further: he shows the animal *hoping for*, and *living in the expectation of*, the same “*deliverance from the bonds of corruption*” as any good Christian. The precise expressions of that great apostle and philosopher will be quoted later on in the present Essay and their true meaning shown.

The fact that so many interpreters — Fathers of the Church and scholastics — tried to evade the real meaning of St. Paul is no proof against its inner sense, but rather against the fairness of the theologians whose inconsistency will be shown in this particular. But some people will support their propositions, however erroneous, to the last. Others, recognizing their earlier mistake, will, like Cornelius a Lapide, offer the poor animal *amende honorable*. Speculating upon the part assigned by nature to the brute creation in the great drama of life, he says: “The aim of all creatures is the service of man. Hence, together with him (their master) they are waiting for their renovation” — *cum homine renovationem suam expectant*.⁴ “Serving man” surely cannot mean being tortured, killed, uselessly shot and otherwise misused; while it is almost needless to explain the word “renovation.” Christians understand by it the renovation of bodies after the second coming of Christ; and limit it to man, to the exclusion of animals. The students of the Secret Doctrine explain it by the successive renovation and perfection of forms in the scale of objective and subjective being, and in a long series of evolutionary transformations from animal to man, and upward. . . .

This will, of course, be again rejected by Christians with indignation. We shall be told that it is not thus that the Bible was explained to them, nor can it ever mean that. It is useless to insist upon it. Many and sad in their results were the erroneous interpretations of that which people are pleased to call the “Word of God.” The sentence “cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren” (*Gen. ix, 25*), generated centuries of misery and undeserved woe for the wretched slaves — the negroes. It is the clergy of the United States who were their bitterest enemies in the anti-slavery question, which question they

⁴ *Commen. Apocal.*, Ch. v. 137.

opposed *Bible in hand*. Yet slavery is proved to have been the cause of the natural decay of every country; and even proud Rome fell because "the majority in the ancient world were slaves," as Geyer justly remarks. But so terribly imbued at all times were the best, the most intellectual Christians with those many erroneous interpretations of the Bible, that even one of their grandest poets, while defending the right of man to freedom, allots no such portion to the poor animal.

God gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation; but man over men
 He made not lord; such title to himself
 Reserving, human left from human free.

— says Milton.

But, like murder, error "will out," and incongruity must unavoidably occur whenever erroneous conclusions are supported either against or in favour of a prejudged question. The opponents of Eastern *philozoism* thus offer their critics a formidable weapon to upset their ablest arguments by such incongruity between premises and conclusions, facts postulated and deductions made.

Confronted with the doctrine of the Church that animals, though not soulless, have no *permanent* or immortal soul in them, and that the principle which animates them dies with the body, it becomes interesting to learn how the school-men and the Church divines reconcile this statement with that other claim that animals may be and have been frequently and miraculously resurrected.

Though but a feeble attempt — one more elaborate would require volumes — the present Essay, by showing the inconsistency of the scholastic and theological interpretations of the Bible, aims at convincing people of the great criminality of taking — especially in sport and vivisection — animal life. Its object, at any rate, is to show that however absurd the notion that either man or brute can be resurrected after the life-principle has fled from the body for ever, such resurrections — if they were true — would not be more impossible in the case of a dumb brute than in that of a man; for either both are endowed by nature with what is so loosely called by us "soul," or neither the one nor the other is so endowed.

(To be continued)

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Mens sana in corpore sano. (A sound mind in a sound body.)

—JUVENAL (*Satires*, x. 356)

THE FIRST QUALIFICATION expected in a Chela is "perfect physical health." Why should this be so? What has health of the body to do with the internal governance of the man, his devotion and his line of a life's meditation? This much is certain that he who becomes reckless of his health cannot aspire to chelaship. The rule is like other rules, binding upon the aspirant in all normal cases.

Medical men attribute ill-health to a germ, a virus infection, a malfunctioning of the organs, etc., and each decade adds to the long list of health-destroying bodies. Ill-health signifies that one set of lives in the body wages war, hinders work, obstructs channels of communication or consumes a larger amount of energy than its usual quota. This necessarily sets up an imbalance, and the process of adjustment entails a strain and an expending of the man's vitality which may leave him exhausted and starve other centres of activity which have perforce to be depleted of that vitality. In acute cases, the fatigue thus generated becomes so overpowering that the mind is thrown into a semi-dazed condition, and but too often becomes so engrossed in its own misery that it loses all inclination to take up another's burden. It is not unusual to find that ill-health forces attention to itself and sometimes the pain becomes unbearable to such an extent that it fully engrosses the mind. In those moments it becomes noticeable that the lower desires are for the time being pushed back, but so too are the higher aspirations and the discriminating faculty.

The preservation of health depends in a large measure upon whether the man can control the inferior potencies, can discriminate as to food, behaviour and emotions, and can build habits which will keep the lives of his physical and mental make-up in balance. This demands an excellence in the art of living, an adjustment of desires and forces in the psychic and physical natures so that an equipoise is maintained on level as on broken ground. The adjustment has to be instantaneous, the watchfulness acutely sensitive. Yet, the chief question must always remain: Why do we desire health? Some covet it so that their passions and urges can be exercised unhampered; others want it because they are obsessed by the outer appearance of their faces and bodies; others

still, so that they can enjoy a full life of ease and pleasure. Each of these tries to preserve health and in so doing each invites lives which make the body gross and, though outwardly without blemish, so full of the earthly elements as to hamper and in certain circumstances inhibit the movements of the Soul. The use of certain drugs, injections, serums and what not may ruin the chances of the Soul for an incarnation. Our physicians have yet to learn the effect of essences on human bodies.

A healthy organism may suffer a setback due to numerous causes. Psychic upsets may be produced by scenes, sounds, odours, memories; emotional upheavals by jealousy, pride, anger, lust. Insatiable craving for undesirable things; the imbibing of foul psychic or physical atmosphere; the overdoing or neglect of functions, duties and ascetic practices; the coming under the influence of persons whose magnetism clashes with that of the aspirant — these and similar causes bring about a malaise, a lowering in the first instance of the tonal quality or the tensile strength of the instruments which the Soul is constrained to use for this incarnation at least. Then of course there are ills brought forward from previous lives as well as those to which a person is heir through atavism and heredity. Physical tendencies, lives and energies which bear our stamp of usage in previous lives return to us. They are chicken coming home to roost and which demand their liberty from the defiling touch which the desires and divagations of humans have placed upon them.

Pain and uneasiness are the destroyers of meditation. So is any urge of the body for sleep or rest. These can set up a persistent clamour which may become sufficiently strong to drown all other voices; and till the man has learnt to withdraw himself into the Silence, the attention is compelled to focus itself on the one absorbing centre of pain. H.P.B. showed in her own life that intense physical pain, mental torture and the anguish of friends turning into traitors can be lived through and not allowed to divert a man from the chosen fields of duty. *The Voice of the Silence* admonishes the pupil thus: "Both action and inaction may find room in thee; thy body agitated, thy mind tranquil, thy Soul as limpid as a mountain lake." However, that is a stage to be devoutly wished for. Till then, for the student, his safety lies in preventing ill-health. Karma alone can decide how much of bodily infirmities can be released from the storehouse of past Karma so as to become a necessary teacher, a force which through the resistance that it offers will help develop that aspect of the spiritual force which will

dominate pain and neutralize its distraction.

