

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life

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PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY	145
THE THREE REALMS	148
PARACELSUS: THE GREATEST OCCULTIST OF THE MIDDLE AGES—I	152
WHOM WILL YE SERVE?	157
THE UNIFYING PRINCIPLE	161
THE WIDER OUTLOOK	165
THE HAVE LIVED BEFORE	169
THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	173

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

# सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

[This article by W. Q. Judge first appeared in *The Path*, July 1890.]

THE ethics of life propounded by Jesus are not different from those found in theosophy, but the latter holds in its doctrines a compelling power which is absent from Christianity and from those systems which require a man to be good for virtue's sake alone. It is not easy to practise virtue for the simple reason that we ought to do so, since the desire for reward is inherent in humanity, and is a reflection of the evolutionary law which draws the universe ever upward to higher points of development. A man reads the command of Jesus to turn the other cheek to the smiter, to resist not evil, to forgive without stint, and to take no thought for the morrow, and then—pauses. His next thought is that such a canon is wholly utopian, and would if followed subvert society. In this he is sustained by eminent authority as well as by example, for a great Bishop has declared that no state can exist under such a system.

Theosophic doctrine, however, on either the selfish or spiritual line of life, convinces that the moral law must be obeyed. If we regard only the selfish side, we find that when people are convinced that evil done in this life will be met with sure punishment in another reincarnation, they hesitate to continue the old careless life when they lived for themselves alone.

Hence practical theosophy must enter into every detail of life in our dealings with others and our discipline of ourselves. It reminds us that we should be more critical of ourselves than of others, that we must help all men if we are to be helped ourselves. And herein the theosophist may escape the accusation of selfishness, for if in desiring to lay up for a future incarnation a store

of help from others by giving assistance now himself, he does so in order that he may then be in a still better position to help humanity, there is no selfishness. It is the same as if a man were to desire to acquire this world's goods in order to help those dependent on him, and surely this is not selfish.

The practical theosophist adds to his charitable deeds upon the material plane the still greater charity of giving to his fellow men a system of thought and life which explains their doubts while it furnishes a logical reason for the practice of virtue. He extinguishes a hell that never could burn, and the terrors of which soon faded from the mind of the sinners; but he lights the lamp of truth and throws its beams upon the mortal's path so that not only the real danger, the real punishment, can be seen, but also the reward and compensation.

The civilized man cannot be guided by fear or superstition, but reason may take hold of him. Theosophy being not only practicable but also reasonable as well as just, its doctrines are destined to be those of the civilized man. They will gradually drive out the time-worn shibboleths of the theologian and the scientist, giving the people of coming centuries a wisdom-religion deeply-based and all-embracing.

Were theosophical practice universal, we should not see the unjust judge plotting beforehand with the officials of a railroad company about the decision he should render, nor the venal public officer engaged with the judge and the officials in arranging the virtuous protest to be offered in court against the foreordained decree, for both would fear to rouse a cause which in their next life might issue in unjust accusation and punishment. Nor would men save their lives, as now they often do, at another's expense, since in succeeding incarnations that person might be the means of depriving them of life twice over. The rich man who now hoards his wealth or spends it on himself alone would not be thus guilty, seeing that, as compensation in another life, his friends would forsake him and nature seem to withdraw subsistence.

The practical theosophist will do well if he follows the advice of the Masters now many years in print, to spread, explain, and illustrate the laws of Karma and Reincarnation so that they may enter into the lives of the people. Technical occultism and all the allurements of the Astral Light may be left for other times. Men's thoughts must be affected, and this can only be done now by giving them these two great laws. They not only explain many things, but they have also an inherent power due to their truth

and their intimate connection with man, to compel attention.

Once heard they are seldom forgotten; and even if rebelled against they have a mysterious power of remaining in the man's mind, until at last, even against his first determination, he is forced to accept them. The appreciation of justice is common to all, and the exact justice of Karma appeals even to the person who is unfortunate enough to be undergoing heavy punishment; even if, ignoring justice, he does good in order to make good Karma, it is well, for he will be reborn under conditions that may favour the coming out of unselfish motive.

“Teach, preach, and practice this good law for the benefit of the world, even as all the Buddhas do.”

—QUILLIAM

IN general, all the matter visible or held in space still unprecipitated, has been moulded at one time or another into forms of all varieties, many of these being such as we have now no idea of. The processes of evolution, therefore, in some departments, now go forward with greater rapidity than in former ages, because both *Manas* and matter have acquired facility of action. Especially is this so in regard to man, who is the furthest ahead of all things or beings in this evolution. He is now incarnated and projected into life more quickly than in earlier periods when it consumed many years to obtain a “coat of skin.” This coming into life over and over again cannot be avoided by the ordinary man because Lower *Manas* is still bound by Desire, which is the preponderating principle at the present period. Being so influenced by Desire, *Manas* is continually deluded while in the body, and being thus deluded is unable to prevent the action upon it of the forces set up in the lifetime. These forces are generated by *Manas*, that is, by the thinking of the lifetime. Each thought makes a physical as well as a mental link with the desire in which it is rooted. All life is filled with such thoughts, and when the period of rest after death is ended, *Manas* is bound by innumerable electrical magnetic threads to earth by reason of the thoughts of the last life, and therefore by desire, for it was desire that caused so many thoughts and ignorance of the true nature of things.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## THE THREE REALMS

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. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not.

—*Isis Unveiled*, II, 587-88

THEOSOPHY teaches that everything existing in the world of matter, be it a lump of clay, a blade of grass, or a planet, has three distinct aspects, and can therefore be viewed from three distinct angles of perception, namely, the physical, the astral and the spiritual. These are planes which differ one from the other, and the forces functioning in each, are of a totally distinctive quality. It is important to grasp the implications of this proposition because it is just as futile to judge the astral and spiritual realms by a reference to the physical as to try to understand the force of steam by studying the properties and behaviour of ice.

The illusion persists that for the man of the present scientific age there can exist no mysteries in Nature which cannot be revealed by the telescope, the microscope and the thousand and one gadgets of the modern laboratory. Yet Oriental psychology asserts that beyond the physical lie two important planes of the occult world, which cannot be brought within the range and operation of instruments that only intensify or deepen the physical senses. The ordinary eye, strain as it may, cannot discern unaided the minute yet exquisitely proportioned lives which throng the air or exist in a drop of water. The simple physical organism of the eye denies that possibility. For the less advanced in knowledge, to whom lens devices are unknown, the whole micro-organic world is non-existent, and they will vehemently oppose all efforts to "educate" them into a recognition of that which their senses have not cognized. So too with persons to whom the norm of the physical senses (aided by instruments) provides the only standard of judgement. For them the super-sensuous world does not exist, notwithstanding the testimony of the sages of all times; and its rediscovery needs must await the awakening in them of a whole new set of senses.

Yet the proposition that the astral plane exists is not so completely alien to human experience that reason cannot admit the possibility of its existence. The psychic inner world has at times broken through into the physical in various manners, and the manifestations of spooks and phantoms are not the only proofs

of it that we possess. Records show that rare sensitives have at all times been able to touch this inner world of forms and bring back its message to us.

Leaving aside the evidence of the experiments with extra-sensory perception, a stone in the hands of a psychometer yields a type of knowledge which no extension of the physical senses can extract. To the sensitive, that stone narrates history as it passed before it for centuries, and it reveals its record of memory to him who has the astral senses sufficiently awakened to read it. If further proof be needed, we have it in the record of the benign or the nefarious influence traditionally ascribed to precious stones and plants; in the "atmosphere" of a place and in the mediumistic phenomena of Spiritualism, to say nothing of phenomena deliberately produced by those who know. Whence the influence in stone and herb and edifice? Whence the talismanic property of an object? The scientists have no answer and none exists in modern writings save in the philosophy of Theosophy and in the records of ancient Oriental psychology.

A further proof of the existence of the inner world, one, moreover, which is within the reach of any normal observer, is that which is furnished by dreams. In sleep we seem to see and hear and feel as vividly as with the physical senses. The somnambulist walking in his sleep has been known to retain his balance on ledges so narrow as to be impossible of traversal by the normal man with the ordinary physical senses. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* was suggested by a dream. Tartini heard his "Devil's Sonata" in a dream and, trying to reproduce it, forgot the finale. Two years later he dreamt the same dream and this time he could recollect the whole of it upon waking. Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" had also its origin in the world of dreams. Whence the inspiration to the artist and the poet? What senses did they use? For the unbiased mind, there is ample proof from the ordinary occurrences of daily life to demonstrate the presence of the astral, and these happenings need not be lightly brushed aside.

