

# THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

A Magazine Devoted to  
The Living of the Higher Life

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- (b) The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and
- (c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

## THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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### THOUGHTS ON KARMA

[This article first appeared in *The Path* for August 1892, over the signature of Eusebio Urban, one of the pen-names of Mr. Judge.]

EVERY day in life we see people overtaken by circumstances either good or bad and coming in blocks all at once or scattered over long periods of time. Some are for a whole life in a miserable condition, and others for many years the very reverse; while still others are miserable or happy by snatches. I speak, of course, of the circumstances of life irrespective of the effect on the mind of the person, for it may often be that a man is not unhappy under adverse circumstances, and some are able to extract good from the very strait lines they are put within. Now all this is the Karma of those who are the experiencers, and therefore we ask ourselves if Karma may fall in a lump or may be strung out over a long space of years. And the question is also asked if the circumstances of this life are the sum-total result of the life which has immediately preceded it.

There is a little story told to a German mystic in this century by an old man, another mystic, when asked the meaning of the verse in the Bible which says that the sins of the father will be visited on the children to the third and fourth generation. He said: "There was once an Eastern king who had one son, and this son committed a deed the penalty of which was that he should be killed by a great stone thrown upon him. But as it was seen that this would not repair the wrong nor give to the offender the chance to become a better man, the counsellors of the king advised that the stone should be broken into small pieces,

and those be thrown at the son, and at his children and grandchildren as they were able to bear it. It was so done, and all were in some sense sufferers yet none were destroyed." It was argued, of course, in this case that the children and grandchildren could not have been born in the family of the prince if they had not had some hand in the past, in other lives, in the formation of his character, and for that reason they should share to some extent in his punishment. In no other way than this can the Christian verses be understood if we are to attribute justice to the God of the Christians.

Each Ego is attracted to the body in which he will meet his just deserts, but also for another reason. That is, that not only is the body to give opportunity for his just reward or punishment, but also for that he in the past was connected with the family in which the body was born, and the stream of heredity to which it belongs is his too. It is therefore a question not alone of desert and similarity, but one of responsibility. Justice orders that the Ego shall suffer or enjoy irrespective of what family he comes to; similarity decrees that he shall come to the family in which there is some characteristic similar to one or many of his and thus having a drawing power; but responsibility, which is compounded of justice, directs that the Ego shall come to the race or the nation or the family to which its responsibility lies for the part taken by it in other lives in forming of the general character, or affecting that physical stream of heredity that has so much influence on those who are involved in it. Therefore it is just that even the grandchildren shall suffer if they in the past have had a hand in moulding the family or even in bringing about a social order that is detrimental to those who fall into it through incarnation. I use the word responsibility to indicate something composed of similarity and justice. It may be described by other words probably quite as well, and in the present state of the English language very likely will be. An Ego may have no direct responsibility for a family, national, or race condition, and yet be drawn into incarnation there. In such an event it is similarity of character which causes the place of rebirth, for the being coming to the abode of mortals is drawn like electricity along the path of least resistance and of greatest conductivity. But where the reincarnating Ego is directly responsible for family or race conditions, it will decide itself, upon exact principles of justice and in order to meet its obligations, to be reborn where it

shall receive, as grandchild if you will, physically or otherwise the results of its former acts. This decision is made at the emergence from Devachan. It is thus entirely just, no matter whether the new physical brain is able or not to pick up the lost threads of memory.

So today, in our civilization, we are all under the penalty of our forefathers' sins, living in bodies which medical science has shown are sown with diseases of brain and flesh and blood coming in the turbid stream of heredity through the centuries. These disturbances were brought about by ourselves in other centuries, in ignorance, perhaps, of consequences so far-reaching, but that ignorance lessens only the higher moral responsibility and tends to confine the results to physical suffering. This can very well lead, as it often does, to efforts on the part of many reincarnating Egos in the direction of general reform.

It was through a belief in this that the ancients attempted to form and keep up in India a pure family stream such as the highest caste of Brahmin. For they knew that if such a clean family line could be kept existing for many centuries, it would develop the power of repelling Egos on the way to rebirth if they were not in character up to the standard of that stream of life. Thus only teachers by nature, of high moral and spiritual elevation, would come upon the scene to act as regenerators and saviours for all other classes. But under the iron rule of cyclic law this degenerated in time, leaving now only an imitation of the real thing.

A variation of the Eastern story told above is that the advice of the king's counsellors was that the broken stone should be cast at the prince. This was done, and the result was that he was not killed but suffered while the pieces were being thrown. It gives another Karmic law, that is, that a given amount of force of a Karmic character may be thrown at one or fall upon one at once, in bulk, so to say, or may be divided up into smaller pieces, the sum of which represents the whole mass of Karmic force. And so we see it in life. Men suffer through many years an amount of adverse Karma which, if it were to fall all at once, would crush them. Others for a long time have general good fortune that might unseat the reason if experienced in one day; and the latter happens also, for we know of those who have been destroyed by the sudden coming of what is called great good fortune.

This law is seen also in physics. A piece of glass may be broken

at once by a single blow, or the same amount of force put into a number of taps continuously repeated will accomplish the same result and smash the glass. And with the emotions we observe the same law followed by even the most ignorant, for we do not tell bad news at once to the person who is the sufferer, but get at it slowly by degrees; and often when disaster is suddenly heard of, the person who hears it is prostrated. In both cases the sorrow caused is the same, but the method of imparting the news differs. Indeed, in whatever direction we look, this law is observed to work. It is universal, and it ought to be applied to Karma as well as to anything else.

Whether the life we are now living is the net result of the one just preceding is answered by Patanjali in his eighth and ninth aphorisms, Book IV.

"From these works there results, in every incarnation, a manifestation of only those mental deposits which can come to fructification in the environment provided. Although the manifestation of mental deposits may be intercepted by unsuitable environments, differing as to class, place, and time, there is an immediate relation between them, because the memory and the train of self-reproductive thought are identical," and also by other doctrines of the ancients. When a body is taken up, only that sort of Karma which can operate through it will make itself felt. This is what Patanjali means. The "environment" is the body, with the mind, the plastic nature, and the emotions and desires. Hence one may have been great or the reverse in the preceding life, and now have only the environment which will serve for the exhaustion of some Karma left over from lives many incarnations distant. This unexhausted Karma is known as stored-up Karma. It may or may not come into operation now, and it can also be brought out into view by violent effort of the mind leading to such changes as to alter the bodily apparatus and make it equivalent to a new body. But as the majority of men are lazy of mind and nature, they suffer themselves to run with the great family or national stream, and so through one life make no changes of this inner nature. Karma in their cases operates through what Patanjali calls "mental deposits." These are the net results stored from each life by *Manas*. For as body dies, taking brain with it, there can be no storage there nor means of connecting with the next earth-life; the division known as *Kama* is dissipated or purged away together with astral body at some time

before rebirth; astral body retains nothing—as a general rule—for the new life, and the value or summation of those skandhas which belong to *Kama* is concentrated and deposited in *Manas* or the mind. So, when the immortal being returns, he is really *Manas-Buddhi-Atma* seeking a new environment which is found in a new body, *Prana*, *Kama*, and astral double. Hence, and because under the sway of cyclic law, the reincarnation can only furnish an engine of a horsepower, so to say, which is very much lower than the potential energies stored in *Manas*, and thus there remain unexhausted "mental deposits," or unexhausted Karma. The Ego may therefore be expending a certain line of Karma, always bringing it to similar environments until that class of Karma shall be so exhausted or weakened as to permit another set of "mental deposits" to preponderate, whereupon the next incarnation will be in a different environment which shall give opportunity for the new set of deposits to bring about new or different Karma.

The object that is indicated for life by all this is to so live and think during each life as to generate no new Karma, or cause for bondage, while one is working off the stock in hand, in order that on closing each life-account one shall have wiped off so much as that permits. The old "mental deposits" will thus gradually move up into action and exhaustion from life to life, at last leaving the man in a condition where he can master all and step into true consciousness, prepared to renounce final reward in order that he may remain with humanity, making no new Karma himself and helping others along the steep road to perfection.