When the aspirant desires physical health, he desires it for a purpose. He wants to lead a dedicated life. To make that dedication effective, there can be no trifling with such things, manners, environment, as raise barriers and thwart progress. The health which is desirable is not that of the man of muscular build or of the athlete which demands an all-exclusive attention, but rather a serenity in well-being which becomes ingrained in the man and which having reached its level remains there with hardly any extra effort, thus leaving the energies and the attention of the man free for employment elsewhere.

The maintaining of health depends on numerous factors, some of which can be summarized thus:

The careful selection of foods and drinks, dividing them into sattvic, rajasic and tamasic (see Chapter xvii of the *Gita*).

Living in places which afford fresh, clean air and which provide surroundings conducive to health of mind and of body.

Taking care to provide the appropriate recreation, the donning of clothes which suit the occasion and the demands of caution against conditions of weather.

The periodical and effective cleansing of the whole bodily system (the observing of silence and fasting are only two of several methods) and the maintaining of a healthy system for eliminating waste matter.

The keeping of the skin and breathing system unclogged and undamaged by avoiding excesses or harmful practices of a psycho-physiological nature.

The adopting of a few ascetic rules and the practising of restraint in matters connected with food, sleep, etc.

The keeping in check of emotions, desires, passions and cravings which have a directly injurious effect on certain organs of the body.

A working knowledge of polarities, of sympathies and antipathies which work in and upon the human body, and a recognition of the effects felt on the body by the phases of the moon.

An appreciation of the effects caused on the body by: (a) minerals, (b) herbs and plants, (c) water and water-contents of fruits, etc., and (d) meats, skins and furs of animals.

The effects of the exhalations of men, animals and places, and the power of talismans, charms and hypnotic influences.

The understanding of hazards to the brain and other parts of the

body through certain drinks and drugs.

The influence of the seasons as also of certain personal cycles.

The effects of sound and colour on the lives which make up the organism, and the recognition of dangers which lurk in crowded places.

These are but a few out of several factors which each student has to study for himself. Yet, the chief consideration must always be for the entity who is the dweller within the body. It is for him that the mansion is prepared for an incarnation. That mansion can be filled with *objets d'art* or with things which while away the idle hours, or again with those aids which the Soul may use to exalt itself. Health must therefore be sought not for enjoyment, not for the ease which it confers, nor for longevity where the thread of a useless life is stretched with hardly any chance for soul achievement. Perfect physical health is desirable only for the purpose of providing a ready tool to the master-hand of Soul. Service even in the ordinary worldly sense demands that the instruments to be used are such as are fit for attaining the maximum output and efficiency. How much more then must our responsibility be to see that we give the Soul instruments and vehicles which are the best that we can provide or make!

THE WAY to overcome disturbance, of course, is by mental and physical calmness; this should be maintained. Medical assistance should be used for the body at times, because the "mental attitude" brings about changes in the body — for the most part gradually — but which sometimes needs material aid in becoming co-ordinated; so do not despise medical aid should any need arise. Mr. Judge sought such aid when necessary, leaving to the physician the care of maladjustment.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

“READ, MARK, LEARN, AND INWARDLY DIGEST”

THIS OLD SAYING is very appropriate today, for we are all prone to read, or to listen, and pay no further attention to the ideas or information imparted to us. From the Theosophical point of view it is all the more necessary for us to change our method of reading. Skimming over the pages of a book — which often passes for “study” — is of no value to us and rather tends to fill the mind with *clichés*, mere empty words, which are often misapplied because they have not gone deep into our consciousness.

What does it mean, to “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest”? Taking it point by point, we may see if we can begin to change our method of observation of life in all fields of activity.

Reading and listening are methods by which various words or sounds are transmitted through the senses and sense-organs to the brain. Accuracy in recording and using the senses, therefore, is the first step. Patanjali attaches much importance in his aphorisms to accuracy in seeing, or listening, and recording, followed by the testimony of others to see if we have recorded correctly. The sense of sight and the sense of hearing must therefore be controlled by the user.

Having read or listened to the words, the next step is to “mark” them, to pay attention to them. Concentrated attention is necessary in order that the brain may record accurately and its attention may be directed to the true facts. We often hear the expression “in at one ear and out at the other.” This means that we have not “marked,” have not paid attention to, what we have been told.

The paying of attention is an important step, because we can hardly expect to make any headway if what we have learned is inaccurate. H.P.B. said in her *Five Messages*: “Learn, then, well the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation.” Why learn these doctrines? Surely the recognition of them as facts is necessary. But can we truthfully say that we have learnt them well, thoroughly? The ramifications of such learning are many, and if applied would revolutionize all our thinking as also make us more careful in generating fresh Karma.

The next stage is difficult but necessary — digesting inwardly, that is, meditating upon, thinking about, dwelling on a subject with the mind. Here it is good to remember what H.P.B. wrote in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. xlvi): “Every reader will inevitably judge the statements made from the standpoint of his own knowledge, experience, and con-

sciousness, based on what he has already learnt." We should realize that we have to go beyond what we have accepted as true and probe more deeply to get at a fuller, more universal aspect to the question. We all know that the tendency of the mind, when trying to understand something new, is to view it merely in terms of our existing knowledge, following an easy line of thought which perhaps makes us fly off at a tangent, so that we rarely get beyond speculating. Speculation is viewing the information in the light of our own experience and knowledge and is quite useless to us. Realizing that "the writer cannot do the reader's thinking for him" (Preface to *The Key to Theosophy*), we see why it is that to the mentally lazy or obtuse Theosophy will always be a riddle.

To reach beyond speculation or mere acceptance we need to realize that words and sounds are merely outer expressions of an idea. It is this fundamental idea or soul of the words that we have to reach in order to turn information into knowledge. To reach this inner basis it is absolutely necessary for us to apply what we learn. Only through application does the information become knowledge, become realized, and only then do we touch the universal aspect or soul of the information. Let us watch, therefore, if our application of what is learnt is in line with other aspects of the Teaching — whether they all fit into the puzzle of life.

We are given two hints as a basis for this inward digestion: the basis of our life and thought must be altruism, and we must be devoted to the Law. Hence the *Gita* says, "Seek this Wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility." The truth is, there to be uncovered by us; if we do not see it, it is our loss; the Teachings will not alter to fit into the framework of our ideas.

Inwardly digesting, we meditate, rising to contemplation and union with the soul of the words that we have read and studied. And we descend from those heights to apply that brilliant light of understanding in our daily life. What we need is more thinking and less reading; more attention to daily activities so that they become avenues of service to others; more and deeper devotion, not only to the Masters but also to the poor and suffering, to all men and creatures. Digesting the teaching of the unity of life, we can bit by bit dwell in the Eternal, bring out the highest in ourselves and in others, and lift up by our creative thinking the level of world thought.