But the astral realm, however hidden and fascinating it may be, is still not the only hidden aspect of Nature. Theosophy asserts that behind the changing shadows of the astral and the physical worlds lies the unchanging light of the spiritual. If divinity is omnipresent, it is to be seen within any and all forms. It is the primary, motivating aspect behind the physical and the astral; and the forces which either of these two worlds manifest only condense in grosser forms of matter that which resides in the

highest state of etherealized substance. To put it in another manner, any form of matter has within itself three types of substances which may be called the refined, the subtle and the gross; and in each of these function respectively the spiritual, the astral and the physical forces. Any form, therefore, has its roots in the divine, archetypal world, and its true essence or *tattwa* becomes known only when its pedigree—physical, astral and spiritual—is known. Therefore, the whole of Nature is sometimes compared to a treasure-house sealed from view by the triple lock of the divine mysteries.

Each of these three major departments of Nature is governed by its own laws, has its own state of consciousness which is peculiar to it, and requires a whole set of senses which function in that department and in no other. Some persons down the ages have, in their desire to fathom the secrets of Nature, delved into alchemy and chemistry and into the higher departments of the sciences of sound, colour and numbers as of glyphs and symbols and ceremonial magic. Though some of these have penetrated a certain distance into the Occult, they have invariably failed to gain spiritual knowledge; and the reason for their failure becomes a warning signal to others who seek for a knowledge of that which transcends the physical.

Theosophy asserts that unless the spiritual basis be known, the astral becomes more of a snare than a help in the deciphering of the Book of Knowledge. And the failure to grasp this essential basis has not always led only to a mere negation of knowledge; it has in many cases led to mental aberration, moral ruin and a total disruption of physical health. For, in the quest after knowledge the person unleashes not only a physical power but also a moral force which either moves to failure under the propulsion of a hunger for personal stature or which moves towards success under the aspiration to live to benefit mankind. Even a mere tyro in science will admit that behind any form, however inert, there lies a force or a consciousness that holds that form together. The heart of Nature throbs as does the human heart, but scientists, stumbling upon this vital life force, have failed to trace the intelligence that propels it towards evolutionary progress. The nebulous and fiery mass of the Milky Way produces a star or a comet. Why and how it does so is as little known as, for instance, the pattern which the embryonic life follows for the production of the future physical form. The conscious movement of this life force has to be recognized, and with it must be recognized the chief factor governing any force—the omnipresent yet conscious

working of the great law within each separate form of life.

The scientist carrying on research, say in nuclear physics, does not regard the force of desire that motivates his research as a factor to be considered. He wants to open up one more secret of Nature—be it the force locked up in the atom or in the solar ray. Maybe he seeks knowledge for its own sake. Yet, if the force of altruism be lacking, his efforts court frustration if they do not bring destruction. It is his motive which anon curses and anon blesses. If the love for universal good be lacking in him, his efforts are but too likely to turn to dust and ashes and his laboriously won knowledge to be carried away at the next great upheaval of civilization.

When the vast synthesis of manifested life is seen and felt, then must arise the desire to ask in all humility: What is the Great Purpose that Nature serves? Where lies the Master Plan? Who are they who guide the impulse of Nature and lead it unerringly towards its goal? Theosophy asserts that there exist the Knowers of Knowledge, Those who help Nature and work on with her, and Nature regards Them as her Creators and makes obeisance. One of these Adepts has pictured for us the qualifications of the true investigator of Nature. Says *Light on the Path*:

Desire possessions above all.

But those possessions must belong to the pure soul only, and be possessed therefore by all pure souls equally, and thus be the especial property of the whole only when united. Hunger for such possessions as can be held by the pure soul, that you may accumulate wealth for that united spirit of life which is your only true self.

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CULTURE is the spiritual experience of a nation. This includes too the individual experience of people, of creators and non-creators. The spiritual experience of a nation is the experience of existence. It involves all arts, all forms of intellectual activity, society's mentality and its purpose. Generally speaking, culture is a sense of one's existence as part of a united existence. It is a feeling of the epoch, of the times. . . .

The issue of preserving culture has never been so important as today. The fact is, we live at a time which is fraught with the threat of global annihilation. What is culture, in the final analysis? Culture is the humanization of man. The purpose of culture is to make man equal to what he is, which he often tends to forget.

—YURI NAGIBIN

## PARACELSUS

### "The Greatest Occultist of the Middle Ages"

#### I

[Geoffrey West's study on the life and mission of the physician-Occultist, Paracelsus, called by H.P.B. "the greatest Alchemist of the age," was published in two parts in *The Aryan Path* for February and March 1934. We reprint here the first part; the second will appear next month.—Eds.]

THE modern study of Theosophy, for the West at least, begins, and in a sense ends, in the work of H. P. Blavatsky. To those teachers who went before her, she has done more than anyone to draw our attention. And she has had, as yet, no successor.

Thus, while in essence Theosophy is universal beyond localization, it comes to us in a specifically Eastern form, and, as such, one which the average, even the average intelligent, European finds so intensely disturbing to his whole mode of thought that his inclination is to reject it out of hand. True, there are increasing signs today of a widespread change or development of outlook. The existence and power of psychic and spiritual factors, the validity of a knowledge and wisdom anterior to Francis Bacon and even Aristotle, are no longer denied with nineteenth-century confidence even by the so-called trained scientist. Yet these tendencies must develop far before anything approaching the Theosophical standpoint becomes widely acceptable, and meanwhile it is inevitable that the casual observer should tend to attach doubt if not downright disbelief to almost all its most eminent exponents through the ages. For every one of them, regarded from the strictly Western point of view, was odd, dabbled in the marvellous, taught the incredible, performed the impossible. These trailing clouds of glory, warrants of power for him who believes, the sceptic deems but the dubious clammy cobwebs of impostorship. And yet, somehow, the conviction persists of their understanding, insight, achievement, knowledge. Self-assured investigators may "expose" them again and again—and still they stand, to demand, and to receive, attention.

Regarding the universe as it is depicted to him by the modern astronomers and physicists, man shrinks to a bewildered atom amid these cold immensities, stoical or whimpering in his fearful loneliness. He seems to bear the burden of all time and space, indeed of eternity, upon his single shoulders. Western science

proffers him no key. In its confessed failure to describe the photon, we have the analogue of its failure to describe being. Certain factors (speed) can be given only by omitting other factors (mass)—or *vice versa*. Analysis, in the last resort, must always fall short. What then? one asks, and turns to find Theosophy whispering of a key whose essence is a knowledge not of the intellect but of the being, an act not of a partial but of a total perception, suggesting that it is the saint rather than the scientist who is the ultimate “seer” of the true nature of reality, for he alone is fully attuned *as an organism* to perceive organically the object of attention, whatever it may be.

We ask: Were these Theosophical teachers, bearing the reputation and seeming to the first glance the very figures of impostors, really of this higher calibre? Not only, what did they teach, but what were *they* that we should listen to them? Let us take, say, Paracelsus, called the Father of European Occultism; such diverse eighteenth-century personages as the Comte de Saint-Germain, Mesmer, Louis Claude de Saint-Martin, and Cagliostro; and last, and inevitably, H. P. Blavatsky. Let us seek to see them in some sort as they truly were, with understanding eyes; and consider what significance they hold for us today, and for the future development of Theosophy in the West.

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Paracelsus—why, and how justly was he termed the Father of European Occultism? Wide factors are involved in the answering of such a question. Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim—he adopted the name of Paracelsus at the age of seventeen—was born at a critical, in fact decisive, moment of the world’s historical and spiritual development. The Renaissance was spreading its ferment over Europe, with the wave of the Reformation close behind. New discoveries, new curiosities, new ideas were active in every field of thought and action. The modern world was dawning after the long night of the Dark Ages.

The previous thousand years had been dark indeed. The bright illuminations of Alexandria and the East, of Rome even, had been persistently and ruthlessly stifled by an all-powerful Church whose lust for temporal power had blinded its spiritual understanding. The torch of Neoplatonism raised by Ammonius Saccas in the third century was extinguished in Alexandria with the mob-murder of Hypatia in 415, and before the end of the sixth century its last reflection seemed dead in the wider world. Simply, it vanished, for over nine hundred years. Then, suddenly, we

find it in revival, even before Paracelsus. How had it survived to emerge after all these centuries? What ark had borne it safely across this protracted flood? For answer we must look to the persistence of the specifically Kabbalist knowledge, Jewish in form but of a more ancient and wider origin, which remained a national possession, a traditional wisdom passing from teacher to student, initiate to initiate, "face to face and mouth to ear," in Palestine, in Egypt, in the Near East, then more and more widely over Europe as the Jews were scattered westward. From the twelfth century forward there were known to be Kabbalist schools in Spain, Italy and Germany at least. It was thus that the essential Hermetic knowledge, directly deriving from the teaching of Simeon ben Yochai but clearly allied both to that of Ammonius *and* to the Gnosticism of Simon Magus, was never lost, though often distorted, misunderstood, and misapplied.