—EUSEBIO URBAN

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Hast never come to thee an hour,  
 A sudden gleam divine, precipitating, bursting all these  
 bubbles, fashions, wealth?  
 These eager business aims—books, politics, art, armours,  
 To utter nothingness?

—WALT WHITMAN

## A GREAT THEOSOPHIST

### William Quan Judge

THE mystical and occult significance of the festival of the Spring Equinox is little understood today, though several religions have harnessed it for their own sectarian purposes. For example, the Christian Easter is a shadow of the sacred festival of the Spring Equinox as observed in the Iranian Mysteries of Mithra. It is connected with Death and Resurrection, or Second Birth.

The 21st of March is also an important day in the calendar of students of Theosophy. It marks the passing of a great Theosophist—William Quan Judge. Earnest students of Theosophy observe his death anniversary as a mark of love and esteem for one whose great example as a loyal, devoted and faithful servant of the Cause of Theosophy is an ever-abiding inspiration.

The ordinary custom of observing the anniversary of those near and dear to us who have passed on has a basis in truth, which is philosophical and esoteric. Such remembrance of the dead is not so much for them as for us who are left behind. Remembering their virtues and merits, thinking of their gifts of love and sacrifice to and for us, we gain an opportunity to resolve to gain those virtues and to reproduce those gifts of love and of sacrifice. Such annual remembrance of great friends of the human race and servers of spiritual science is a benediction, inasmuch as the occasions bring us a special opportunity to dwell upon those capacities and qualities which made such people great and worthy of respect and reverence.

Let us consider then some of the outstanding characteristics of this great Theosophist, who served the Cause for 22 long years—from 1874 when he met his guru H.P.B. to 1896 when on the 21st of March he left his body of flesh and blood. Many aspects of his life and Theosophical endeavours on behalf of earnest students of the Sacred Science of Occultism or Yoga-Vidya may be recalled. H.P.B. has described W. Q. Judge as the Bridge between the Esoteric Philosophers, *i.e.*, the Great Masters, and the exoteric world, especially the Western world. To quote H.P.B.'s own words: "W.Q.J. is the *Antaskarana* between the two *Manas(es)*." She described those two minds as "the American thought and the Indian," and she defined the Indian as "the trans-Himalayan Esoteric Knowledge." How many here in India

possess the mind educated and trained in the trans-Himalayan Esoteric Knowledge? Only a handful. Most men and women of India today are full of the Western mind, the analytical or argumentative mind. The lower mind may flower as a scholar, but the higher flowers as a sage. Between the scholar and the sage a wide gulf exists, which remains to be bridged. H.P.B. called Mr. Judge that bridge, because he was capable of imparting knowledge to the ordinary educated mind, knowledge that would take it in the direction of the higher spiritual mind. In the writings of Mr. Judge, which are but a faithful simplified version of H.P.B.'s teachings, there is that power which awakens the higher or inner perception of the soul. Anyone can test that out for himself or herself. Study of his writings results in an inner awakening, a soul-understanding, which sweetens life and brings strength.

What particular quality in his constitution enabled Mr. Judge to achieve this singular success as a bridge, as a channel between mortals and Masters? It is the rare quality of *Bhakti*, devotion. In India, religious feeling and religious emotion are mistaken for *Bhakti*. Devotion is a transcendental quality of the human soul. It is not related to feelings or personal love. *Bhakti* is of the womb of Buddhi. What is commonly called love is an ordinary emotion and is not of the heart; it is born of blood and flesh, and even animals possess it. But *Bhakti* or spiritual love and devotion is born of the Spiritual Soul. The term Buddhi is translated by some as Intellect, *i.e.*, higher mind, by others as the Heart. Both are right, for both stand for the same truth. The *Bhakti* quality was very strong in Mr. Judge: he was devoted to H.P.B. as his guru, but it was not a feeling or an emotion of the personal self; it was a soul-vibration of the higher Individuality.

Let the present generation of student-servers of Theosophy try to meditate upon this supreme virtue of spiritual devotion which transformed Mr. Judge, an Irishman by birth and later an American, into the bridge or the link between the world of mortals and the world of Masters. By studying his writings and by emulating his example, we too shall be able to do, each in his or her own small measure, what Mr. Judge did in so splendid a fashion. As an aid to the development of devotion, let us recall what he wrote to a devoted disciple of his:

Arouse, arouse in you the meaning of "Thou art That." Thou art the Self. This is the thing to think of in meditation....If you will

look for wisdom you will get it sure, and that is all you want or need.

This is *the* advice that the successful Chela gives. When we have found the Self or the Master within the Heart, in our own Buddhi, then will it be possible for us to go to the Great Guru, the Illuminator of the Mind, the giver of Bliss to the Heart. Then only we shall appreciate and chant this verse:

Salutations to the Glorious Guru; my sight was blinded by ignorance and He restored to it the Light of Knowledge and Truth.

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THE generality of men have many and widely branching objects for mental devotion. It is a devotion to sense, or to self, or to wrong belief, or to improper practice. But the follower of the *Bhagavad-Gita* gradually comes to see that the true devotion is that which has but one object through all changes of scene, of thought, or of companionship. That object is the Self which is all in all. The Self, as object, is immovable, whereas the objects taken up by the unwise are movable and transitory.

Equal-mindedness and skill in the right performance of duty are the true rules—this is yoga. This right performance of duty means the mental state, for the mere performance of an act has no moral quality in it, since even a machine may be made to perform acts usually done by men. The moral quality resides in the person inside and in his presence or absence....The performance of a good act is no virtue unless the person within is in the right attitude of mind. Many an apparently good act is done from selfish, hypocritical, crafty or other wrong motives. These are only outwardly good. So we must attain to a proper state of mind, or mental devotion, in order to know how to skilfully perform our actions without doing so for the sake of the result; doing them because they ought to be done, because they are our duties.

—W. Q. JUDGE

## WHO ARE WE?

THE problem of consciousness is one of great importance in the philosophy of Theosophy. The use of the word needs to be looked into, for we forget what we understand it to mean when we talk of animal consciousness or egoic consciousness or cosmic consciousness.

We know that ordinarily we take it to mean the state of being aware or conscious of "something." We need "someone" to be aware of "something." That "someone" may be very unresponsive to other "someones" as in the lower kingdoms of nature, or semi-responsive as life progresses upwards through the lower kingdoms, or fully responsive when evolution in the human kingdom has reached its zenith. And we ask ourselves, "What makes these differences?"

The one who is aware and the thing he is aware of have to be united by a power, the power to perceive or to be aware. There are, therefore, three things: the perceiver, the power of perception and the object of perception. For any power to function there must be a form through which it can work—hence the variety of forms which make up a universe.

When we think of the Human Monad we know that it is really a trinity of Atma, Spirit; Buddhi, its vehicle; and Manas, its "conscious principle." Atma is Consciousness, unaware of any limitations or divisions; Buddhi is its carrier and, as such, unconscious of divisions in itself; Manas is the power to perceive such divisions. Since all is in fact Atma or Spirit, Atma is the perceiver in all forms, Manas is the power of perception, Buddhi the vehicle through which perception functions.

Manas can be Universal Mind or awareness on any plane, or it can be focused in a form so that the power to perceive in that form is able to see other forms as separate from itself and itself as an entity. This is the human stage.

In the human kingdom, Manas is linked with Buddhi as a definite entity, called the Ego. The work of the Ego in the human kingdom is to become conscious of every part of the universe and retain the consciousness of itself as Atma-Buddhi-Manas, the Divine, when functioning on the plane of Atma-Buddhi, the universal aspect of life, and also when functioning on the lower planes of matter. Man, divine, man, sees himself as Perceiver, the power of perception and the object

perceived.