PRAYER

PRAYER is a much misunderstood word and usually conveys the idea of some favour or boon sought from a God outside of ourselves. Even the dictionary defines it as a "supplication to God or persons." But who is God? With the exception of the materialists, all believe in God, either as a person, however high, or as a power, however divine, but outside of the human heart and of the universe. Theosophy teaches God to be the Supreme Spirit, omnipresent and omnipotent, the root and the source of all beings; and man is its crystal ray, a beam of immaculate light within the form of material clay. It is the highest privilege of man to commune with God because he is a self-conscious being. The kingdoms below man move in terms of natural impulse in accordance with the law of their own being, and that is their harmonious evolution. The human consciousness is a link between the divine and the personal, so man can choose to move in one direction or another, either to unite with the Supreme Self within or get victimized by his lower and personal self.

Prayer is the outpouring of the human heart in utmost humility and reverential gratitude for all the blessings of life. There is no thought of personal gain, no petition for personal favours, because God, from the Theosophical point of view, is also Law, universal and impersonal, which cannot be deviated from its own course by human petitions. As Lord Buddha advises us in *The Light of Asia*:

Pray not! the Darkness will not brighten! Ask
Nought from the Silence, for it cannot speak!
Vex not your mournful minds with pious pains!
Ah! Brothers, Sisters! seek
Nought from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,
Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruits and cakes;
Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
Each man his prison makes.

It is this wrong type of prayer that kills self-reliance and makes one dependent on priests and ceremonies, temples and churches. The right understanding of God and prayer enables one to become self-dependent on the basis of interdependence. As there is unity of life, so human solidarity is a fact, and each one is his brother's keeper and therefore responsible for his own thoughts, words and deeds.

True prayer is a yearning of the human heart, its ardent wish to

be united with its Divine Parent, to seek its guidance, and reflect its light in the daily affairs of life. This is the real significance of prayer.

Leaving aside the selfish ones who pray for their own gain and benefit, there are evil minds who wish harm to others. Fanatics of one orthodox religion look down upon their brothers of another religion and show enmity towards them without understanding the true meaning of religion as a binding force, a bond of unity between man and man. Wars have been fought in the name of religion! Opposing creeds express hatred towards one another and even wish for the downfall of their opponents. During the two World Wars, opposing Christian nations, the so-called followers of Jesus, the teacher of the Sermon on the Mount, prayed to the same God to bring them victory and defeat their enemies! This sort of prayer is really dangerous and can ultimately lead to black magic.

We have a very good story in *The Light of Asia* where the great Master taught the householder Singala the true kind of prayer. Singala was seen bowing to the earth and looking up to the heaven and in all four quarters, and while doing so, he scattered rice with both his hands. When Lord Buddha questioned him, he replied that this was the custom followed by his ancestors at every dawn to ward off evil from all quarters. This is a mechanical sort of a prayer condemned by all the great teachers, and so the great Lord advised him: "Scatter not rice, but offer loving thoughts and acts to all." And he told him to think of parents and teachers when he turned to the east and the south; of wife and children when he faced the west; of friends and kinsmen and all men when he turned towards the north; looking heavenwards he should think of the great saints, and with his head turned down towards the earth he should remember the lower kingdoms. And this was the correct way of shutting out evil. So it is really the thought and the devotion behind the uttered prayer that is more important. Thinking of all with a pure heart and wishing them well in the true spirit of harmony can alone establish peace and good-will on earth, and that is the correct way of praying or becoming worthy of relationship with the divine and the eternal.

In the Tenth Discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, mentioning his divine excellences Sri Krishna states: "Of words I am the monosyllable OM." Even one word rightly uttered with full understanding of its meaning and importance is better than a thousand words muttered without understanding. "Better than reciting a hundred verses of empty

words is the repeating of a single stanza hearing which one feels peace" (*The Dhammapada*, Verse 102). And Sri Krishna says that "the silent repetition of sacred texts" is the best form of worship. We have a similar statement in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus teaches: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." All the other great teachers have taught likewise and have indicated the futility of churches and priests. Madame Blavatsky, in her first monumental book, *Isis Unveiled* (II. 635) states: "The world needs no sectarian church, whether of Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, Calvin, or any other. There being but ONE Truth, man requires but one church—the Temple of God within us, walled in by matter but penetrable by anyone who can find the way; *the pure in heart see God.*"

It is purity that is of the utmost importance, purity of mind and heart, purity in thought, word and deed stressed by Lord Zoroaster. It is through supreme purity that one becomes worthy of relationship with the God within. God is truth, and the more an individual aspires after truth and lives up to the true and immortal ideas, the closer he comes to the realization of the SELF and the more firmly he is convinced of the fact of Universal Brotherhood. God is love, and the more we open our minds and hearts to the sufferings of others, the greater will be the expression of unity and harmony. "The more thou dost become at one with it, thy being melted in its BEING, the more thy Soul unites with that which Is, the more thou wilt become COMPASSION ABSOLUTE." (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 76)

Three definitions of Yoga are given in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. In the first place, it is called "equal-mindedness." Passing through the joys and sorrows of life, through success or failure, elation or depression, one has ever to preserve calmness and equipoise in the daily affairs of life. The second definition is: "Yoga is skill in the performance of actions." Some people are indifferent to their work; they work for money and do not have full interest in or love for their work. Skill comes only through the power of the Higher Self, the God within, and this requires the union of mind and heart. Each act then becomes a prayer. The poet Wordsworth calls duty the "stern Daughter of the Voice of God." It is stern only in the sense that it demands from each one his due, however unpleasant it may seem many a time. "Theosophy is the quintessence of duty," says H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*. One of the great Masters has stated: "Duty... is for us stronger than any friendship or even

love; as without this abiding principle which is the indestructible cement that has held together for so many millenniums the scattered custodians of nature's grand secrets — our Brotherhood, nay, our doctrine itself — would have crumbled long ago into unrecognizable atoms." This shows how the great teachers have valued duty as something sacred and holy, which, when performed with skill, unites one to his silent and supreme Self — and that, indeed, is true prayer.

There is a third definition of yoga given by Sri Krishna: "Know that . . . disconnection from union with pain is distinguished as yoga, spiritual union or devotion, which is to be striven after by a man with faith and steadfastly." Disconnection from union with pain is difficult. Whether the pain is physical or mental, whether it is heart-anguish or soul-starvation, it has to be calmly endured and patiently cured. And that is still another form of prayer bringing us closer and nearer to the God within.

The highest type of prayer is will-prayer. "The intensity of our ardent aspirations changes prayer into the 'philosopher's stone', or that which transmutes lead into pure gold. The only homogeneous essence, our 'will-prayer' becomes the active or creative force, producing effects according to our desire" (*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 68). But this has to be done with the purest of motives, realizing one's own responsibility to oneself and to humanity and dedicating oneself to the service of others. Mr. Crosbie explains in his *Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy* (p. 109): "Spiritual Will . . . is developed by true unselfishness, a sincere and full desire to be guided, ruled and assisted by the Higher Self, and to do that which, and suffer or enjoy whatever, the Higher Self has in store for one by way of discipline or experience." To command and perfect the Will is one's duty, and it leads to White Magic or true Wisdom. As H.P.B. states in summing up the ten Propositions of Psychology (*Isis Unveiled*, I. 590), "One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will."