In the strict sense Paracelsus taught nothing new; but very little study of the "alchemical philosophers" who preceded him is necessary to realize that. Practically without exception his main principles were the common possession of the other outstanding occult initiates of his own day. On the face of the facts there is no particular reason why his teacher Johannes Trithemius, or Cornelius Agrippa, his fellow-pupil under Trithemius, should not have achieved as he did. Madame Blavatsky has declared Trithemius to be the greatest Kabbalist of his day, and he was a master of the arts of magnetism and telepathy, magic and alchemy. Agrippa too had both wisdom and great energy.

Paracelsus, unlike either of them, was primarily neither scholar nor mystic but physician. He lived and died—whether the latter by violence or disease—a doctor. Perpetually questing, in Browning's words, "to comprehend the works of God, and God himself, and all God's intercourse with the human mind," he applied his knowledge, as he won it, first and foremost to the art of healing. His purpose and his task led him into many strange paths, but he forsook neither.

His comparatively brief life—he died at forty-eight—falls into three periods, the first of youth's dedication to an aim, the second of conscious pupillage culminating in attainment of understanding, the third of the master, the man of knowledge speaking with authority, demonstrating his powers in action and teaching with tongue and pen. And in each phase he was a wanderer, without—once boyhood passed—a home, poor in friends though with, alas, no lack of the harsh coin of others' hatred. He was born in 1493 near Zurich in Switzerland, but was only nine when his father, the distinguished doctor Wilhelm Bombast von Hohenheim, was

appointed town-physician at Villach in Carinthia, whither the two of them, for Theophrastus was an only child and his mother was already dead, went to live. There he had his first schooling, but when sixteen returned to Switzerland to the University at Basle. Later he studied at Wurzburg as the pupil of Trithemius, and then in the laboratories of Sigismund Fugger, a noted alchemist, at Schwarz in the Tyrol, where he wrote his earliest work.

Clearly his transcendent aim was fixed, but, it soon appeared, he had to follow it in his own way. He had in boyhood been his father's constant companion, accompanying him upon his medical visits and learning from him both theory and practice of chemistry, alchemy, surgery and medicine generally. And having thus had his first lessons in, as it were, the world, he never took kindly to the study. Scholastic methods he found pedantic, unprofitable. He was never a reader of books, save "the great open book of nature, written with the finger of God." Like all the great figures of the Renaissance, he relied upon his own living perceptions: while he could recognize the profound qualities of such a teacher as Trithemius, the world was, first and last, his ultimate laboratory.

In this assurance, in 1516, aged twenty-three, he deliberately set forth as a pilgrim upon the roads of Europe, of which in the next five years he left little unvisited, travelling unburdened, learning as life might teach, and despising no knowledge whatever its source. He passed in turn through Vienna, Cologne, Paris, Montpellier (very stronghold of orthodox medical opinion), Italy, Spain, England, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, Bohemia, Poland, Transylvania, Wallachia, Croatia, and the Balkans, whence he entered Russia, penetrating as far as Moscow. In Russia he became acquainted, either as prisoner or guest, with the Tartar ruler, and accompanied his son to Constantinople in 1521. There he is said to have lived for some months in the house of a great occultist, under whose tuition he received "the Philosopher's Stone"—his final initiation into that higher occult and spiritual understanding which thenceforward he owned in higher degree than any other Western student of his age.

Who was this instructing occultist? Some would say Solomon Trismosinus, a reputed initiate whose very existence, however, some well-informed students of the period would deny. It has also been declared that Paracelsus himself penetrated to India and even Tibet, but he himself stated explicitly: "I visited neither Asia nor Africa, although it has been so reported." Presumably the basis of the legend is the extent of his knowledge, and its

consonance with Eastern teachings, but he had his teachers, and—truth knows no geographical limitations. He did in fact say that “all Wisdom comes from the East; from the West we can expect nothing good,” but H. P. Blavatsky on the other hand suggests that identical teachings do not necessarily derive one from another, “for an eternal truth may as well be recognized by one seer as by another.”

He was now a master, in the realms alike of occult knowledge and medical practice—the one implied the other. But his wanderings were no more ended, and one might almost say that his troubles were only beginning. All not simply blinded by prejudice could not but recognize him as a truly distinguished physician, and his powers were manifest in his seemingly almost miraculous cures; but these very things roused professional jealousy against him wherever he went, and he could not long settle in any place, to draw about him a circle of student disciples, before his very life was threatened and he was forced to fly. (Admittedly his vigour and bluntness in controversy, or in denouncing the laziness and ignorance of the doctors as a whole, and his quite evident contempt, did nothing to allay their resentment!) He had thus to leave Bohemia, Poland, Wurttemberg, Strassburg, Basle (where he had been appointed town physician and professor of medicine in the University), Nuremberg, and other places. For a while he was reduced to absolute poverty, possibly relieved in 1537 by receiving some property from his father who had died in 1534. Not until the spring of 1541 did he find, at Salzburg where he was welcomed by the Duke Ernst of Bavaria, another occult student, what might have been a home. But his rest was brief, for he died in the following September, murdered at last, some have said, by his old enemies, though other evidence suggests a natural death from an incurable disease contracted in the course of his wanderings.

—GEOFFREY WEST

*(To be concluded)*

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WE discover in ourselves what others hide from us, and we recognize in others what we hide from ourselves.

—VAUVENARGUES

## WHOM WILL YE SERVE ?

Of all the duties, the principal one is to acquire the knowledge of the supreme soul (the spirit); it is the first of all sciences, *for it alone confers on man immortality.*

—*Manu*, XII, 85

ARE we then as spirit beings not immortal?

Two ideas have to be grasped in this connection. First, in essence, as rays of the Universal Soul, we are eternal, changeless, ever-existing, but as personalities we have to acquire immortality. Secondly, though as spiritual pilgrims we are immortal, we are not conscious of that immortality, and the goal of evolution, the aim of our long pilgrimage, is to live a *conscious* existence in Spirit.

H.P.B. explains in *The Key to Theosophy* that, for the terrestrial personality, immortality is conditional. She writes:

Your spiritual "I" is immortal; but from your present self it can carry away into Eternity that only which has become worthy of immortality, namely, the aroma alone of the flower that has been mown by death.

From the above statement it becomes clear that our wish should be to live in such a way that all our acts will help to feed the spiritual "I" with that nectar of life, "Amrita's sweet waters"—the food which gives immortality. But the mere wish to live wisely, to think nobly, is not enough; we shall have to go about it scientifically. In the above quotation from the Code of Manu we are told that the acquirement of the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit is the first of all sciences. In the *Bhagavad-Gita* Krishna calls it the "Kingly Knowledge," the "Royal Mystery," the direct knowledge or spiritual perception of the Highest Self in us as being a ray of the Supreme Spirit, and thinking and acting from that basis. That true part of our nature is beyond the intellect; it cannot be known by a reasoning process, by the rationalization of the finite mind. To contact and have a glimpse of the "Eternal Man" we must first learn to put aside our emotions and intellectualism, use our intuition and "soar beyond illusions," endeavouring to raise our consciousness to the plane of the Real, the plane of the deathless Self.

Thus the first step is to turn within and practise meditation, to seek communion with the inmost Self, trying to bring ourselves within the influence of its divine radiance. For, we may recognize intellectually that we are immortal in essence, that "we are outwardly creatures of but a day, within we are eternal," but unless

we get some kind of first-hand knowledge of the fact, a glimpse of the true Light within, we shall not gain the required confidence, certainty and faith to proceed in our quest of Self-Knowledge. Constant practice in meditation and devotion to the task we have undertaken become necessary. "The kingly science and the kingly mystery is devotion to and study of the light which comes from within." We have to provide the necessary conditions which will enable the inner Light to manifest. Through devotion we must strive to open ourselves to the eternal, identify ourselves more and more with the spiritual forces of life and then persevere in the practice to centre ourselves in the higher aspect of our being, not only at the time of meditation, but throughout the day. Mr. Judge has said:

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

In this process of spiritual development, we need to exercise our will-power. And in proportion to our recognition and realization of the Higher Self, the spiritual Will is aroused and energized—that indomitable will of which Longfellow has written:

The star of the unconquered will,  
He rises in my breast,  
Serene, and resolute, and still,  
And calm, and self-possessed.