Trying to understand this abstruseness, we, the *human* Ego (Kama-Manas, the ray of the conscious principle of the Monad functioning as an entity or Ego conjoined with Kama), begin to sense this aspect in ourselves. In time we see that the trinity is in all forms, though in all it does not shine forth. But our present stage is that of perceiving, being affected by, material objects and their reflection or reconstruction by the Kama-Manasic mind. We learn that our Kama-Manasic consciousness has to become Buddhi-Manasic, that is, *Manas Taijasi*. Is it the ray of the higher Ego in us that is functioning when we act in ways so far removed from those of Manas, or is it the Kama-Manasic ego? Is our Ego asleep until we are perfect? If not, what is its state of consciousness, of what is it aware all the time?

In *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (p. 29), we are told that "while Consciousness is not a thing *per se*, Mind is distinctly—in its Manvantaric functions at least—an Entity."

*What is it doing while we are awake or asleep?* We are told in the *Transactions*: "...our *Ego* lives its own separate life within its form of clay whenever it becomes free from the trammels of matter, *i.e.*, during the sleep of the physical man (p. 60). And it is added:

During the waking hours the thoughts and Voice of the Higher Ego [Manas] do or do not reach his gaoler—the physical man, for they are the *Voice of his Conscience*....So dormant are the Spiritual faculties, because the Ego is so trammelled by matter, that *It* can hardly give all its attention to the man's actions, even should the latter commit sins for which that Ego—when reunited with its *lower* Manas—will have to suffer conjointly in the future. (pp. 61-62)

*What are the thoughts of this Ego?* Its thoughts are actions. It looks directly on ideas. It can be disturbed by the wrong actions of its ray in human form. It is therefore a conscious entity, conscious of the without and conscious of the within, for it knows itself to be itself. Its consciousness is "on quite another plane" from ours. It is more or less dormant as far as this material plane is concerned, except through the ray of itself sent out for any particular incarnation. Why? Because once incarnated, this ray gets entangled in Kama, in sense impressions. The vehicles of its expression through which it perceives on the lower planes are not pure. When they are purified, then the Light shines

through the "nine-gate city of his abode," and man becomes Egoic Man.

*How can we raise the vehicles?* Is not our answer in the teaching that the action and behaviour of the vehicles depend on whether they will gravitate towards the higher Ego or towards the lower animal man? When the impulse given them is psychic, *i.e.*, personal in outlook, the Egoic consciousness is unable to make any impression on them. When the impulse is noetic, *i.e.*, of the same nature as the Ego, then the Ego is able to impress itself on its vehicles and function through them.

Shall we not then give our principles food of the highest nature we know, *i.e.*, universal in scope? In doing this, are we not giving a noetic impulse to the atoms making up the vehicles, so that in time, and bit by bit, the nature of those vehicles is changed? Is this not the reason why we are taught that virtues are essential, that the basic thought and motive of life must be universal, and not limited to "I" and "mine"?

What are the virtues in fact? They are the result, in action, of thought-feeling along certain lines, noetic impulses given to the organs of action. The conscious use of *Dana, Shila, Kshanti*, etc., will bring us as personalities into closer contact with the Egoic individuality. The Ego can understand, vibrate in unison with charity and love immortal, with patience and other virtues; they belong to its own nature. But it cannot respond to hatred, jealousy, etc.

Therefore, are we not faced with the fact that no matter how much we say, "I am an Ego," "I am not this body, these feelings, etc.," we, as we know ourselves consciously, *are* the body, the feelings, etc.? Only as we think, feel and act on the lines of the Ego is the Ego working through us and we are It and It is us; otherwise it is asleep for us, or nearly so. Let us turn towards it all the time, free its ray in us from the entanglements of personal desires, and turn it towards its Parent.

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HE who has not forgiven an enemy has not yet tasted one of the most sublime enjoyments of life.

—JOHANN K. LAVATER

## THE OBLIGATORY PILGRIMAGE

MANY are the sacred shrines in India and elsewhere, to which millions of pilgrims have flocked down the centuries. Though the custom of visiting such places is not as widely prevalent today as it once was, many still look upon sacred shrines as centres of spiritual force from which radiate elevating influences, and consider it a religious duty to make such a pilgrimage at least once before death.

The institution of pilgrimage is a religious reflection of a spiritual verity; the person going on a pilgrimage represents the Eternal Pilgrim, the Human Soul, bound for the Goal of Light, self-shining within the Shrine of the innermost consciousness of each human being. To symbolize this, and to inspire the simple-minded and clean-hearted humble folk to look beyond this world of ignorance and false knowledge, the Wise Men of old established places of pilgrimage. They were founded in an epoch when spirituality was beginning to decline and the force of sensuous living was on the increase. According to the occult tradition, to protect humanity against the descending cycles, culminating in the Kali Yuga, the Dark Age, the ancient Sages magnetized newly built shrines and other suitable places, and posted suitable persons to look after the shrine and care for the spiritual needs of the pilgrims. It is asserted by many that at most of the famous places of pilgrimage there still can be found an Adept or Holy One, who, though he conceals his identity, is always ready to give spiritual insight and assistance to those pure of heart who might go there.

About these sacred shrines there is rife not only colossal ignorance but also great superstition. In this, as in other matters, the shadow is mistaken for the substance and outer formalism has usurped the place of spiritual reality. Today millions of pilgrims observe outer rites and derive little benefit. An excellent illustration of the uselessness of formal pilgrimage is furnished by the story of an orthodox Muslim who had just returned from Mecca; he visited the saint Junaid to narrate his adventures. After a while Junaid asked his visitor:

"From the hour you began journeying away from your home, have you been journeying away from your sins also?" "No." "Then you have made no journey."

"At every stage where you halted, had you advanced a stage towards God?" "No." "Then you have covered no stages."

"When you changed your ordinary clothing for pilgrim's garb, did you discard your vices and put on virtues?" "No." "Then you have not put on the pilgrim's garb."

"When you stood at the Mount Arafat, did you stand in contemplation of God?" "No." "Then you have not stood at Arafat."

"When you went round the Ka'ba, did you behold all aspects of the immaterial Spirit?" "No." "Then you have not gone round the Ka'ba."

"When you ran between Safa and Marwa, did you achieve Purity (Safa) and Considerateness (Murawwat)?" "No." "Then you have not done any real running."

"When you reached the place of sacrifice, did you sacrifice your worldly desires?" "No." "Then you have not made sacrifice."

"When you threw the pebbles, did you throw away whatever sensual ideas were in your mind?" "No." "Then you have not thrown the pebbles, and have not performed the pilgrimage."

The sincere seeker after Wisdom, using the key of analogy and correspondence, must look for the spiritual truths hidden behind the outer forms prescribed in the *shastras*. To those who look deep enough, the physical pilgrimage is but a reflection of the psychological pilgrimage; sacred cities, sacred shrines, sacred rivers, sacred hills, etc., are inner psycho-physiological centres to which the Pilgrim-Soul must go, and which correspond to the bodily journey to these places.

There is that in us which is the experiencer, the sufferer, the enjoyer, who learnt in the mineral, grew in the vegetable, moved in the animal, and acts, feels, thinks, wills, in the human. This is the Pilgrim-Soul, immortal and eternal. Yet all have not awakened to the fact that life is a pilgrimage. Many are those who journey through life concerned only with physical supremacy; others look upon life as a sort of a contest of wits in which the sharpest carries off the prize; still others are mere sight-seers, who move about leisurely in the pleasure-grounds of senses, engrossed in enjoyments of the moment. There are only a few for whom life has become a conscious pilgrimage, not only from the cradle to the grave, but from the beginning to the end of a *Manvantara*, or period of evolution, embracing millions upon millions of years. Nations and civilizations rise, grow old, decline and disappear; but the Eternal Pilgrim lives on, spectator of all the innumerable changes of environment. Starting upon the long journey from his spiritual Home, radiating like a spark from the central Fire, he

struggles through every form of life, gathers experience in all ages, ever engaged in a pilgrimage to the shrine from which he came, along the long and weary Path.

The idea of a Path is one of the most graphic symbols that the mind of man is capable of conceiving. In it is contained the whole story of spiritual evolution. It is mentioned in all the mystic works. On it the Pilgrim-Soul journeys—from the Land of Shadows, Homeward, to the Mount of Light. This Light towards which he journeys is within, not outside of himself. But, though he is a Being of Light, that Light is obscured. This Light of his mind, the Light of Knowledge, is veiled; the Light of his heart, the Light of Compassion, is covered up. The Path of spiritual evolution, therefore, is an inner Path which begins with one's self, as he is. Without moving, it is said, is the travelling on this Path. As one puts into practice those ideals and perceptions one holds to be true, one *becomes* that Path.