THEOS

The word *Theos* means a god in Greek, one of the divine beings, certainly not "God" in the sense attached in our day to the term.

—*The Key to Theosophy*, p. 1

THERE ARE several statements in *The Secret Doctrine* which will support the etymology assigned to the word *theos* in the above quotation. The first one which comes to mind is in Vol. I (p. 2, fn.):

Plato proves himself an Initiate, when saying in *Cratylus* that *Theos* is derived from the verb *theîn*, "to move," "to run," as the first astronomers who observed the motions of the heavenly bodies called the planets *theoï*, the gods.

This was a particularly appropriate reference to give, for the *Cratylus* is precisely the book in which Plato deals with the correctness of names, or their conformity with the nature and excellence of the being, or person, they are supposed to represent. In the passage in question, which comes after the introductory conversation, Socrates proposes to Hermogenes that the discussion should first refer to those whose existence and nature are eternal, namely the gods, and how they may have come to be called *theoï*. He suggests that the most ancient of Greeks did not know any other gods than those known to the "barbarians" (foreigners): Sun, Moon, Earth, Stars, Heaven. And that, because they saw them all running round in a perpetual course, *theonta*, from this nature of "running," *theîn*, they called them "gods," *theoï*.

Madame Blavatsky amplified this further in *The Secret Doctrine* (I. 346) where she wrote:

It is the "Movers," the "Runners," the *theoï* (from *theîn*, "to run"), who do the work of formation, the "Messengers" of the manvantaric law, who have now become in Christianity the "messengers" (malachim); and it seems the same in Hinduism or early Brahmanism. For it is not Brahmâ who creates in the *Rig Veda*, but the Prajâpati, the "Lords of Being," who are the *Rishis*; the word *Rishi* (according to Professor Mahadeo Kunte) being connected with the word to move, to lead on, applied to them in their terrestrial character, when, as Patriarchs, they lead their hosts on the Seven Rivers.

According to present dictionaries of Ancient Greek, the verb *theio* means not only "to run," but even "to run fast," and, by extension, "to

fly," "to whirl rapidly," or even "to stretch in a given direction," all these meanings obviously confirming or reinforcing the above. Discussing the derivation of the word "God," Madame Blavatsky also states: "Its meanings and etymologies are as many as they are various."¹ It may therefore be appropriate to refer to another derivation of the word "*theos*," which connects it with the Greek verb *tithēmi*, meaning, in the literal sense, "to place, to pose, to set, to put down, to deposit," and figuratively, among other things, "to arouse, to engender, to suppose, to provoke." This derivation will be found in *Herodotus*, II.52 (Euterpe), as follows:

Formerly, the Pelasgians sacrificed all sorts of victims to the gods with prayer, as I was informed at Dodona, but they gave no surname or name to any of them, for they had not yet heard of them; but they called them gods, because they had set in order and ruled over all things. (Rev. Henry Cary's translation)

Dodona was a city of Epirus and famous for its temple of Zeus and the oldest of Greek oracles. Herodotus, who came approximately 50 years before Plato and was most probably also an Initiate (*cf. S.D.*, II. 395-96), gives us a derivation which contains essentially the same meaning as that of Plato, for the "setting in order" of chaotic matter is nothing else but causing it to move in orderly orbits, *i.e.*, in accordance with cyclic law. As for the Greek verb "*tithēmi*," it is derived in turn from the Sanskrit "*dádhāmi*," "I pose, I do." The connection between Sanskrit and Greek, now so well known, was extensively discussed by the famous Max Müller, who relates admiringly in *The Science of Language* (Fourth Lecture) that the Spanish Jesuit author-philologist Hervas (1735-1809) had already compared such words as *Theos* and *Deva* (*Catalogue of Languages*). Madame Blavatsky proceeds similarly when she states: "In ancient Greece, the word Zeus and *Theos* led to the Latin *Deus*."² Here we run into a bit of a problem, for the relationship Deva-Zeus-Theos-Deus is no longer so clear. According to R. Grand-saignes d'Hauterive (*Dictionnaire des Racines des Langues Européennes*), the Greek *Zeus* and the Latin *Deus* are both connected with the Indo-European root *dei*, which contains the idea of brilliance, as follows:

¹ "The Roots of Ritualism in Church and Masonry," THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, September 1946.

² *Ibid.*

First theme: *dei-wo*, luminous sky, considered as a divinity.

Sanskrit *deváh*, god; *divyáh*, celestial.

Greek *dios*, divine.

Latin *deus* (formerly *deivos*), god; *dius*, *divus*, *divinus*, divine.

Second theme: *dyew*, god of the luminous day.

Sanskrit *dyaúh*, luminous sky.

Greek *Zeus*, genitive *Dios* (for *Diwos*).

Latin Juppiter (from *Ju*, *pater*), genitive *Jovis*, *jovialis*, which gives *jeudi* (day of Jupiter) in French, Tuesday (day of Tius) in English, and *Dienstag* (day of Tius) in German, *Dienstag* being a popular etymology for *Ziestag*.

Third theme: *dyen* (accusative of the second theme), luminous day.

Latin *diem*, *dies*, day, with a great number of derivatives in the main European languages.

Thus, according to this system of etymology, it appears that *Deus* and *Zeus* do connect with *Deva*, but not with *Theos*, and this notwithstanding the apparent similarity between *Theos* and the genitive of *Zeus*, *Dios*. The root *Div* is the source of the double declination of the Greek *Zeus*, including certain "oblique" forms: Nominative *Zeus*, genitive *Dios*, dative *Dii*, and accusatives *Dia* and *Zêna* (from *Zên* or *Zan*=*Zeus*). Now, if we return to the *Cratylus*, we find Plato referring to the difficulties which arise from this duality, for he states that *Zeus* is a name which fits the father (of Tantalos) perfectly, but that this "is not easy to understand." This name is almost like a kind of sentence which would be cut in half, one part being used here and the other there:

... sometimes we call him *Zên* from *Zeus* and sometimes *Div*.

But these two parts, by uniting into a whole, manifest the nature of this God; the realization of which is exactly, as we say, the proper function of a name. For there is not, either for ourselves or for others, a being which is the principle of "living," *Zên*, to a higher degree than the Sovereign Lord, the king of all things. Hence this God is correctly named "he by whom," *di hon*, "life," *Zên*, belongs always to the living. But, as I say, this single name has been cut in two, by the *Div* and the *Zeus*.

While the word *theos* is not an element in this portion of Plato's treatment of the subject, it should be clear that beyond the etymological intricacies, *i.e.*, beyond the words and their variations as temporary forms, there is a metaphysical connection of the permanent concepts, and we may establish the analogy *Div-Zeus-Theos*=Life, Light, Motion, also remembering that "all these peoples have derived the name of 'god'

from their respective traditions, the more or less clear echoes of the esoteric tradition" (*The Theosophical Glossary*, p. 123). Alluding perhaps to such origins, Plato emits the opinion that "those who were the first to establish the names were not those of a gross mind, but rather those who were habitually dealing with high matters..." H.P.B. also takes us further than the outer shell of the word "god" when she points out (*Glossary*, p. 123) that as it begins with the letter "G" in so many languages, "there is an occult reason for this which only the students of esoteric philosophy and of the *Secret Doctrine*, explained esoterically, will understand thoroughly." And she adds: "...every letter had its manifold meaning. A symbol itself of a celestial being and objects, it was in turn represented on earth by like corresponding objects whose form symbolized the shape of the letter."