We need to affirm that we *are* the Immortal Man, to assume a firm position that our Higher Self is the only reality, and constantly direct our mind towards that truth. "Arouse, arouse in you the meaning of 'Thou art That.' Thou art the Self," wrote Mr. Judge (*Letters*, p. 136). And then cultivate dependence upon the Supreme Spirit, reliance upon the Higher Self.

Rely within yourself on your Higher Self always, and that gives strength, as the Self uses whom it will. (*Letters*, p. 139)

Give up in mind and heart all to the Self and you will find peace. (*Ibid.*, p. 138)

But we must not only turn towards the higher aspect of our being; simultaneously our attention must be directed to the purification and control of the lower self. Unless we deliberately work to overcome its animal passions and quiet the turbulent mind, we shall never succeed in separating ourselves from it.

...the man who has not first turned aside from his wickedness, who is not calm and subdued, *or whose mind is not at rest*, he can never obtain the Self, even by knowledge. (*Letters*, p. 36)

Our task thus becomes twofold: the cultivation of the higher nature or the development of intuition, and the purification, subjugation and control of the lower self. The obstructions that hide the vision of the Self within have to be removed: the shadows of the moving passions, the veil of egotism, the cobwebs of the lower mind. But once the link with the Higher Self has been established, the undertaking to subdue and conquer the animal man becomes less difficult, for the lower can be subdued only through the higher.

The goal of the "Kingly Mystery," says Mr. Crosbie, is "seeing and knowing and feeling and acting *universally*" (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 225). Turning within and dwelling even for a few minutes every day upon our Higher Self, lifting our consciousness even for a short moment to a higher plane of life, will give us not only inner peace and energization but will also enable us, through that experience, to look down upon the lower personal self, viewing its daily actions with impartiality, noticing its virtues and weaknesses, guiding it to think and act universally, for the Higher, urging it on to a life of "noble deeds, days well-spent, years of holy striving." One of the Masters once called such admonitions from above "whisperings of the Buddhi to the Manas." It is by such efflux and influx, aspiration and inspiration, that *Antaskarana*—the path or bridge between the immortal Higher Self and the lower personal self—is built, and man is drawn higher and nearer to the world of the Real, closer to the Heart of things. H.P.B. wrote in *The Theosophical Glossary*:

It [*Antaskarana*] serves as a medium of communication between the two, and conveys from the Lower to the Higher Ego all those personal impressions and thoughts of men which can, by their nature, be assimilated and stored by the undying Entity, and be thus made immortal with it, these being the only elements of the evanescent *Personality* that survive death and time. It thus stands to reason that only that which is noble, spiritual and divine in man can testify in Eternity to his having lived.

One more thought on the subject: H.P.B. says in *Isis Unveiled* that "all who labour for the good of the race, forgetful of mean self," become immortal (I, 66); and *The Voice of the Silence* expresses the same idea: "To reach Nirvana one must reach Self-Knowledge, and Self-Knowledge is of loving deeds the child"

(pp. 33-34). Devotion to the interests of others, the giving of ourselves in service of our fellow men, is the way to immortality, the way to the Great Immortals, whose consciousness or perception of Self, as the Self of all creatures, has no break in its continuity. They have attuned Their Hearts and Minds to the great mind and heart of all mankind. Out of "boundless pity and compassion for the world of deluded mortals" They have pledged Themselves to live and labour for suffering humanity throughout Eternity, to "remain unselfish till the endless end."

We have received in trust the gift of Theosophy—"the first of all sciences." We have been shown what our highest duty is, and we, too, can choose our way.

The questions before each human being are: Whom will ye serve? Will you serve the higher spiritual nature, or the body of flesh? WHOM CHOOSE YE THIS DAY? (*The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 225)

MAN is a king, dethroned, and cast out from his kingdom; in chains and in a dungeon.

Man is a cave-dweller though he calls his cavern the world.

Man is a gnome, condemned to forced toils, in the kingdom of darkness.

Man cries aloud in desolation, a poor captive beating his life out against the bars.

Then quietness falls on the struggler's soul; he learns that the prize may be his, as soon as the price is paid; and he learns that the price is himself.

There is that which is sweeter than melody, and more joyful than joy. What is that treasure that lies within?

Two oracles there are, graved in the shrine of the heart: The first, Thou, Man, art the heir to fulness of life. The second, No life that is bounded can ever satisfy the soul.

The heart of a beggar will not be content with half the universe; he is not born to a part, but to the whole.

The door may be opened in life; it may be opened by death: but there is a death which will not open the door.

—AGELESS WISDOM

## THE UNIFYING PRINCIPLE

IS the real meaning of Brotherhood so obvious as it is usually thought to be? A Master of Wisdom wrote to A. P. Sinnett in 1880:

The term "Universal Brotherhood" is no idle phrase. Humanity in the mass has a paramount claim upon us. . . . If it be a dream, it is at least a noble one for mankind: and it is the aspiration of the *true adept*.

The First Object of the Theosophical Movement has been set forth in direct and simple terms. Yet it is variously conceived according to individual knowledge, experience and consciousness. It is not expected that anyone shall have attained perfection in the understanding of the depths of the First Object, as such perfection is the attainment of the great Masters of Wisdom. But everyone who subscribes to the ideal has some idea of its meaning and practice. This is the starting point for acquiring a truer realization and profounder conviction of its reality.

Everything begins in the germinal or nuclear stage. This is true of growth in understanding as well as in action. But there is an ever-present danger of materializing or degrading the concept of an ideal unless it is also profoundly realized from a spiritual point of view that the universe is worked and guided from within outwards. This fact in Nature is universal.

We may be devoted to and promote brotherly works, but we cannot "make" Brotherhood. That already exists as a fact in Nature with or against which we live and work. W. Q. Judge admonished those interested in Theosophy to heed the words of those Masters who directed H.P.B. to write that each member (of the original T.S.) could become first of all in himself (or herself) an active centre from which would radiate unseen powerful forces able to influence men and women in the vicinity for good. Thus, the whole Movement could become "a vast, whirling centre of light and force and energy for the benefit of the nation and of the race." (*The Heart Doctrine*, p. 58)

Every human being comes to learn that there are good and evil in the world. As a consequence, and because of the nature of man, it becomes a natural human craving to want things to be better. But a desire is not enough. Reformers and politicians, missionaries and advocates of systems of whatever kind begin from without in the endeavour to change conditions and the other fellow. Such endeavour is often fruitless because it does not get at the root and cause of trouble. The would-be Theosophist is not exempt from the influence of the upside-down worldly idea characteristic of

the age. It is in fact this very inversion of the ideal that makes a dark age. Only reverting to the true can make a better one.

Meditation and action are not two distinctly different paths to be pursued. Neither the one nor the other alone can lead to the goal. It is the proper balance between the two that is most efficacious. *Both* are required to accomplish by the fairest means the truest end which has ever to be kept in view.

Reformation, in any worthy sense of the term, begins within, not without. One may be devoted to the ideal of Brotherhood and the performance of duty in one place or have to travel far to accomplish a needed work. Brotherhood does not depend upon place. H.P.B. travelled round the world, first learning and then verifying the traditions of old. This entailed also laying down the lines of force for the Theosophical work of centuries to come. When W.Q.J. went from America to India to do his duty, he was as much "on high mission bent" as when he stayed in America to carry on the work. The notion that spirituality or Brotherhood depends either upon staying in one place or moving about is no different from the delusion that only those are spiritual and brotherly who go to church on Sunday or run like missionaries to convert the "heathen" in foreign lands to so-called "Christian" or other dogmas.

Place has nothing to do with spirituality. The latter does not depend upon location. Neither does Universal Brotherhood, or it could not be universal. Spirituality may transform and better a place, but the result is a consequence, not a cause. The cause lies in Spirit; the effect in matter. Both are aspects of Life itself. Place or location may have to do with necessity and Karma, duty and responsibility, or with consequent relationships there. But it does not alter in any way the omnipresent fact of Brotherhood. The idea that the spirituality required for the practical realization of Brotherhood depends upon place or places, leaders or followers, systems or organizations, is the illusion of what Robert Crosbie called "organizational Theosophists."

Spirituality begins within. It depends upon an awakening from worldly illusions to the realities of spiritual consciousness, the immortal higher nature and Universal Brotherhood. What W.Q.J. called "the centre spot" lies within, not without. As he said, "the kingly science and the kingly mystery is devotion to and study of the light which comes from within." The duty of a Theosophist, as of any man, is neither to be determined nor judged by anyone but the man himself. The Spirit in man alone is judge, jury and prosecuting attorney. It alone is "the spectator, the admonisher.

the sustainer, the enjoyer, and also the *Paramatma*, the highest soul."