The road, wearily winding its way upward through the Vale of Darkness—the darkness of ignorance—and the region of deceptive light and shade—the world of the Great Illusion, where the real is mistaken for the unreal and the unreal for the real—is steep and thorny, and beset with perils of every kind. The barriers and pitfalls that the Pilgrim has to encounter on his inner journey are to be found in his own psychic nature, in the desires, habits and tendencies of his personal self. The impure heart and the unclean mind thwart his progress. Doubt, prejudice, suspicion, hatred, anxiety, regret, fear, lust, anger, covetousness, pride—all take shape and drag him down. Deadly foes they all are—self-conceived, self-begotten, self-bred. Some there be who blame outer circumstances and conditions for their difficulties, who point the finger of accusation at the "other fellow" for blocking their road to happiness. But how can any external condition or event prevent a person from acting righteously, if that is his heart's desire? Progress on the inner Path is measured by the degree to which he masters the passion of his lower self. True progress is for him who obeys the voice of his conscience, who lives up to the best that he knows.

It is not hard to grasp that selfishness and impurity and their brood must be done away with; but many a person stops short with this. He fails to see that he is still held back by qualities and attitudes of mind and heart not evil in themselves but personal and hence a hindrance to

the Pilgrim-Soul's free course. All personal ties and interests, all hopes, fears, loves, hates and other qualities that seem to us part of ourselves, all "self-identifying attachment for children, wife, and household," for race, community or nation, constitute an additional burden that weighs us down, unsuspected by ourselves, and must sooner or later be cast aside. The lighter the burden he carries, the easier and swifter the Pilgrim's journey; what is true on the physical plane is equally true on the moral plane. Like the rich man in the parable, we are unable to make any progress because we have great possessions—physical, mental and psychic—and we cannot let these go.

But even when the Pilgrim has stripped himself of all that seemed to hold him back, let him not think his journey will henceforth be smooth sailing. Many tests and trials have to be encountered, many temptations have to be faced and resisted. In Greek mythology we read how Atlanta, strong and fleet, was outrun by Hippomenes, who lacked her swiftness but possessed deep guile. The golden apples that he rolled ahead she slowed her speed to snatch up as she ran, and thus lost the race. Many are the wayfarers who stop for golden apples by the way! The lure of the world is something the Pilgrim must learn to resist.

In the fullness of time, through trial and error, the Pilgrim-Soul learns the lessons of Life. He learns to attune his being to Humanity's great pain; to attune his heart and mind to the great mind and heart of all Mankind. For thus and thus alone can the journey upward and homeward begin, and the Shrine of Light be reached. Then at last does the Pilgrim-Soul see his Divine mission and seek to fulfil it. Not for himself but for the world he lives. So living, with his soul-gaze centred on the one pure Light, he sacrifices the material to the Spiritual, the changing to the Unchanging, the unreal to the Real. Through a series of progressive awakenings he completes the Cycle of Incarnation, the obligatory Pilgrimage. He reaches the consummation of human life; and having reached it, he voluntarily stations himself on the Path, to point out the Way to others, ever ready to extend a helping hand and utter a word of cheer to the suffering Pilgrims struggling through the Vale of Darkness or stranded in the deceptive Land of Shadows.

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## "RESIST NOT EVIL"

A MYSTERY lies hidden in the words accredited to Jesus in the Gospels. We are all fond of quoting his injunction to love our enemies, but we are less willing to try to come to terms with the words of verses 38-42 of the fifth chapter of *Matthew*. These few words present us with a problem, a dilemma. We are instructed, in these verses of the Gospel, as follows:

Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

In this day and age when we pride ourselves upon our "rights," these wise words may be hard to digest. Most will say that such an attitude is untenable. How are we to maintain our equilibrium if we are to allow ourselves to be manipulated by all and sundry? We must affirm our superiority and show that we are not to be trifled with. This is the measure of true manhood—to be able to assert our authority.

These thoughts occupy the minds of the vast majority of men and women in today's society. They may also argue that such a viewpoint would have been to no avail, say during World War II, when the evil of Hitler threatened to engulf humanity.

The truth is that we must be prepared to realize that men like Hitler may very well be the product of the misguided thinking characterized above. We may place *ourselves* in the situation where offensive action seems necessary, but it still remains in *our* hands whether or not to provide the conditions for the rise of another similar dictator. The idea that non-resistance to evil is an effective way to neutralize that evil is a difficult one to come to terms with. We think that if our defences are lowered, we automatically will open ourselves to all kinds of malignant influences. Well, certainly passivity will do this, but we are discussing something far removed from a torpid state of mind that is totally

ineffective. It is our inability to grasp the concept of an effective alternative that renders us helpless in the face of our many "adversaries." We are indoctrinated with the ideologies of the promoters of "an eye for an eye" doctrine. The arguments in favour of revenge are put forward enthusiastically by these people and there seems to be a part of our nature that responds to such malevolent utterances. Modern society does not cultivate the higher and nobler sentiments inherent in us all, but it encourages the speedy growth of the animal nature. Many times, in conversation, we hear our fellow human beings declaring that it is neither wise nor possible to forgive our enemies. They may try to bring their point home by asking how we would react if some thug were to murder our own family in their sleep. Would *our* hearts be full of charity and compassion for the perpetrator of such a dastardly crime? Would *we* be able to resist the temptation to inflict our wrath upon the person responsible?

The answer to these questions is by no means easy. We admit that the frenzy that may be engendered by the discovery of such a crime may lead us to lose our self-control and retaliate, bringing to book the perpetrator of the crime; and by the low standards of contemporary civilization, we may feel well pleased with our action. Justice has been done. The "Vigilante" code of ethics has proved effective. End of story. But is it? Perchance it is just the beginning.

A student of Theosophy will be aware that it is impossible to "kill" anything. Rendering the physical body inactive does not mean that the man has ceased to be. The inner man does not die with the physical body, and we can turn with profit to the great scriptures of the world for confirmation of this fact. The *Bhagavad-Gita* informs us that the Spirit "is not slain when this its mortal frame is destroyed." The most disturbing fact regarding the fallacy of revenge killings, whether carried out by individuals, groups, or even nations, under the guise of lawful executions, is that the victim is actually being provided with the opportunity to continue his evil deeds free from the encumbrance of a weighty physical body. He becomes a "spook," or elementary, wandering the earth and influencing the minds of susceptible people to commit the same crimes for which he was punished.

It is a sad reality that modern education regards such teachings as the above as remnants of mediaeval superstition, and believes that 20th-century enlightenment has freed us from such "puerile" beliefs.

So much the worse for them. It is hard to characterize the "benefits" bestowed on us by the education system of today. The sharp rise in crime and immorality worldwide does nothing to substantiate the doctrine that we are now free from the degrading influence of "mediaeval superstitions." Although there is certainly an element in us that is overcome by the desire to revenge ourselves, a careful analysis of the situation may reveal to us that such a course of action is far from efficacious. We should also be awake to the possibility that the criminal may be mentally unbalanced in some way, and therefore not responsible for his actions; he may require help rather than castigation.

If we turn our attention to Book the Fifth of *The Light of Asia*, by Sir Edwin Arnold, we shall find Gautama Buddha asking of the Brahmin ascetics: "...wherefore add ye ills to life which is so evil?" "Two wrongs do not make a right" is another piece of "homespun philosophy," but there is a definite ring of truth to it. How can we ever hope to achieve a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, with no distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour, if our hearts are polluted by the selfish desire to revenge ourselves on those who have wronged us? It is not possible that there can be any exceptions to such a rule—not in the thoughts of students of Theosophia anyway. The driving force of the true aspirant should always be to *help* and never to criticize, unless constructively.