Thus, words are like bodies, ensouled by various levels of meaning, according to their physical, psychic and spiritual genealogies, and corresponding to low, medium and high purposes. Motion on the physical plane is an ultimate result of emanation, and transformation must lead to transmutation in the end. At this point, and as an example of "spiritualization of teachings," it may be proper to quote a few short passages from the Scholia of Proclus on the *Cratylus* of Plato:

... the Soul of the world gives life to altermotive natures; for to these it becomes the fountain and principle of motion, as Plato says in the *Phædrus* and *Laws*. But the demiurgus simply imparts to all things life divine, intellectual, psychical, and that which is divisible about bodies. No one, however, should think that the Gods in their generations of secondary natures are diminished; or that they sustain a division of their proper essence in giving subsistence to things subordinate; or that they expose their progeny to the view, externally to themselves, in the same manner as the causes of mortal offspring. Nor, in short, must we suppose that they generate with motion or mutation, but that abiding in themselves, they produce by their very essence posterior natures, comprehend on all sides their progeny, and supernally perfect the productions and energies of their offspring....

But we must conceive that their progressions are effected through similitude; and that there is one communion of essence, and an indivisible continuity of powers and energies, between the sons of Gods and their fathers.... Jupiter therefore proximately establishing a communion with this divinity, and being filled from him with total intellectual good, is very properly said to be the son of Saturn, both in hymns and in invocations, as un-

folding into light that which is occult, expanding that which is contracted, and dividing that which is impartible in the Saturnian monad; and as emitting a second more partial kingdom, instead of that which is more total, a demiurgic instead of a paternal dominion, and an empire which proceeds everywhere instead of that which stably abides in itself. (Translated by Thomas Taylor in *The Mystical Hymns of Orpheus*, pp. 171-172)

THE VICTORIOUS DISCIPLES

“Love one another,” said Jesus to those who studied the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

“Profess altruism, preserve the union, accord, and harmony of your groups, all you who place yourselves in the ranks of neophytes and seekers of the *one Truth*,” say other Masters to us. “Without union and intellectual and psychic sympathy you will attain nothing. He who sows discord reaps the whirlwind.”

Those who wish to succeed in theosophy, abstract or practical, should remember that want of union is the first condition of failure. But let ten determined theosophists unite themselves; let them work together, each according to his own way, in one or another branch of universal science, but let each one be in sympathy with his brother; let this be done, and we can answer for it that each member would make greater progress in the sacred science in one year than could be made in ten years by himself. In theosophy what is needed is emulation and not rivalry.

In real theosophy it is always the least who becomes the greatest.

However, the Society has more victorious disciples than is commonly supposed. But these stand aside and work instead of declaiming. Such are our most zealous as well as our most devoted disciples. When they write they hide their names; when they read garbled translations of sacred ancient books, they see the real meaning under the veil of obscurity that western philologists have thrown upon them, for they know the mystery language. These few men and women are the pillars of our temple. They alone paralyse the incessant work of our theosophic moles.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THEOSOPHIC "PEARLS" IN UNLIKELY PLACES

III.—"AN ESSAY ON MIND"

BY ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

IF EVER THERE WAS a born poet it was Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who began at the age of eight years or earlier to write verse and even then regarded poetry, as she said later, as "an object to read, think and live for." At the time of her death in her mid-fifties she stood higher in public esteem than her famous husband, Robert Browning, who was considered obscure and difficult. Of course, since then his star has risen steadily while hers has somewhat declined, partly because much of her work was inspired by her passionate devotion to the cause of Italian liberty in the 19th century, and also because of a strain of sombre piety, even at times morbidity, due to the circumstances of her earlier life. Yet many rank her as England's greatest woman poet, sensitive, noble, with a command of glowing utterance and rich imagery. Her wide range of culture in many languages — Greek, Hebrew, Italian, French and German — and her studies in philosophy and political history give her an impressive power, even though these very assets tend sometimes to become liabilities through weighing her down with learned lore.

This is already apparent in her long juvenile poem "An Essay on Mind," which she herself in later life called "pedantic" and which even admiring critics¹ have described as "thoroughly book-begotten," but which is a remarkable *tour de force* for a girl of 20, packed as it is with scholarly references and running to no fewer than 631 couplets. It is in the style of Pope (b. 1688, d. 1744), that stylist supreme of the Age of Reason, and altogether may seem a most unlikely source of any Theosophic pearls. Yet they are there none the less, partly because implicit in the subject (Mind), but more because Elizabeth was, as already remarked, a true poet, who, with a phrase, an image, a sudden insight or a moment's reflective musing, can make us forget her dry matter as she leads us into "the mystic paths of thought" with a sure guidance astonishing in one so young.

Elizabeth does not, as students of Theosophy would do, approach her subject in its dual aspect of higher mind and lower, and in fact treats it mainly on the *manasic* level throughout, for, brought up in the Anglican Church (though her later leanings were to a simpler form of

¹ Charlotte Porter and Helen A. Clarke, Editors of E.B.B.'s Complete Works.

worship), she would naturally ascribe all loftier thoughts and sentiments to "the soul." She does, however, differentiate between Mind's various powers, naming Reason, Judgment, Memory, Association, Imagination, and Genius. She seems to give pride of place to Reason — "Lean on Reason as your safest rule" — not, we may be sure, belittling Genius thereby (how could she, when all compact of it herself?), but probably aware that even Genius needs Reason's wise control, yet never making quite clear to us what Reason actually *is* (in her view of it) though she introduces the word 25 times!

She begins her study by noting the desire, natural to Mind, to investigate its own qualities, and considers the various dispositions of different minds, illustrating these with such a roll-call of famous names as at once reveals her wide reading. The inequalities of Mind perplex her, so much so that she has to appeal to it to be itself her teacher:

Thou thing of light! instruct my pen to find
Th' unequal powers, the various forms of Mind!

There is a phrase here that assures us that she will not proceed to track down Mind as mere evolving instinct. It is to her a "thing of light."

Though unable to find an answer to her question, "In equal men, why burns not equal fire?" she entertains no doubt that Mind is "the subtle cause, ethereal essence of all being," intended "to join, in mysterious union, the natural and the spiritual, the mortal and the eternal, the creature and the Creator."² This simple creed, which she was to hold to her life's end, divides her noticeably from her fellow-Victorian, the great scientist, Charles Darwin, born three years later than herself.

Having thus assigned Mind its rightful status she discusses the different types of poetic genius, of which "different causes wake the latent fire," and then turns to the historians, whose is the

Majestic task, to join, though placed afar,
The things that have been with the things that are!