According to the plain and simple yet symbolical language or "astral cipher" of the true author of *Light on the Path*, the soul in man "is the link between the outer body and the starry spirit beyond; the divine spark dwells in the still place where no convulsion of Nature can shake the air; this is so always." Of the individual who accomplishes the awakening of consciousness in the "starry part of himself," by facing his own soul and refusing to be drawn back by his lesser self, the same author significantly says:

He may not blazon forth his deeds, he may dwell in secret and silence; but it is a fact that he forms a link between man and his divine part; between the known and the unknown; between the stir of the market-place and the stillness of the snow-capped Himalayas. He has not to go about among men in order to form this link; in the astral he *is* that link. (pp. 57-58)

Throughout the kingdoms of Nature Brotherhood exists. In fact, kingdoms themselves could not exist were it not for this universal law. They all come forth from the Unknown, and will return into it when the cycle has rolled its round. This is as true as that night is followed by day and day by a night of rest again. Each kingdom aids the others. None could exist alone.

Amongst the living creatures of any species there are countless manifestations of brotherhood. The fact that all are subject to birth, life and death according to the same immutable law is evidence of it. A naturalist once significantly observed that harmless animals like deer have survived through the principle of brotherhood, while many of the more vicious animals have not thus survived. The gathering of birds for migration after a season apart to perform their "duties" is remarkable.

Despite the predatory habits of many creatures, there are numberless astonishing accounts of the brotherly assistance rendered by animals to other animals of the same or a different species or to human beings. Who knows but that man is largely responsible for the viciousness in many animals and that vicious tendencies in them would change considerably if man did not spur them on and if he starved out viciousness in himself? Did he but know it, he could impart to the whole of Nature an impulsion toward a higher life. It is under the law of brotherly necessity that man must come to learn this lesson.

That Universal Brotherhood is a fact in Nature has profound significance. In view of this, why do not all men always act like

brothers? First, because all men are not fully conscious of the fact of Brotherhood. Second, because what consciousness there is of Brotherhood is not spiritualized. That is to say, the spirit or consciousness in man is not generally awakened to the full realization of the significance of the great fact and the living of the life implicit in that realization. What is the panacea? It is spiritual knowledge of the true nature of the Universe and Man, of Karma and Reincarnation, of Universal Unity and Causation, and therefore of the need for Human Solidarity.

In the light of such principles men would cease to take sides with anybody or anything but Truth and Justice. Sects and cliques, creeds and dogmas, castes and classes have at some time to disappear as separative divisions among men. The sooner the better. The condition requisite for carrying out the objectives implicit in these principles is a wise, positive and dynamic peace. Hostility cannot do it, least of all a passive indifference. It is an unfortunate characteristic of the age that bureaucracy tends to dominate over genuine knowledge and the free spirit.

The attempt to dominate others is a tendency characteristic of the lower nature. It is the antithesis of spirituality. This in no way implies that spirituality is a negative or passive quality, for it is not. Spiritual power for good flows from the conviction of essential Truth and the domination of the lower nature by the higher. Thus the lower nature can be transmuted and the higher strengthened in the furnace of man's own being. This is the symbolical meaning of the true alchemists of old who concealed in their alchemical jargon their real meaning about the transmutation of a baser metal into one of a nobler kind.

The obnoxious tendencies of the lower nature stand in the way of the practical realization of Brotherhood. They can be understood for what they are and conquered. The means is study, self-discipline based on spiritual knowledge, and performance of duty or service. The root causes of war, as of all woes and most sorrows, lies in human nature made vile by selfishness. The way out is to face the facts in one's own soul, correct them, and right the wrong at its source. Because the root causes are within, Brotherhood depends upon no sect, party or organization. Brotherhood is a unifying principle in itself. Such is the ideal end toward which all men, parties and organizations must ultimately strive, and which they must one day attain.

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## THE WIDER OUTLOOK

IT is said that we are "ceaselessly self-deceived" and the puzzling advice is given to break our moulds of thought once we have made them. Yet it is easy to see how sound the advice is if one remembers the human tendency to swing from one extreme to the other. A new student, after much inner struggle, may reach the point of jettisoning his dearly-loved conceptions of a personal God. But his tendency will probably be to put in its place a fixed idea of God as the Absolute, "unthinkable, unspeakable," out of all relation to finite, conditioned existence, and one can well imagine his dismay and bewilderment on hearing an elder student speak of the personal god within, or on finding a reference in Theosophical writings that apparently upsets all his newly acquired notions. A deeper understanding will reconcile seeming contradictions, until he will almost laugh at the ludicrous inadequacy of the ideas he formerly held.

The same process holds good for the notions that we have about practical affairs. If one has swung from a day-dreaming obliviousness of time, and a careless, slapdash inaccuracy into a somewhat rigid and overanxious insistence on the virtues of "accuracy in space, punctuality in time, purity of causation," it may be difficult to realize that these have a higher and wider aspect. If machinery, for example, is made too accurate, *i.e.*, if each part fits exactly into its neighbour without the little necessary "dither" or leeway, the machine will not work. The parts will interlock and no movement ensue. In a work of art, whether a painting or a piece of decoration, there is the beauty of a balanced composition, the accuracy of the right proportions. But balance does not necessarily mean a unit on the right hand accurately balancing an exactly similar unit on the left, or in whatever way the pattern is devised. In a formal decoration it may do so, but even here the real craftsman always brings vitality to it by varying slightly the details of the balanced portions, while maintaining the general similarity. The cheap imitator makes the two halves of the pattern mechanically and accurately alike. There is the formal balance of Western mediaeval religious painting, with the Madonna in the centre, flanked by a saint or benefactor on either hand. But the informal balance—such as that which characterizes Chinese and Japanese painting, in which a large mass may be satisfactorily opposed by a small one, or a spray in one corner be balanced by the pattern of empty space—gives a dynamic living quality not to be achieved by the more obvious geometrical

relationships. It may be difficult at first to appreciate, and still more so to achieve the subtleties of the informal ratios, but their accuracy is none the less real for not being so easily discernible.

The beginner in writing has to pay accurate attention to the rules of grammar and syntax, otherwise he will fall into a slipshod style. But once he has mastered them he can, and must at times, flout them to gain a particular effect or quality, or to give special significance and life to any point. Too accurate a regularity in the metre of verse makes for a deadly monotony that is only obviated by the poet's deliberate or instinctive escape from the tyranny of rhyme.

Again, can we say that truth is necessarily "accurate" from the matter-of-fact point of view? To say:

My love is like a red, red rose,  
That's newly sprung in June

is factually false, but it conveys more truly the "quality" of the beloved than if one were to say "My love weighs 9 st. 2. She stands 5 ft. 6 (in her stockinged feet)—together with all the passport details.

Another case in point. Every attempt to clarify legal phraseology, so as to make it more intelligible, to cover more accurately every possible eventuality, only results in still more involved obscurities. Students are told to "get the idea and not the word"—though this must not be used to condone slovenliness of thought and expression on the part of the speaker. Again, too much attention paid to accuracy of details is often detrimental to the grasp of the subject as a whole. One cannot "see the wood for the trees."

One can give a study-class assignment accurately, without being tied down to one method or way—there are six schools of Indian philosophy, each accurate from its own viewpoint, though none comprehensive. Certainly, one can give an "accurate" presentation of the U.L.T. Declaration in one's own words, without plagiarizing the phrases. The same with the Fundamentals. To some students a rigid following along the text of pp. 14-17 of Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine* is the only thing recognized as the Three Fundamental Propositions. Yet, if these "underlie and pervade the entire system of thought" and must therefore find application in every practical aspect of life as well, they must find expression in countless ways, however little the student who fails to perceive their existence in a different guise recognizes their accuracy and validity.

In the same way, punctuality does not necessarily mean rigid

adherence to an immutable timetable, however valuable the discipline of a fixed schedule, particularly in organizing routine work. The people who are lost unless they get up at the same moment, dine at exactly the same time, and follow the same daily routine, are slaves rather than masters of punctuality, slaves to the automatic action of their bodily "lives" as much as is the animal. Just as a machine demands that little margin for free action among its parts, just as balance can be formal or informal, so punctuality has its fluidity. "The right time and right place" is not a fixed formula. A subordinate in a business office may be able to keep strict working hours, but the managing director will almost certainly have to adapt his timetable to opportunities offered. A doctor, to take another example, cannot pay the same tribute to rigid punctuality as a firm's employee, since accidents and the arrival of babies upon this earthly scene are not confined to office hours. His sense of "the right time" has to be worked out on a different material level from that of the formal organization.