Mahatma Gandhi developed the concept of non-violence to a fine art and put it into practice effectively. Unfortunately many of his followers had not the same understanding of *Ahimsa* and also lacked the self-control of their "leader." Even so, a point was proved. It is possible to employ a force that is more potent than the self-destructive currents produced in the act of retaliation. This is a spiritual force that manifests in a frame of mind that is tranquil and all-forgiving. Such a person is motivated by one idea, and one idea alone—to reduce the sum total of human misery and to help his brothers and sisters to bear the heavy burden of life. He will be aware of the many influences that prevent his fellow human beings from acting in a way that is beneficial to themselves and, more importantly, to those around them. A person may be driven to perform some terrible deed by entities on the astral plane, and his affinity to such forces may be the result of Karma accumulated in past lives, or even in this present life. However, it is plain that such a person is in need of help because it is society as a

whole that has allowed the development of the vices that react upon us and cause such havoc.

In the 1960's there was an "explosion" of talk and action connected with "freedom." This "freedom" consisted in an abandonment of morals and a surrender to the animal elements in us. The sentiment may have been correct, but nothing of true value is won so easily. "The Kingdom of Heaven is taken by violence," and this means that we should cultivate that frame of mind that refuses to be led astray by that portion of our nature that desires only to satiate animal functions, such as eating, drinking, mating, etc. Taken to an extreme, these become bestiality and the progenitors of diverse illnesses, physical, mental and moral. This is what may be defined as "evil." It is important to realize that the censure of the older generation as regards the actions of the younger is totally ineffective, as these actions are a direct result of the misdeeds of the "elders." In one respect, the breakdown commenced some decades ago with the relaxing of sexual restraints as the result of the wide use of contraceptives. Sex education has created a generation of sexually aware young people, but with no real moral restraint. We collectively have brought into being the Frankenstein's monster, and only we can destroy it.

H.P.B. and the Masters were always keen to stress the importance of morality. Many subsequent Theosophical "leaders" have attempted to push this teaching into the background, with disastrous results. If Theosophy cannot "enter the arena" and deal with the topic effectually and intelligently, then it can hardly be said to be fulfilling its duty as a potent force for good in the world. The actions of Theosophists, and students of Theosophy, towards the perpetrators of evil deeds and towards evil itself should always be restrictive and ameliorative and never punitive. This is not to say that, in the face of some intensely cruel and despotic individual or regime, we may not act in a way that is defensive, protecting those values that we cherish. Such a dilemma has faced civilization for millenniums, and every now and again a definite choice has to be made—how we are going to deal with those who are totally misguided, those whom the "illusion of separateness" has blinded to the truth that we are all *one* and that it is a fallacy indeed to take up arms against oneself. Even the thoroughly evil man is to be pitied, as even he, in the near or distant future, will bring about his own destruction. Hatred and revenge can be productive of nothing

positive and can only add to the sum total of evil in the world. The fact that we are not perfect and may act in a vengeful manner in certain circumstances, when our emotions override our common sense, does not validate the claims of those who believe in "an eye for an eye" as a legitimate form of justice. Such a course of action arises from temporary weakness and may be regretted on a future occasion.

In *The Key to Theosophy* (Indian edition, p. 248), H.P.B. discusses the attitude that should be adopted by a Theosophist towards his fellow human beings. H.P.B. commences by stating that no Theosophist should remain silent when he hears evil reports or slanders directed against innocent persons. The conversation then continues as follows:

ENQ. But suppose what one hears is the truth, or may be true without one knowing it?

THEO. Then you must demand good proofs of the assertion, and hear both sides impartially before you permit the accusation to go uncontradicted. You have no right to believe in evil, until you get undeniable proof of the correctness of the statement.

ENQ. And what should you do then?

THEO. Pity and forbearance, charity and long-suffering, ought to be always there to prompt us to excuse our sinning brethren, and to pass the gentlest sentence possible upon those who err. A Theosophist ought never to forget what is due to the shortcomings and infirmities of human nature.

ENQ. Ought he to forgive entirely in such cases?

THEO. In every case, especially he who is sinned against.

ENQ. But if by so doing, he risks to injure, or allow others to be injured? What ought he to do then?

THEO. His duty; that which his conscience and higher nature suggests to him; but only after mature deliberation. Justice consists in doing no injury to any living being; but justice commands us also never to allow injury to be done to the many, or even to one innocent person, by allowing the guilty one to go unchecked.

These wise and thoughtful words should be used as guidelines by all those of us who are interested enough to want to understand our fellow human beings and who wish to aid in the task of bringing about a "Golden Age" of world peace.

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## THE RAZOR-EDGED PATH

THE path of Occultism is said to be like a razor's edge, but is not the pathway through everyday life—the training ground of the Occultist—razor-edged also? When we look at the unhappiness in the world and see to how great an extent it is made here and now, by *present* actions, *present* feelings and *present* thoughts, we cannot but realize that life is a testing ground of balance. We are accustomed to think of it as a battlefield, but is it not more truly an arena, where the tight rope has to be walked? Feats of balance are therefore more necessary than feats of strength, and to gain balance the arms, symbolic of action, must be used to offset any misplacement of weight that might occur. The head must be cool, clear and capable of judgment, and the heart or emotions must be stilled and centred in the desire for balance.

Therefore balance is a necessity in life itself and not only in the endeavour towards specialized spiritual living. How can balance be attained and maintained?

First and foremost it must be recognized that balance is necessary and therefore must be desired—just as in meditation the first step is the *desire* to concentrate.

Secondly, the desire must be steadily sustained, as in the next step towards meditation—contemplation.

Then comes thought about it, how to attain it, what it is, etc.—as the third stage in meditation is the dwelling on an object or a subject until full understanding of it is gained. And as in meditation, so here, these three stages must be ever operative.

Meditation on the subject of balance leads to the conclusion that it can be attained only by true judgment—in life and of things, people and conditions. True judgment is gained by weighing pros and cons, weighing things in terms of principles, in terms of universal right and wrong, harmony and disharmony. The first stage of this procedure is criticism and, as a first stage, as the sharpening of the tools, so to say, it is necessary. It is when it becomes the only stage that so much harm is done, for then bit by bit the criterion of right and wrong, harmony and disharmony as universal principles, becomes slowly changed into the criterion of the person's idea of himself as the exponent of these principles. Criticism in any shape or form must be kept in check constantly, and must never result in comparison of oneself with the

object criticized.

The essence of true criticism, whether of actions or of persons, is the ability to learn how the great universal laws work.

To take an example, we inevitably criticize an action without having full knowledge of its background, the thoughts of the actor, those things that the actor knows and that we do not, the causes that led up to the action. Therefore our criticism is only partial and should be held tentatively only, in order to watch events and see where we were right or wrong.

In this way, criticism leads to discernment, for it is under the control of the mind free of *kama*.

"To know all is to forgive all" is a good slogan which nevertheless must not blind us into condoning evil while feeling compassion for the evil-doer. True discernment is a faculty of *Buddhi*; the light of universals is shed on the particulars, the whole field is grasped at once and the relation between causes and effects is seen, *i.e.*, effects are seen as the flowering of causes. And in time, just as we can tell by seeing a rose that it must have grown on a certain kind of bush having roots, stems and leaves of its own kind, so we can deduce what kind of actions have led to the effects that we are seeing or experiencing.

True discernment is necessary in our own life, as true criticism of our own life is necessary. True analysis—a better term, by the way, than criticism—of our own reactions to events and our own self-engendered actions will help us more than criticism of others.

But to complete the picture we need to be sufficiently familiar with world conditions, with new discoveries of science, new methods of education, new ideas of morality, new concepts in the world of thought. To discern which of these are false and which true and our relationship to them, is part of our training. And who will say that a balanced view is not essential? Who will say that our own actions may not, by their imbalance or their balance, affect the world? Who will say that our emotions do not require to be balanced to discern truly the good from the false? And who will say that our thoughts may not be swayed from balance by our own opinion, if this is not based on universal principles?

We sometimes forget that a razor's edge is not only sharp, it is also *straight*.