Her criticisms of them are incisive and she sternly denounces their chief faults — prejudice, and the distortion of facts — observing how often

Private feeling, like the taper, glows,
And here a light, and there a shadow, throws.

Next, her scrutiny falls on Physics, "or, the doctrine of efficient causes" (as she calls it in her Preface), and while allowing that, if used

² From her Preface to the poem, in itself a striking piece of work.

aright, "fair beams the torch of Science," she warns the bearer of it that if

Yon mystic pilgrims of the starry way
No humbling lesson to his soul convey,

he will find "his heart grow narrow as his hopes grow high" and all his "splendid dream" will eventually "turn to death and dust."

Closing with a tribute to "divinest Newton," she then devotes herself "to higher themes," namely philosophy and poetry, awarding (needless to say) the palm to the latter, her own heavenly dower, and concluding with a fervent eulogy of Byron, the great poet whose life had just ended at Missolonghi, whither he had gone to fight in the cause of Greek freedom, and whose death had darkened the whole literary horizon.

Such is a brief summary of this lengthy poem, all of it extremely interesting to students of literature, not only as an unusual specimen of *juvenilia* but because its comments are valuable in themselves and its judgments sound, despite the writer's youth. But we are perusing it as students of Theosophy, less concerned with "the fair creations of the mental ray" than with that ray itself, so far as the 20-year-old poetess can expound it.

From the first she approaches Mind on a far higher level than the purely functional and as one whose scrutiny is not distracted by its mere activities. "The property of Mind," she states roundly, "we call an essence or a substance spiritual," and, as already noted, she puts Mind foremost in the evolutionary order instead of regarding it as something that emerged gradually from bodily organs as these became more sensitive and perfect.

... Spirit first inspired, pervaded all,
And Mind met Matter at th' Eternal call.

Of this she is convinced, though offering no explanation, and little wonder is it if she cannot. For, as H.P.B. points out, "A Life-Principle must remain for ever a mystery *on physical lines* . . . a VITAL FORCE independent of any physical or chemical processes," merely associating itself with the brain-cells for working purposes, but never merged with, far less originating from them. So Elizabeth dismisses with scorn those materialists who have misused

The modes of Mind to form the modes of clay;
And made, confusing each, with judgment blind,
Mind stoop to dust, and dust ascend to Mind.

How many such were to give tongue increasingly during her lifetime she could not, of course, foresee, but she had no doubt herself which came first. Only when "Mind's triumphant influence spoke, Dust owned the spell, and Plato's spirit woke" — Plato's and every other.

Therefore, man is for her "the child of Mind," and only through this divine birthright to be acclaimed "creation's lord." H.P.B., with fuller wisdom, says likewise: "Man, the most perfect of organized beings on earth, in whom matter and spirit are the most developed and powerful, is alone able to give a conscious impulse to that principle which emanates from him" (*Isis Unveiled*). Here the young thinker reveals her instinct for going straight to the heart of the matter, for what strikes her most sharply about Mind is its ability to know and examine *itself* and

...turn the powers of thinking back on thought —
With mind, delineate mind, and dare define
The point, where human mingles with divine.

Mind's range must be unifying. Elizabeth asserts this, but leaves "unity" undefined. Enough that she feels the need for it. "Dwell not in parts, for parts contract the Mind." She reiterates this conviction, "Mind is narrow'd, not inspired, by parts," while allowing that it is not easy to get away from the separative outlook, but rather

...most laborious to direct the soul
From studying parts to reason on the whole;
Thoughts, trained on narrow subjects, to let fall;
And learn the unison of each with all.

Her values are always spiritual. Therefore unity, for her, must bear a special meaning. She has cognized that "the scale of life is link'd by close degrees," and argues from this that if

In Nature's reign a scale of life we find,
A scale of knowledge we behold in Mind.

Mind can differentiate and appraise, can dwell on separate minutiae or make a comprehensive sweep. What she seems to be dimly groping for, surely Theosophy could have given her, a perception of the "unity of everything in the universe," based on "a knowledge at once scientific, philosophical and religious" — the very subject-matter of her poem — a unity "so universal and all-embracing that no man, as no speck, from gods and mortals down to animals, the blade of grass and the atom —

can be outside of its light."³

"By Truth determine what is true!" cries our young poetess. Truth is the other prime essential for Mind to work upon, but, as with unity, she does not state clearly what it signifies to her or what test she applies in order to recognize it. Instead, she seems rather naively to take its "unerring glance" for granted as part of the mental equipment of earnest students:

Let reasoning Truth's unerring glance survey
The fair creations of the mental ray —

thus again introducing "Reason," which indeed seems to be the aspect of Mind which commends itself most to her. But perhaps her assumption is less credulous than it seems, for the whole poem reveals her as an omniverous reader, one who not only acquires knowledge of many kinds but who reflects upon it deeply, and does not so great a master as Shankaracharya tell us that "The conviction of the Truth is seen to proceed from *reasoning* upon the salutary counsel of the Wise"?

Elizabeth speaks of Truth 19 times. Beyond all doubt, "Truth's fair tablet" was dear to her. She may not define, but she commends it with urgency, voicing her conviction that in every branch of learning and accomplishment "All names are bubbles but the name of Truth." Whatever her norm, it was a pure and lofty one, for she bids us use discrimination to ensure that no doubtful matter has been superadded by even the noblest sage:

If human faults to Plato's page belong,
Not ev'n with Plato willingly go wrong.

Among her references to Truth there occurs an interesting little phrase:

Yes! search for Truth — the glorious path is free;
Mind shows her dwelling, *Nature holds the key.* (Italics ours.)

Precisely what does this indicate? That the girl-philosopher has some awareness of the Law of Correspondence? If so, she must have gained it through her Greek studies, for it was not until many years later that H.P.B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled*: "Nature is triune: there is a visible, objective nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the exact model of the other, and its vital principle; and, above these two, *spirit*, source of all forces, alone eternal, and indestructible." Had Elizabeth read that, she would surely have found in it the "key" to the "dwelling"

³ U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 1. "Is Theosophy a Religion?" By H. P. Blavatsky.

of Truth; namely, Mind in its lower and higher aspects, deriving from and animated by the Spiritual Soul. She depicts Nature lovingly and gives us much fine imagery and many beautiful descriptive passages; but here we have a slight hint of a deeper comprehension, and there is also a metaphysical view of nature poetry in general:

Such poetry is formed by Mind, and not
By scenic grace of one peculiar spot,

which, taken together with her claim that

None read, but Poets, Nature's poetry!
Its characters are traced in mystic hand,
And all may gaze, but few can understand,

leads us on to what she seems to have elucidated for herself regarding the Archetypal.

On the lines of the Theosophical distinction between "the inner world of *noumena* and the outer shell of *phenomena*," Elizabeth has noticed how

... reflective Mind

Essence unseen in objects seen may find,
And, tracing whence her known impressions came,
Give single forms an universal name . . .
So, when particular sounds in concord rise,
Those sounds as *melody* we generalize;
When pleasing shapes and colours blend, the soul
Abstracts th' idea of *beauty* from the whole.