If a social or political reform has to be introduced by brute force, it is "out of time," no matter how excellent its nature, or how well intentioned its sponsors. Being premature, it can only produce evil. The inner need determines the moment for punctuality.

In the same way with purity of motive: The enthusiast for the Theosophic life usually starts with some kind of "stained-glass" ideal, and considerable preoccupation with the moral health of his own motive and the purity of his own nature. Though observation and judgment must be used before action, and errors faced afterwards, Theosophy does not advocate too close and morbid a scrutiny of one's motives before acting, nor yet time wasted in repentance. If our quick action in an emergency can save a child, we do not hold off because the hands that must pull it to safety are begrimed with dust. *Light on the Path* speaks of the need to give up, at some time, even the sense of self-respect and of virtue, to be prepared to "lose face" for a cause. One may have—as H.P.B. had—to let others deceive themselves, even though it means losing irrevocably their confidence and friendship. Obedience to the laws of the land is good, but the lesser loyalty may have to give way to a larger ideal, even to a breaking of laws for the sake of Justice. The "gang loyalty" of the small boy teaches him not to give away his comrades to those in authority, under any circumstances. The greater perception of youth might lead him to see that this would have to be outgrown, for the sake of a higher viewpoint. The man who fights for his country, and the one who refuses to kill his fellow-beings, even for its sake, can both be

pure in motive.

There must be a change in our very ideas of self-purity, of motive. The impersonal man, being unmixed (*i.e.*, who does not identify himself) with personal characteristics, is truly pure. He is not concerned about omitting "I-Me-My" from his conversation. Neither H.P.B. nor Judge—nor Crosbie either—were afraid to use these self-denoting terms. The impersonal man sees himself in due proportion, neither the centre of all interest, nor yet the inferior, the outcast. Too often we think of purity from the "moral" point of view, and inevitably make comparisons between ourselves and others "holier" or less holy than we. There is no "moral" judgment involved in the real purification—neither personal elation nor personal shame. It should be as impersonal a matter as that of the technician obtaining a pure colour in pigment or light. It means eliminating from the given colour all admixtures of other colours. Each may be perfectly good in itself, but the admixture makes them all "impure." Kama and Manas, Desire and Mind, in themselves are essential and pure, but their admixture creates the "impure" personality, the man of Kama-Manas, self-centred, self-embodied passion and desire. But when these powers are resolved back again to purity, Kama becomes the clear working force of Buddhi, Wisdom, while Manas becomes the organ of the free will in physical man.

The union of Soul with Spirit, the goal towards which all Life strives, would seem to furnish the right motive for effort; nevertheless, motive must reach higher than "purity." If the soil is entirely purified of all bacteria it becomes sterile. Pure Spirit in itself is passive and completely inactive. The Dharmakayas who become "complete Buddhas," ideal breaths in Universal Consciousness, devoid of all attributes of clogging matter, are yet, in their obliteration of concern for their other "selves" on earth, less truly "pure" than the Buddhas of Compassion. These retain the ethereal Nirmanakaya vesture so that, while Their consciousness may live in the light of Spirit, they still have the means to work in the shadow of material existence, for the sake of poor, ignorant, sorrowing mankind.

Whatever place in the scheme of things we ourselves may occupy, whatever our virtues or our failings, it is "the self-sacrificing pursuit of the best means to lead on the right path our neighbour, to cause to benefit by it as many of our fellow creatures as we possibly can, which constitutes the true Theosophist."

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## WE HAVE LIVED BEFORE

THE man or woman who is normally and healthily interested in life regrets its shortness, and particularly so if he or she belongs to the growing number of people who feel that the world can only be "saved" by the personal efforts of individuals. What can be accomplished in the few decades allotted us on earth? they ask.

Fortunately we are not really so hampered in this respect as most suppose. Man proceeds on his evolutionary pilgrimage by means of a long, long series of incarnations. In other words, each of us has lived on earth before many times and will live, in a body similar to the one we use now, over and over again in the future. Obviously we need time to accumulate all the kinds of experience life has to offer; time to assimilate the meaning thereof; time to develop capacities for the application of our growing knowledge; time to put our impress on the world in company with those of our fellows who are like-minded with ourselves. And Nature supplies our need by the process of reincarnation.

Not many people care much about the authority of religion nowadays, but it may interest some to know that this teaching, which involves the pre-existence of the soul before birth as well as its survival after the death of the body, is one that all the great religions of the world have either taught or taken for granted.

Nay, but as when one layeth  
His worn-out robes away,  
And, taking new ones, sayeth,  
"These will I wear today!"  
So putteth by the spirit  
Lightly its garb of flesh,  
And passeth to inherit  
A residence afresh.

These words from Sir Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial* set forth an idea which has found expression all down the ages. Even in Christianity the notion that God creates a new soul for every child born into the world was generally taught to the people only after the truth of the pre-existence of the soul had been eliminated from the accepted doctrines of the Church at a Council of Church Fathers held about 500 A.D.

This lost teaching was not restored to the West until the 19th century, when Madame Blavatsky introduced Theosophy to the public. As Theosophy is a restatement of the age-old fundamental principles of world and human evolution, it naturally includes

the teaching of reincarnation. It was reintroduced in the latter part of the last century and the idea of rebirth is now not so strange in the West as it was in the days when it was first propounded under the banner of the new Movement. The number of professed Theosophists is small when compared with the population of the world, or even with the reading public, but it is well known to those who are more or less conversant with what is being said and written, that Theosophical teachings have penetrated modern thought to a very remarkable extent—notably this idea of many lives on earth. Even in the last decades of the last century this was true: Madame Blavatsky, who died in 1891, is reported to have said in answer to a question:

When you consider and remember those days in 1875 and after, in which you could not find any people interested in your thoughts, and now look at the widespreading influence of theosophical ideas—however labelled—it is not so bad. (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 6)

This process of penetration, which then was already noticeable, has been going on ever since.

To confine ourselves to the teaching of reincarnation. In the course of a century and more, it has been derided, condemned, parodied; but it has also found many who accepted it eagerly. Unfortunately some of the latter, though friends in intention, have done harm to the cause of truth by the wrong notions and mistaken interpretations they have propounded in its name. For us hasty moderns, whether of the East or of the West, it is hard to stop to think. We grasp at ideas quickly and are all too often satisfied with a superficial understanding of them. This leads to misstatements and misinterpretations, for the teaching involves more than we realize in the first flush of enthusiasm consequent upon our intuitive acceptance of the doctrine that fills us with new hope and gives us the conviction that life is very much worth while, despite its many difficulties and disappointments.

It does bring relief to feel that we have another chance in spite of death long before we have gathered the whole harvest of living—but, what reincarnates? What do we mean when we say “I” shall live on earth again? Surely not that conglomeration of personal aims and desires which we think of as ourselves! That changes from year to year, actually from minute to minute, though we may not notice the transformation. Surely not the “character” which becomes modified in a rather haphazard way as we grow in years and experience—not always for the better, or from strength to strength. Theosophy explains that all these are indeed but the temporary clothing of the actor, who is the

Self, the reincarnating Ego, the real, inner man or soul, who gathers knowledge and experience of various kinds as he appears on the stage of life: as a man or as a woman, in a brown body or in a black one, or in one of the indefinite colours termed "white." What this inner Self that leaves the outworn body and in time takes a new one *really* is, can only be realized by each one for himself as he thinks the question through quietly, eliminating from himself in thought all that is changing and evanescent, and then trying to define what is left.

Do we go on reincarnating for ever? Theosophy says: No. Earth is like a school and each incarnation represents a day. We, the pupils, have to go on attending our Earth-school until we have learned all that it has to teach us. We have to make up our minds, however, that the task before us is a stupendous one—much more difficult, much more comprehensive than we, at our present stage of development, can fathom—and that patience and persistence are needed—and time.

We are taught that the human race to which we belong has been incarnating on earth for 18 million years; and to judge by the slow pace at which we are going and the ignorance, confusion, disharmony and lack of mutual consideration we meet on every hand, we shall not need to be warned that we are far from the end of the journey even now. But there is an end, finally, and there is no reason why we should not reach it, if, like the children at school, we attend to our duty and do not waste too much time.

Why don't we remember our past lives? This question generally refers to memory in the sense of recalling details: where we lived, what our parents looked like, what profession we followed, and so forth. Things like these we do not remember, to be sure. But then they are matters which do not affect the real, reincarnating man—the Ego. They are of interest only to the personal man<sup>1</sup> and the recollection of them depends, for the vast majority of us, on the brain. Now as the taking of a new body means also a new brain, it is evident that these details are not available, for the organ on which they were recorded has disintegrated and only their essence, their significance, has been impressed on our real Self. So the new brain does not remember in detail the events that took place in a former earth life.