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## H. P. BLAVATSKY AS SEEN THROUGH HER WORK

[The writer of this article, Dr. J. D. Buck, was a close associate of Mr. Judge and worked indefatigably in the cause of Theosophy. A practising homoeopathic physician in Cincinnati, Ohio, he was also a writer of many books on a variety of topics, and contributed numerous excellent articles to *The Path*, *The Theosophist* and *Lucifer*. Though he never met H.P.B., he maintained a correspondence with her while she was in India. In 1891, he sailed for England to meet H.P.B. personally, but while he was in mid-ocean she abandoned her body. Dr. Buck's memorial article appeared originally in *Lucifer* for June 1891.—Eds.]

HAVING joined the Theosophical Society in 1878, just as Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott were leaving America for India, and having followed the fortune of the Society ever since with increasing interest up to the time of H.P.B.'s death, it has occurred to me that the reasons that have led me, step by step, to the present time, may not be without interest to the readers of *Lucifer*. It is not my purpose to write even an epitome of the Theosophical Movement, or to attempt to show Madame Blavatsky's relations thereto, but rather to give a distant view of the teacher, as seen in her work, and show how her motive and aim may be discerned therefrom.

Coming to the T.S. doctrines from the orthodox protestant communion through familiarity with modern science, and philosophers like Herbert Spencer, these studies were immediately followed by mystical writers like Jacob Boehme, when at this point my attention was attracted to *Isis Unveiled*.

The result of all previous studies had been most unsatisfactory. The old religious creeds and theological interpretations of Christianity had been altogether repudiated; and while the materialism into which modern science was obviously drifting was still less satisfactory, as giving the meaning of life, the nature and destiny of man, there lingered a feeling that there must be, after all, an element of truth and a beneficent purpose in the old religions. I was still earnestly searching for that which I had all along been unable to find, and yet which I felt must somewhere exist.

Two or three times I took up one of the volumes of *Isis*, only to lay it down, discouraged by the idea that I must read it through in order to know what it contained, and life at that time seemed very

short, and time always precious. To "scan" these books hastily, and get, as I had often done with other volumes, a good general idea of their contents, seemed impossible. One day I opened the first volume, "Science," and certain references therein to the Freemasons arrested my attention. I read on and on, and always with increasing interest. Before I had read to the end of the volume, I began to hunt for some clue to the author. Who was "H. P. Blavatsky"? I had found in the volumes certain references to a "Theosophical Society." What was Theosophy, and what objects had the Society in view? At last my interest became so great that I wrote a letter of enquiry to the publisher, Mr. Bouton, and the result was a most kind and courteous response from H. P. Blavatsky herself. A more specific letter of enquiry was followed by another kind answer, and by my joining the Society.

Soon after arriving in India, H.P.B. wrote me again in regard to the *Theosophist*, just then getting out its first number, and requested me to answer any attacks upon, or misrepresentations regarding the T.S. From that time till her residence at Avenue Road, she wrote me at considerable intervals of time and whenever occasion specially required.

Obtaining, from clues given in *Isis*, a more definite idea of that for which I had been so long in search, as also of its earmarks in many directions, I soon learned the sign-manual of the true occultist, viz., the absence of all egotism. As soon as I found a writer exploiting a doctrine for either personal fame or profit, I learned first to distrust, and finally to discard him. Applying this test to H.P.B., as I did from the beginning, I found her in the face of her immense knowledge never egotistic, and not only from every sign and all reliable information, free from all personal pride or ambition, but rejecting everything offered to herself in the way of adulation or revenue. If one called her great or wise, she replied, "I am but the servant of Masters who are indeed great." Before leaving America she became a naturalized citizen of the U.S., and in doing so lost her pension from the Russian Government. The expense of founding the Society, of removing its headquarters to India, of starting the *Theosophist*, and of many other items, was largely borne by H.P.B. and Col. Olcott, while at the same time the small fees for dues, diplomas, etc., went in every instance into the treasury of the Society. I never knew her to solicit

money in any way, even for the propaganda, and whenever presents of money were made to her they invariably went into the general fund of the Society.

I speak of these matters here, although so generally known, because as year after year went by, they furnished additional confirmation that here was no selfish egotist, no "adventuress," but a worker for truth and for humanity who utterly sank herself in her work. This chain of evidence, beginning from the foundation of the Society and ending only at her last breath, is unbroken. Nor have I ever seen one particle of evidence to the contrary, though ignorant and unscrupulous persons have made all sorts of baseless and absurd charges against her.

I regard this line of evidence as of great importance for the reason that every other movement of modern times, claiming to work on similar lines, with which I am acquainted, and I know a good many personally and intimately, is open to the charge of exploitation for both money and personal aggrandisement. H.P.B. sometimes made the statement that some of these organizations had stolen the livery of Theosophy for the purpose of personal profit; and in several instances, taking their professions at face-value with the reserved right of withdrawing if I found them otherwise, I joined them for the purpose of learning whether they were indeed true, and if they were working unselfishly on Theosophical lines. In every single instance their professions were false, and their boasted wisdom a delusion and a snare. One society was exploited by a convicted felon with great pretensions and manuscripts "borrowed" from the "literary remains" of P. B. Randolph. The test to which I referred in the early part of this paper is unfailing, and those who are inexperienced in such matters will do well to bear it in mind. The true teacher of arcane wisdom who really aims at the betterment of man is never egotistic, ambitious, mercenary, or time-serving. For fourteen years I have applied this test to H.P.B. with the result of confirming all my earlier impressions. She sacrificed fortune, fame, health, and at last life itself, for an *idea*, and that idea was first and last the teaching of the truths of Theosophy for the benefit of humanity.

Coming now to her teaching itself: those who have charged her followers—those who were glad to be taught and led by her—with foolish credulity or blind fanaticism, are invariably those who speak

without knowledge, and malign without evidence.

If I examined her method and motive, I also critically examined the grounds of her knowledge, and the evidence of her statements. Everyone who has ever read her larger works, even with curious and literary interest, has remarked the almost innumerable references to many books in many languages and written in almost every age. Profound, indeed, would be the knowledge, and priceless the opportunity, of him who had the ability and the opportunity to verify all these references. He might, indeed, find here and there inaccuracies; what wonder, when these references were known to have been made *apparently* from memory, for it is well attested that she had a small number of volumes of any sort within her reach, and for months together never left the house in which she was living. Fortunately I have one of the largest libraries of occult and rare books to be found in America, and as my studies progressed I kept buying books to which she referred in *Isis*, in *The Secret Doctrine*, and in her almost numberless fugitive essays, for the purpose of verifying her statements as well as for further research. Through the clues thus afforded by her writings I was almost unconsciously gathering a mass of testimony in support of the old wisdom-religion. Given, now, an individual of fair intelligence, capable of estimating evidence, and loyal at all times to the simple truth, I could undertake to support the great bulk of H.P.B.'s teaching by outside and overwhelming testimony.

There is also another, and entirely different, line of evidence; I have already early in this paper referred to the Freemasons. It was at this point that I first became attracted to H.P.B.'s writings and joined the Society; I had been through thirty-two degrees of Masonry, and had here, as in the orthodox religions, found something wanting. There were, indeed, traditions of "Ancient Landmarks," and that Masonry had originally been given to man "by God Himself," but what these ancient landmarks really were, or how and when the G.A. of T.U. had revealed them to man was nowhere to be discovered.

In other words, there was the evidence of glyphics, and the meaning of symbolism; and here my first real clue was derived from H.P.B. A friend of mine who has probably made more discoveries in the ancient Kabbala than anyone known to modern times, and who had devoted more than twenty years to this special line of work, raised once certain enquiries concerning his own researches, and

expressed the doubt that any man then living could or would answer his enquiries. I suggested that he should write to H.P.B. in regard to the matter, and after some delay he did so. The result was nearly forty pages of very closely written MSS. answering every question he had raised, and adding a fund of information that astonished the recipient beyond all measure. This gentleman is not and never has been a member of the T.S., but to the present time he declares his conviction that H.P.B. was the most profound and wonderful woman of this or of any age. He, a specialist for half a lifetime in an obscure and unknown field, found H.P.B. perfectly familiar with all his work.