Here she manages ably to express the concept of ideation. She has learnt that "reason's radiance"

Abstracts from forms their hidden accidents,
And marks in outward substance inward sense,

and with her command of appropriate language is able to convey the concept to others. Her seed-thought comes to fruition in a passage of Robert Crosbie's: "Each and every manifestation, physical, psychical or otherwise, is an expression from within outwards; the 'eye of Spirit' is not limited to, nor deceived by, the manifestation, appearance or expression, but with that 'inner sight' turned upon the whole nature of the 'being' gazed upon, so to speak, has a full comprehension of the purpose and value of the appearance in expression."

As a poet, Elizabeth was blest with this "inner sight," and, directing it on poetry's self, she ponders this concept of ideation and again finds

the right imagery through which to make it understandable.

All poetry is beauty, but exprest
 In inward essence, not in outward vest.
 Hence lovely scenes, reflective poets find,
 Awake their lovelier images in Mind . . .
 Something less visible, and much more fair!

She is using here the very faculty that Mr. Judge would have us cultivate. He says: "Such attitude of mind must be attained as will enable one to look into the realities of things. . . . The mind . . . should be firmly established on the truth that Man is a copy of the Universe and has in himself a portion of the Supreme Being. To the extent this is realized will be the clearness of perception of truth" (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 175). This goes beyond Elizabeth's poetic capacity, or, rather, explains it as being a form of the true sight, the direct vision of the Ego, able to pierce through all appearances to "the intelligent soul or cosmic consciousness . . . which is the *Dhyan-Chohan*ic thought reflecting the Ideation of the Universal Mind." (*The Secret Doctrine*, I. 280)

While devoting so much of her "Essay" to mere mental productivity, albeit never without regard to eternal verities and values, Elizabeth is deeply aware of this great faculty of which H.P.B. and W.Q.J. speak.

. . . when the property of Mind we call
 An essence or a substance spiritual,
 We name her thus by marking how she clings
 Less to the forms than essences of things.

Here another quotation from Mr. Judge seems appropriate, this time from his Preface to the *Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*:

If we are but mind, or the slaves of mind, we never can attain real knowledge because the incessant panorama of objects eternally modifies that mind which is uncontrolled by the Soul, always preventing real knowledge from being acquired. But as the Soul is held to be superior to mind, it has the power to grasp and hold the latter if we but use the will to aid it in the work, and then only the real end and purpose of mind is brought about.

An apt image of Elizabeth's helps to illustrate this. She sees Mind as a mill standing firmly in the midst of the rushing current of sensory impressions.

Sensation is a stream with dashing spray
 That shoots in idle speed its arrowy way;

When lo! the mill arrests its waters' course,
 Turning to use their unproductive force:
 The cunning wheels by foamy currents sped,
 Reflection triumphs — and mankind is fed!

Do we hear a far-away echo of *The Voice of the Silence*? “True knowledge is the flour, false learning is the husk.” We well may, for Mind can be trained by practice to co-operate with the great Wheel of the Good Law, and then “the worthless husks it drives from out the golden grain, the refuse from the flour.”

There is yet another point on which Mr. Judge and the young Elizabeth think alike. Students of Theosophy will recall that injunction given in his *Letters That Have Helped Me* — “Let us use with care those living messengers called words.” Elizabeth too knows how greatly words matter (incidentally calling them “the vehicles of thought on wheels of sound”), and bids us

Spurn not words with reckless insolence,
 But still admit their influence with the sense,
 And fear to slight their laws.

One of the best passages in her poem treats again of that “essence” of which she is so conscious, seeing it this time as the content of thought which even the choicest words too often fail to embody perfectly.

The thought, howe'er sublime its pristine state,
 Is by th' expression made degenerate;
 Its spiritual essence changed, or cramped.

This leads her to muse on the possibility of a plane of being where no longer “thought must bend to words” —

Some kindred home for Mind — some holy place. . . .
 Where souls may see as they themselves are seen,
 And voiceless intercourse may pass between,
 All pure — all free! as light, which doth appear
 In its own essence incorrupt and clear! . . .
 One tongue, intelligence! one subject, truth!

Here again we find an affinity with Mr. Judge, for he describes “a natural power . . . used by one mind to convey to another . . . any idea or thought. In natural things we can take for that the vibration of the chord which can cause all other chords of the same length to vibrate similarly” (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 169). He speaks, too, of “synchronous vibration.” Elizabeth would surely have allowed that *these* words accurately

describe the "voiceless intercourse" she is dreaming of. Note her assumption that it will centre upon "one subject, truth."

She sets a high ideal for every student of Theosophy:

He leaves all vulgar aims and tries alone
To find the ways of Truth and make them known —

"alone" being used, of course, in the sense of "only"; she is not commending solitude, but on the contrary urges

...the interchange of thought with thought,
T' associate mind with mind, for Mind's own weal,

which is fully in line with Mr. Judge's warning that "the person who revolves selfishly around himself as a centre is in greater danger of delusion than anyone else, for he has not the assistance that comes from being united in thought with all other sincere workers." Also, she bids us discard "thoughts train'd on narrow subjects," and Mr. Judge gives the same advice: "Attempt to raise the mind from the mundane plane of petty thoughts to heavenly heights," reminding us how much harder it is to conquer distractions "if the mind be full of impressions, [for] there is also a self-productive power in it which takes hold of these seeds of thought and enlivens them."

Gifted as she was, Elizabeth was modest. Her Preface to her "Essay" is erudite, yet concludes in all simplicity:

I wish the subject of my poem had fallen into such hands
that the power of the execution might have equalled the vastness
of the design. . . . But as it is, while I may have often erred, I
have not clung willingly to error, and while I may have failed
in representing, I have never ceased to love Truth.

From first to last it is indeed obvious that she loved Truth. And in Truth's name she offers her readers this valediction:

... glad thine heart
With all that Mind's serener skies impart;
Where Wisdom suns the day no shades destroy,
And learning ends in Truth, as hope in joy.

Again we hear the echoes of the Orient, and again in the words of Shankara — "The Self, rising in the firmament of the heart — Sun of Wisdom, darkness-dispersing, all-present, all-supporting, shine forth and illumine us!"

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

There are countless people today, as there have been in the past, who are trapped by an obsession, phobia or other kind of compulsive behaviour we call a "habit." Habits run an exceedingly broad gamut — from the trivial, like facial tics, to the fatal excesses of drug addiction. Current research on how we are ensnared by habits and how we can break out of the maze is outlined by veteran science writer George A. W. Boehm in his article "Habits: Easy Come, Not-So-Easy Go." (*Think*, November-December 1969)

Many people are determined to do something about overeating, overdrinking, oversmoking, or overdoing something else. Yet in any given case, says the author,

the chance of immediate success is about the same: not very good. Once firmly established, a habit pervades so many corners of a person's psychic and physical being that to root it out is equivalent to slaying the hydra, the mythical nine-headed monster. . . .

Nevertheless, some people have been conspicuously successful in breaking some habits. They derive their methods largely from what psychologists have learned about the making of habits. The overall strategy is like running a film backwards. That is to say, when one finds out what psychological, physical and social factors support a habit, the effort then is to counter these with techniques that produce a contrary sort of conditioning.