But, in another sense, we do remember; the fruit of our experience is not lost. The meaning of what we enjoyed or suffered, all that we learned from that past, constitutes an eternal posses-

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Key to Theosophy*, by H. P. Blavatsky, Section VIII, Subsection: "On Individuality and Personality."

sion. It is stored, not in the physical brain but in the immortal part of us; and this is at our disposal in each new incarnation. We know it as character, as the dictates of conscience, as talent in some direction, in short, as knowledge and capacity which belong to an inner store and cannot be accounted for by the accumulated experiences of this one life.

One of the treasures that some people obtain from that inner store is the conviction that we have lived before; that our real friends—and our real enemies, if any—have not become such by contact with us in this life only and will not be lost to us when we “die.” Not everyone is sufficiently open to the inner influence to feel that certainty, but many are, especially children, who, more commonly than grown-ups think, “remember” having had another mother and another father once and would talk about it all if adults did not so often discourage such confidences by calling the children silly or fanciful, or accusing them of telling fibs.

We should do well to lend an attentive ear to these “intimations of immortality” in ourselves and in others. The time has come for reorientation, and we shall never, so the great Occultists tell us, get a soul-satisfying view of life and be able to find lasting happiness until we stop interpreting ourselves and our surroundings from *without* and from *below* instead of from *within* and from *above*.

In other words, we must give up evaluating things from the point of view merely of our physical selves and try instead to look at them with the eyes of the Immortal that we really are. What the world needs, to solve its pressing difficulties, is “education in the apparently obvious,” from the standpoint not of the body and its limitations, but from that of the inner man and his possibilities. How different life looks to one who judges it on the basis of reincarnation!

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CONTROL the heart, for it is the biggest pilgrimage to Mecca.

One heart is better than thousands of Kabas [the house of God].

—JAMI (Sufi poet)

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

One of the characteristics of our age is the rapidity with which things come to pass in our lives, and in the world without. According to Dr. Perry W. Buffington (*Parade*, February 1989), accelerated change has played havoc with our established norms and values. However, it is not change that is causing problems, but rather the individual's outlook towards change. Studies have shown that the ability to cope and to adapt plays a major role in our lives and varies greatly from person to person.

On the up side [writes Buffington], people see change as a problem solver, helping us to get out of a bad situation. Unfortunately, there is a down side to change, and it involves unexpected changes, or those things which are difficult to control. In fact, there are some who believe that too much of either positive or negative change can lead to physical and emotional problems. There is even evidence that change may cause our internal biological clocks to malfunction. . . .

Over the past 30 years, a great deal of evidence has suggested that the number of changes—controllable and uncontrollable, positive and negative—which occur in a person's life are related to illness. . . . The more changes, the more vulnerable one's immune system becomes.

These vanguard studies have pointed out that change takes its toll; however, more recent studies are suggesting that life change does not necessarily have to be debilitating or even associated with illness. The key to minimizing the harmful effects of positive and negative change appears to be resiliency—the ability to bounce back and effectively deal with, and adapt to, the effects of change. The real question then becomes: what is it that allows one person to bounce back effectively, and yet another who experiences the same life change to fall apart? The answer is related to the person's age and his or her expectations. . . .

The rate and pervasiveness of change today is totally different from anything our ancestors ever experienced. Every facet of our lives is affected by change. Our educational system, jobs, family lives, leisure pursuits, economic positions, beliefs and values are constantly in flux. . . .

There are three important points to remember: change can be minimized through planning; belief in future goals reduces the deleterious effects of change; and, at the risk of sounding redundant, the way to deal with change is to change.

“It is always wiser to work and force the current of events

than to wait for time," wrote a Master of Wisdom. The symbol of progress is perpetual motion—change. To be passively satisfied with one's environment stops growth. That satisfaction is of the nature of *tamas*, inertia. On the other hand, dissatisfaction with one's environment leads to impulsive action with a desire to produce outer change. Impulsive action is of the quality of *rajas*—jerky and disturbing motion which frustrates itself. To move deliberately to self-improvement effects improvement in one's environment. This is rhythmic change and is of the nature of *sattva*, Harmony. To use our environment is to learn the lessons it stores for us. The extent to which we have developed the virtues of adaptability and resourcefulness can spell the difference between successful—and unsuccessful—results.

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A special feature in *India Today* (December 31, 1988) focuses attention on scientific investigation into the unseen realms, with special reference to India. Long before the term "paranormal phenomena" was coined, ancient Indians had already known of psychical powers, or *siddhis* and *vibhutis*.

Despite the mindstart [states the report], the realm of the unknown remained till recently a jealously guarded preserve of a host of mystics and traditional spiritual healers. And faced with a pliable populace, the "frontiers of the mind" soon became the backdoor for charlatans and fakes claiming extraordinary powers.

All that is beginning to change, albeit slowly. In the past two decades a band of investigators called parapsychologists have begun taking what they describe as a "scientific peep into the keyhole of eternity." Their number is small and at times they are derisively referred to as "pariah psychologists." But their findings are already raising the subject from the realm of superstition to that of established scientific research.

The prestigious National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in Bangalore, for instance, has conducted a systematic investigation of over 250 reported cases of reincarnation. Its findings are shattering several myths of the phenomenon. The study showed most people in the cases investigated remembered past lives when they were around three years old. Curiously, 49 per cent of them reportedly suffered violent deaths in their previous lives. Many exhibited traits and phobias that were linked to their previous births. And proving that these experiences were not fantasies, researchers identified in as many as 77 per cent of the

cases the deceased persons whom these people claimed to be.

Meanwhile, six universities—Andhra, Delhi, Punjab, Garhwal, Allahabad and Rewa—are probing the phenomena of Extrasensory Perception (ESP) or an ability to acquire information shielded from one's senses. . . . The unknown factor underlying all these [telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, and psychokinesis, or the power to influence objects with just the mind] is called psi (after the 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet). And parapsychology is the branch of psychological sciences that studies such psi abilities. . . .

Much of the findings by Indian researchers tally with similar studies done on rebirth and ESP in other parapsychological institutes dotting the world. But a fund of knowledge is being built on a subject that has intrigued man for centuries. As Professor K. Ramakrishna Rao, the doyen of Indian parapsychological research and currently director of the prestigious Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man in Durham, USA, says: "We are gathering enough evidence to assert confidently that such phenomena exist. Research on the subject is of profound significance. It is not only helping us understand the nature of man but could alter our concept of the Universe."

But parapsychologists are still to alter the concept of other scientists towards their research. Faced with the difficulty of providing "battle-tested" evidence demanded by science, parapsychological research has almost always been met by scorn and scepticism. . . . Stung by the criticism, parapsychologists have concentrated on evolving laboratory techniques and analytical methods that would stand up to the rigid standards laid down for any science. . . .

Some of the Indian research has been pathbreaking. . . . But as P. V. Krishna Rao, professor of parapsychology at Andhra University, says: "The search is for replicability. If more and more studies show consistent results then it points to several factors that could trigger ESP qualities." . . .

Some researchers theorize that psi operates in a "space-warp" or bridge across space that transcends the three-dimensional framework. Others talk of it being caused by a cortical excitation in the brain which emits a cloud of particles of imaginary mass called "psitrons" that trigger response in the receptive brain cells of another person. More philosophical is the theory that psi operates in what is called "the collective unconscious" field through which all beings are linked. . . .

If there is a common thread through these diverse experiments it is the lack of conclusive evidence. Despite the growing body

of knowledge, psi phenomena continue to confound researchers. The breakthroughs have been in discerning patterns, detecting some signals and destroying some myths. But the core force that is causing these seemingly paranormal phenomena is yet to be defined. It is a problem that hounds similar studies done mainly in the UK, US and the Soviet Union. While laboratory techniques have become more sophisticated with computers replacing cards and precision detectors replacing simple instruments, doubts still persist over the methodology that is being adopted.

In the words of St. Augustine, "Miracles occur in contradiction not to nature, but what is known to us of nature." Attention is invited to the comment on "anomalous" phenomena in our last issue.

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Control of speech and cultivation of the power to listen can be commended for many reasons. Leaving aside the occult considerations, there are cogent reasons even from a purely physical standpoint. Investigators have found that changes take place in our body as we talk—or listen.

An article condensed from James Lynch's *The Language of the Heart: The Body's Response to Human Dialogue*, appears in the *January Reader's Digest* (Indian ed.). New research reveals that the way we talk is vital to our health; equally vital are the benefits of *listening*.