But why multiply evidence on these lines so familiar to all who have really any knowledge of the subject of which I write? If such methods of examination and such tests constantly applied for fourteen years constitute one a "blind follower" and an "unreasoning enthusiast," then am I all that and more. Mine is not the pen to write a biography of H.P.B., nor to estimate the value and magnitude of her work. These are but brief personal reminiscences of one who never saw her, who could not, therefore, come under her personal magnetism, nor be in any way prejudiced by personal contact. From the beginning I have measured the work of H.P.B. *by itself*, as well as by every available test and comparison, and allowed it to stand or fall on its merit. The time has now come when everyone at all interested in the teachings and work of the T.S. must apply this discriminating method, and if the student be in real earnest and ready to accord to truth its own intrinsic value, the result can be in no wise uncertain. There is no record of any such teacher in the western world since our boasted "civilization" emerged from barbarism.

If it be just to judge a tree by its fruit, a character by its service to humanity, and a personality by its self-forgetfulness, then will H.P. Blavatsky soon be recognized in her true character, and placed among the benefactors of humanity.

Her mission remains to the Society she came forth to found. If its members have not apprehended her mission, then, indeed, have they studied in vain, and she hath imagined a vain thing. Those who have received most through larger opportunity and from personal contact with the teacher, have the larger duty.

Nay, O thou candidate for Nature's hidden lore!

If one would follow in the steps of holy Tathagata,

Those gifts and powes are not for Self.

But what if the disciple prove forgetful and untrue, and wander off in search of Self? The teachings still remain, and truer disciples yet will come to carry on her work. A tidal wave raised by her hand has already swept around the world. Its pulses throb in every artery of life. The Society has but to feed the body already transfused with a newer life, to keep it intact as a whole, and to draw from exhaustless sources already in their keeping, to move the world as it has not been moved for many a weary century. *The nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood* is already formed. Shall this Laya-centre lift humanity and enlighten the world? H.P.B. is not dead. There is no death. H.P.B. has diffused her life into the Theosophical Society, bidding them again diffuse its vital stream to every soul that breathes; adding their life-force to hers, and so to *pass it on*, involving all; enlightening all; redeeming all from selfishness and sin. "Death" was her most heroic deed. It marks and means renewed life. Hitherto we have received, now we must give. Hitherto we have learned; now, like her, we must teach. The harvest is ready, and the reapers are *not* a few, and the golden grain shall not fall back into the ground, nor be devoured by the beasts of the fields and the fowls of the air, for an innumerable host that no man can number stand hungry and waiting without. They are waiting without, footsore and weary with life. They have waited long, clamouring for bread and receiving only a stone, and here is the *one only Truth* that can feed and satisfy the starving soul; the one Truth that to the last analysis can satisfy the reasoning mind, and give new life and hope to the sorrowing heart of humanity. *Let us push on the work of H.P.B.*

—J. D. BUCK

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HE who would be a true Theosophist must bring himself to live as one....A true Theosophist ought "to deal justly and walk humbly."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

## IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Ignorance, it is said, breeds prejudice. Nowhere is this more evident in present-day India than in the prevailing mood among at least some Hindus—the surfacing of anti-Muslim prejudice. There has been much talk about analysing the "roots of prejudice." "What we are now witnessing, as we did during the Partition holocaust, are the poisonous thorns on the tree of prejudice," writes Rahul Singh in *Indian Express Magazine* (January 20, 1991).

A point worthy of note that should jolt Indians is that the word "communalism" has little meaning for people in some other countries:

Communalism? That's a concept—or should one say emotion?—that we in India, with so many communities, are completely immersed in. It pervades our lives at various levels, particularly now. It is difficult to imagine that there are countries where the concept is so remote and so alien that it is almost forgotten....

John Dunn, professor of political theory at Cambridge University, who was in Bombay recently, made much the same point. He said that the religious and communal turmoil that India was presently going through was something that the West had put behind itself over three centuries ago, though it had taken the West a century of bloodshed and trauma to do so. "I hope it doesn't take India that long," he added laconically.

During that century Europe too had witnessed fierce religious strife, fuelled by blind prejudice. But that was so long ago that it was not even memory in the public mind, only remembered by historians.

But what is happening in India is only too horrifyingly real. And the prejudices—many of them irrational—which underlie what is happening are furiously at play. To overcome these prejudices, one must understand them, and to do that they must be confronted head on. There should be no shirking....

Indeed, lack of sufficient education is at the core of the Hindu-Muslim problem, as it is of so many of our other problems.

We should add that the need of the hour is *moral* education—study of the Great Sages and their scriptures. Not a sectarian and dogmatic use of the *Gita* and the *Koran*, but a dispassionate study of these and other great texts from an eclectic, universal standpoint. And the purpose of such study is as thorough an application as possible of the

instruction they impart. A proper understanding of the ancient texts of the ancient world, however, requires a key, which Theosophy offers.

The specific ills that have brought about India's downfall all proceed from one centre—the sin of unbrotherliness. Even in this last decade of the 20th century, we are a divided people. Religious dogmatism, communal pride, caste prejudices, provincial jealousies, linguistic rivalries—these flourish to such an extent that the question presses: "Is India a nation?" How many are there who think, feel, speak and act as Indians? People refer to themselves as Hindus or Muslims, "forward" castes or "backward" classes, Gujaratis or Maharashtrians. When the world is becoming one, Indians seem to be growing narrower and more sectarian and divisive in their views and deeds. The outbursts of fanaticism and violence in the wake of the Ayodhya controversy are a sign of degradation, of a fallen and irreligious India, falling further into the mire of unbrotherliness.

India has proclaimed itself a Secular State, *i.e.* the State as such does not interfere with the religious beliefs and freedom of its citizens. Yet some among the elected representatives of the people who should know better are themselves fanning the flame of religious intolerance! Are not those in positions of power expected to educate the people, by precept and by example, in how to raise secularism to a spiritual altitude? Secularism does not mean agnosticism or atheism. It implies, or should imply, an atmosphere of Gnosis, of Light and Peace, of Unity and Universal Brotherhood.

It has been pointed out by a Master of Wisdom how formidably evil are "the magnetism and invisible results proceeding from erroneous and sincere beliefs." And again:

Ignorance created Gods and cunning took advantage of the opportunity....It is priestly imposture that rendered these Gods so terrible to man; it is religion that makes of him the selfish bigot, the fanatic that hates all mankind out of his own sect without rendering him any better or more moral for it. It is belief in God and Gods that makes two-thirds of humanity the slaves of a handful of those who deceive them under the false pretence of saving them. Is not man ever ready to commit any kind of evil if told that his God or Gods demand the crime?—voluntary victim of an illusionary God, the abject slave of his crafty ministers....Remember the sum of human misery will never be diminished unto that day when the better portion of humanity destroys in the name of Truth, morality,

and universal charity, the altars of their false gods....

If it be permissible to symbolize things subjective by phenomena objective, I should say that to the psychic sight India seems covered with a stifling grey fog—a moral meteor—the odic emanation from her vicious social state.

This stifling atmosphere is the result mainly of false religiosity and caste prejudices, which engender hypocrisy on the moral and social planes, and decay and death of soul life. Is the regeneration of India then a hopeless task? Master states elsewhere:

India has been going down for thousands of years. She must take equally long for her regeneration. The duty of the philanthropist is to work with the tide and assist the onward impulse.

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In USSR today, there is a new wave of religious freedom. Requisitioned churches and other places of worship are being returned to believers, talks on religion and ethical standards are being broadcast on radio and television, and these subjects are being taught to the young. Recently, the newspaper *Sovietskaya Kultura* published an article by the writer and theologian Alexander Mèn. An English translation of the article appears in the December 1990 *Sputnik*. The author says among other things:

Belief in a higher meaning of life always was a basis of morality and a source for cultural creativity. Such was the role of religious belief as well. Of course, one would be mistaken to insist that religious people always lived up to religious ideals. Nevertheless, ideals there were; they would stir one's conscience, reminding one of one's conduct.