There is much more to many habits than straightforward psychology can explain or hope to cope with. . . . Scientists still do not understand all the subtleties of addictions. . . .

Rational man would like to undo his own habits simply by saying to himself: "This is harmful to me. I will therefore stop it forthwith." Willpower, unfortunately, is seldom strong enough to make this approach effective. Nevertheless, people can often extinguish their own habits by carefully planned stratagems.

The tactic of swearing off "for today and for today only" is undeniably sound. It has worked wonders for members of Alcoholics Anonymous. And Bell of Donwood used this approach a few years ago when he cured himself of smoking. He admits he went through hell for a couple of weeks, but he made it one step at a time.

The same technique can be applied by a harried executive who, say, has fallen into the habit of losing his temper at the

slightest aggravation. By resolving repeatedly not to shout for the next hour, he can probably break the pattern of violence. It would help if he could also persuade his secretary or a colleague to commend him occasionally on his restraint.

There are many methods suggested for the breaking of habits, but the making of a deliberate and will-ful effort to set up an opposite habit to counteract the old one is something that has much to commend itself. The ancients taught that each act has a thought underlying it, and each thought makes a mental impression that we retain in ourselves. There is the law of the return of impressions of which Mr. Judge speaks thus:

... as we have the tides in the ocean ... so in man we have tides, which are called return of these impressions; that is to say, you do a thing once, there will be a tendency to repeat itself; you do it twice, and it doubles its influence, a greater tendency to do that same thing again. And so on all through our character shows this constant return of cyclic impression. ("Cyclic Impression and Return and Our Evolution": *U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 24*, p. 10)

Understanding this, we know that we can break a habit by implanting in ourselves an opposite impression. We shall then find that when the impulse to repeat a bad habit returns, it will have weakened somewhat because of the opposite impression which returns at the same time, for it is related to the old cyclic impression by association. The two impressions coming together will counteract each other "just as two billiard balls coming together tend to counteract each other's movements," as Mr. Judge puts it.

The December-January issue of *AV Times* (the monthly newspaper of the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection) outlines the recently evolved "humane alternatives" to experiments on living animals. The majority of these new research techniques have been developed by scientists themselves because of the imperfection and unreliability of using animals in experiments that relate to human health problems. It has been accepted for several decades that no animal species can compare with the human being; more, that no two animals even of the same species are identical, just as no two humans are the same in every respect. There has therefore been a swing away from the old practice

of using animals for all manner of experiments and towards the wider use of alternatives which offer more accurate and quicker results, besides being cheaper. There are, however, many diehards of the old school who have an almost traditional loyalty to the vivisection method.

The new humane alternatives can be summarized briefly as follows:

(1) Systems whereby intensive data processing can take place at high speed — such as by the computer. Computers have been used for some time in the testing of drugs for their toxic effects on human beings, as well as in the general study of physiological and psychological functions.

(2) Techniques that involve testing the effects of chemical agents or viruses on cultures made from animal or human tissues, part or whole organs, or cells. The action of all living human matter can thus be studied without recourse to the old method of using whole living animals.

(3) Electro-mechanical systems that simulate exactly various physical and psychological functions of human beings. These are complete substitute systems in themselves and can take into account an infinite number of variables. The disadvantage here is that these mathematical models as they are called can only be used to their best advantage by scientists who are trained in this work.

(4) The use of lower organisms that, because of their extremely rudimentary composition and short life cycle, are particularly suitable test-beds for a wide variety of trials. Numerous unicellular organisms have been used to screen anti-cancer agents while others are in the process of being investigated.

(5) The use of modern and sophisticated tools for greater exactitude and speed. This category includes also such items as human dummies that are now being used to study the effects of motor accident damage. Previously, it was common practice to use live animals in the study of impact injury.

Professor Soreya T. Aygün of the University of Ankara, who has spent some 30 years perfecting the cell, tissue and organ culture technique, is of the opinion that 90 per cent of the experiments still being carried out on animals could immediately be substituted by alternative methods.

The attention of readers is invited to H.P.B.'s article "Have Animals Souls?" reprinted in this issue.

An article by Galina Bashkirova in *The Times of India* for January 25 describes the experiments being conducted at the Heuristic Laboratory in the Moscow Institute of Psychology to understand subliminal perception.

Subliminal advertising, which has already been tried in America, is a technique of flashing an advertisement on a screen for a fraction of a second so that the image penetrates to the viewer's subconsciousness, though it makes no impression on his conscious mind. This new technique is described thus:

The standard film-projector speed is 24 frames a second. Each frame is a static image of part of an action. Run together, the images are perceived as continuous — say the lifting of an arm. But if, for example, on every 25th frame a totally unrelated image is flashed (which urges you to buy or do something) the mind retains the impression only subconsciously because of the speed of the shot. In other words, the subject remains unaware that he has seen an image unrelated to the rest of the film.

During the interval at film shows the audience walk out for refreshment and just point unconsciously at a particular soft drink, a particular brand of cigarettes or chewing gum — the very brand that the subconscious mind had just recorded in a split second without knowing of it in the conscious mind....

What is the basis of subliminal perception? So far, there is no scientific explanation.

Members of the laboratory say that the human brain has a double perception of reality: when man watches something, he sees only what is essential to him at any particular moment. The rest — the inessential — serves as a sort of background. But it does not mean that the background slips from his field of vision. It is also perceived, but unconsciously. That is why man can suddenly recall details of a scene he has witnessed but somehow paid no attention to....

Everybody possesses peripheral vision but it varies widely from individual to individual. Altogether some 30 per cent of adults and over 57 per cent of children are in the sensitive category.

Does this mean that subliminal suggestion fails to work on non-sensitives? So far, there is no definite answer.... More and deeper psychological investigations, both experimental and theoretical, are needed.

Besides its commercial use, subliminal projection is being experimented with in the educational sphere, to make the student "effortlessly assimilate material that he would otherwise have to spend a lot of time and effort on." In other experiments, sensitives prone to hypochondria and cardiovascular illness are being treated by suggestions from the screen that enter the mind subliminally.

Are not the experimenters in subliminal projection treading on dangerous ground? Is there not the possibility of its being used in the future as a means of unscrupulous brainwashing and indoctrination? Subliminal suggestion seems to be somewhat allied to the hypnotic technique inasmuch as it bypasses the normal barrier of visual awareness to inject itself, through the subliminal physico-astral fringe of sense perception, directly into the brain.

It is significant to note that suicides dropped by 20 per cent in Detroit during a recent newspaper strike. Investigators at the University of California School of Medicine believe that news of violence, sex, power and the like may influence people to take their lives. (*Science Digest*, January 1970)

It has been proved that crimes of violence reported in newspapers frequently supply the psychological impulse for other crimes by other persons. So it is with suicides. There are epidemics of suicide as there are epidemics of crime. Though there are other causes lying behind this, sensational details of suicide, murder, violence and other crimes that newspapers all too often wallow in spreading to boost their circulation do play a role in spurring on some unfortunates to go and do likewise. The responsibility of newspapers and other mass media is grave indeed.