After 20 years of research [James Lynch writes] my colleagues and I have discovered that *all* communication involves our bodies, sometimes profoundly. While we speak with words, we also speak with every fibre of our being. This "language of the heart" is integral to the health and emotional life of all of us.

We found that even a pleasant chat about the weather can affect the cardio-vascular system, particularly blood-pressure. . . . Blood-pressure and heart rate rose rapidly whenever people talked. We asked students to read aloud from a bland text. Their blood-pressure and heart rate rose rapidly every time. We tested 38 deaf-mute volunteers. When these people used sign language, their blood-pressure also increased. This confirmed our suspicion that it was the act of communication, not just talking, that led to these changes. . . .

Most normal talk is a see-saw. The rising of blood-pressure when one talks is balanced by a rapid *lowering* of pressure when

one listens. . . . Attending calmly to the world outside yourself helps lower blood-pressure.

Why do some people find talking so stressful, and listening so difficult? . . . We speak millions of words in our lives, and listen to millions. Our relationships with others constitute a kind of "social membrane" that surrounds us. Hypertensive people seem too sensitive to this, too responsive to it. Their high blood-pressure reflects this chronic hyper-vigilance.

So how can we enjoy conversation yet keep blood-pressure down? By listening more, by breathing regularly while talking, by alternating between talking and paying attention to what the other person is saying. But what can hypertensives do? Treatments that teach them to focus on their relationships and how to communicate in a relaxed way can have a place alongside conventional drug therapy on the road towards health.

We can understand and cope with illness only when we view ourselves as part of a complex world beyond the confines of our own individual skin. The response of our hearts, blood-vessels and muscles when we communicate with spouse, children, friends and colleagues is as vital to our cardio-vascular health as is exercise or diet.

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The phenomenon of persistent pain in an amputated limb, which, at least physically, no longer exists, has been known for centuries. This has been termed the "phantom limb" phenomenon. Over the years, it has been observed that sensation in missing parts is not restricted only to the limbs, but encompasses any part of the body surgically removed, such as the eye, the nose, the genitalia or the breasts (for cancer). Another find is that while earlier documentators restricted themselves to the pain associated with phantom parts, later investigators noted a plethora of sensations, some pleasurable and some otherwise. For example, on immersion of the body into water, some patients experienced a wetness in the phantom of the amputated limb. (2001, January 1989)

Still another find has been perhaps most instrumental in evolving the present "body-image hypothesis" for phantoms. This is the experience of phantom phenomena by people who have never undergone amputations—as, for instance, by those suffering from migraine, cerebral tumours, functional psychiatric disorders like schizophrenia, and even in epileptic auras and bizzare sensations which a patient may experience just prior to the onset of a seizure.

Popular theories for the explanation of phantom phenomena incorporate neurological and psychological factors.

Schilder (1935) defined body image as follows: "Body schema is the three-dimensional image everybody has about herself or himself." Kolb (1952) applied the same concept to an understanding of the psychodynamic impact of amputation and subsequent phantom limb sensations. He explained it as a disturbance in the process of coping with loss. Thus, the phantom pain served as a symbolic expression of the anxiety over the loss, as an expression of sadomasochistic identification, or as a manifestation of depression.

The Theosophical teaching of the astral body is the best calculated to explain such phenomena. Mr. Judge writes in *The Ocean of Theosophy*:

...where we find a man who still feels the leg which the surgeon has cut off, or perceives the fingers that were amputated, then the astral member has not been interfered with, and hence the man feels as if it were still on his person. For knife or acid will not injure the astral model. (Indian ed., p. 44)

The experience of pain following an amputation can be understood when it is recognized that the real senses—through which pain is felt—have their seat in the astral body, which is not affected by the surgeon's knife and which remains in sympathetic connection with the lost member.

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"Gandhi's Message for Today: Love and Non-Violence" is examined by Guy de Mallac, a practitioner of the philosophy of Non-violence and editor of *The Way of Peace and Service*. He writes:

There are two principles at work within us. We are the battleground between these two principles. One is "the Law of Love"; the other, "the Law of Violence" or Aggression. Gandhi acknowledges that both exist. The Law of Love is a force which is present and deeply seated and felt in all of us. It exists inside us; it is something within others that we can reach out to. Even in the most hardened criminal there is still, theoretically, always a possibility to reach out to that place. And we may be certain that in each individual there is a readiness to respond when reached out to.

The Law of Violence or Aggression is also present in us. Gandhi certainly did not deny it. It exists in human activities. We should beware, however, of those negative thinkers who tell us that "there always has been war and there always will be." Strife and war, such persons say, are fine and good things for humans. . . . This is not Gandhi's perspective. . . .

The best time to stop wars is before they start. World Wars can grow out of regional wars. Regional wars can result from local injustices, lack of brotherhood, an insensitivity to our neighbours, from the ascendance of greed over love, from the bad habit of maintaining antagonisms against many persons and groups, from narrow-minded nationalism, from internecine religious fanaticism, from the ideological messianism of large and not-so-large countries.

The "Beyond Wars" movement deserves our gratitude for the clear and sharp logic it uses to analyse the reasons why *war is obsolete*, and to suggest that in consequence we should make the decision to reject war.

We will always be faced with the propensity in human nature to resort to warfare as a way of solving conflict. But there is a powerful alternate strategy advocated by Gandhi, which can be summed up as follows. Practise the Law of Love; insist that the institutions around which our life is organized apply non-violence; and retrain ourselves to become non-violent—that is, to learn to solve conflict without resorting to violence. . . .

*Practise the Law of Love* means thoughtful attentiveness; therefore, practise creative listening to the other side. In dealing with an opponent, search actively for areas of mutual interests; on the basis of these interests, build projects to encourage the development of increasing mutual trust. Use *negotiation, arbitration*, and other *conflict-solving methods*, at local, national, international levels. Fully utilize and improve existing dispute resolution systems between nations so that war is not the only option. Freeze and reverse the arms race. Cut the military budget. Practise non-violence as an active struggle. Actively pursue alternatives to military intervention. (Interfering in another country's internal affairs is a form of violence.) Support human freedom and dignity at home by endorsing civil liberties. (Not granting such liberties is also a form of constraint.) Persistently denounce and oppose injustice. Refrain from the violence of, first, tongue, or heart. (*Sarvodaya*, Vol. 34, No. 6)

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Our entire civilization is built upon unnaturally stimulated desires, and the business of advertising is geared to this end. If left unchecked, it would rule our lives. This prophecy of Vance Packard in his book, *The Hidden Persuaders*, has come true to quite an extent. Advertisers are not only hidden persuaders but claim to have insight into the human psyche. How do they get to the mind of the consumer? Under the title "Consumer on the Couch," Vanita Dhir writes in *The Times of India* (February 2):

These hidden persuaders can make the most hardened and cynical buyer succumb to their relentless persuasion. Marketers have had to redefine their sales promotions, use the electronic media and invest enormous amounts of money into campaigns to build a niche for themselves. As a result we are now virtually dictated to in all our purchases—from the food we eat, the soda we drink, the clothes we wear, the vehicles we drive, the appliances we use and even the Prime Ministers we elect. . . .

Admen believe that people buy emotionally, seldom logically. The ad executive can be rightly called a psycho-salesman as he probably operates on only one theory to inculcate desire in the consumer: The more senses you involve, the better your odds of making a sale. He is fully aware that a short straight wire runs between what our senses seek and what our minds decide. His first approach to an ad is the loading of that straight wire with all the messages it can carry. Messages which involve all the senses of the buyer.

Once the admen have mastered the art of selling, the consumer is like putty in their hands. They can shape him whichever way they want. As Bill Bernbach, the famous adman, said, "All of us who use the mass media are the shapers of society. We can vulgarize that society. We can brutalize it. Or we can elevate it."

It is often admitted that all advertising is sham, and yet our society, which has hypocrisy at its roots, allows advertisers to practise fraud upon it. The art of advertising appears to be to make people want what they have not got, or become dissatisfied with what they have, which includes making them dissatisfied with what they are and how they look. Fundamentally it is the art of making people discontented and unhappy in order to sell them a product. It is the warped psychology of our civilization which is responsible for the misleading content of most advertising propaganda.

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(See Rule 8)

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17th March 1989

(*Sd.*) Gopal G. Thakur  
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THE SECRET DOCTRINE. A facsimile of the original edition of 1888.  
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U.L.T. PAMPHLET SERIES, Nos. 1-36  
H. P. BLAVATSKY AND WILLIAM Q. JUDGE PAMPHLET SERIES

# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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