Where then, one might say, does evil, working in the name of religion itself, come from and where do impatience, fanaticism and the victimization of nonconformists come from? Excesses of a similar nature were not requirements dictated by faith itself. On the contrary, they were examples of a betrayal of religious teachings and evidence that the human soul had not yet been transformed by religion....

We are aware that in the course of history people who formerly converted to Christianity not infrequently distorted its ethical meaning. They reduced the Precept of Love into a weapon of social

and spiritual suppression. Dostoevsky embodied this tendency in the figure of the grand Inquisitor. What the Grand Inquisitor represents goes well beyond the scope of the tragic betrayal of the Gospels within the Church's sphere. The Grand Inquisitor has many faces. All that changes are his symbols, but in essence he remains the same....

Having said to Satan, "Man shall not live by bread alone....," Jesus Christ acknowledged the necessity of this "bread." But not only bread is needed.

The seduction lies in the absolutism of material values, when man, in the words of Nicolai Berdyaev, searches not for the meaning of life but only for its material blessings. The price for this becomes consumerism, an increase in egoism, a violation of feelings and spiritual bankruptcy....Such is the retribution for scorning the higher beginnings of man....

The Grand Inquisitor is a cynical realist. He holds people in contempt and wants to save them from themselves by force, thus enslaving them as if for their own good. This conception has been put into practice more than once—in the Middle Ages by the ruling clergy and secular sovereigns, and in our day, in different forms across the globe from Madrid to Peking. Almost everything was exactly as the Grand Inquisitor conceived it would be. He was only mistaken in one thing: the world did not become a better place. On the contrary, it has been drowned in innumerable calamities and has come close to the throes of death....

Alarming signals have already flashed out their warning. The question is whether the world will find it in itself to repent. Will it come to its senses, will it read the signs?

There is a meaning to history, and I believe that the flame of good and truth in it will not be extinguished. They always existed, they do exist and they shall exist. And thus we still have hope.

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Warnings have repeatedly been sounded by psychiatrists and citizens' groups that films containing high levels of "entertainment violence," though receiving children's rating from film boards in many countries, are psychologically harmful. A case in point is the American film "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles," which contains 194 glorified acts of violence. (*Science Express*, January 15)

According to the International Coalition Against Violent Entertainment (ICAWE), a coalition of organizations from 23 countries, glorification of violence and revenge is not suitable material for audiences of any age, and the large number of children and teenagers attending such films are especially a major concern. ICAWE claims that violence levels have gone up the world over with the increasing availability of video cassette recorders and the commercialization of television.

Dr. Joseph Strayhorn, an American psychiatrist at the University of Pittsburgh and writer on child development, states:

It is tragic that despite the massive evidence showing harmful effects from fantasy violence on normal children, our world culture continues to produce and sell such violence. Advertising campaigns sell these films to children but we never give them the honest truth about their harmfulness. As long as our society continues to glorify and revere violent heroes, lasting progress toward a non-violent world will be blocked.

Dr. Thomas Radecki, psychiatrist and Research Director of ICAWE, told a press conference: "The evidence is overwhelming that violent role models and fantasy rehearsal of violence make actual violent acts much more likely." Similar concern has been voiced by many other authorities. ICAWE notes that over 700 studies from 25 different countries, including numerous long-term field studies, have shown harmful effects from violent television and film entertainment on viewers of all ages. Exposure of pre-teen children to such films has long-lasting effects which persist into adolescence and adulthood, causing those children to be desensitized to violence and to be more likely to engage in serious violent and anti-social activities as adults.

ICAWE is requesting that warnings be sounded on television and accompany all cinema films that violent entertainment has harmful psychological effects on viewers. But are such warnings enough? It is the filmmakers who need to be made aware of their responsibility. They try to justify themselves on the ground that they are but giving to young or adult audiences what they ask for. This is evasion of responsibility. It is all a vicious circle: the films cater to popular taste (or lack of taste) and this leads to further debasement of tastes and lowering of standards. Films and television wrongly used can debase, and rightly used can elevate the young by infusing into them such

lofty ideals and resolves as would be conducive to the growth of the soul.

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Yelena Maslova, a young Russian, had since childhood an overwhelming desire to learn Indian classical dancing, and finally an opportunity came her way to fulfil her ambition at Kalakshetra, Madras, one of the most notable centres of the arts and cultural education for young people. In the January 1991 issue of *Soviet Land* (published by the Information Department of the USSR Embassy in India), Yelena writes about the function of Indian art—"art that raises mortals to the skies and drags down angels to the earth." This art with its five basic inseparable aspects, namely, painting, poetry, music, sculpture and dance, "developed as a part of the religious-philosophical institution of *Vedant*," she writes.

An art is a service, whose object of research is man. Research in this field had been going on since times immemorial and it boils down to the fact that art is one of the supreme paths of revealing the individuality, inner integrity and harmony of a man. But with the changes taking place from epoch to epoch in the vision of the world and of man in it, the concept of man's personality and significance denoted by this word also changes. As the conceptions of human individuality differ for various nations, different paths of social and cultural developments have been adopted in different regions of the world. Therefore, before discussing Indian art, it is necessary to understand the contribution made by Indian culture to the idea of human soul or individuality....

Enriched by the abundant treasure of supreme and lofty truths, Indian art is a perfectly finished philosophical system....The idea of Supreme Individuality was never identified with the idea of personality, with the "ego" or the feeling of "I," the idea of individual existence. This Individuality of a man is an object of research of Indian art. Bringing the personal "I" to harmonize with the Supreme, merging one's identity with it and strengthening the Divine Consciousness are a refined technique of Indian art. Imparting the feeling of supreme happiness on merging with the absolute eternity and one's unity with all creatures of the world, a feeling which is capable of elevating a person to the summits of spiritual cognition, constitutes the supreme significance of such art.

According to *Vedant*, a man represents a finished model of the

universe within himself developing along the same laws as the outer world. When a man stops to perceive himself as different from creatures and phenomena surrounding him and finds himself in harmony with the diversity of the world, then this world stops frightening him with its complicacy and diversity and becomes one with the inner world of the man. Only thus, by way of the cognition of the self, it is possible to cognize the surrounding world, says *Vedant*. The cognition of world-harmony and of the self in it is the path of every man desirous of learning the ultimate truth. *Vedant* mentions a number of means for the achievement of this state such as yoga, meditation, and so on. Art is one of them.

Art, then, is not a mere luxury product or an ornament, but is a creative power. All the arts and sciences were taught to infant humanity by its divine Rulers and Instructors, who thus demonstrated how the immutable laws of Nature could be used to manifest the invisible metaphysical principles in visible works of beauty.

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Cancer has been called "a disease of civilization." Some cancers have increased at such an alarming rate in the industrialized countries that experts consider it necessary to investigate the causes urgently. This is the conclusion of an international team of epidemiologists which has analysed trends in different cancers in the U.S., England, Wales, Germany, Italy and Japan over the past 20 years. Their findings are published in *The Lancet* (Vol. 336, p. 474).

Since 1968, there has been a sharp rise, especially among the elderly, in the incidence of brain tumours and other cancers of the central nervous system, in skin cancer, breast cancer, and multiple myeloma, a cancer of the plasma cells in the bone marrow. Lung cancer and cancer of the stomach, on the other hand, are on the decline.

The researchers believe it is unlikely that all the increases could be due to improved diagnosis or improved access to health care. They suggest that mass screenings with relatively high dosages of X-rays in the 1940s and 1950s could have had a "double-edged impact." Higher exposures could play a role in initiating cancer, they say.

The fact that cancer is on the increase in the industrialized world—and it is not the only form of illness on the increase—shows that all

is not well with the form of civilization we are evolving. It is a clear indication that a predisposing cause is our modern artificial, unnatural ways of life, mental, emotional and physical.

Cancer in general is attributed to cells turning "wild." In Theosophical terminology, certain "lives" of the body turn "devourers." Why do they so turn? Is the cause of this lawlessness purely a physical one, though many physical conditions conduce to its manifestation? Medical science deals mainly with effects and does not recognize that the seeds of disease are Karmic and lie in a region beyond the reach of physical experiment. In cancer, even more than in other diseases, the individualistic characteristics of the patient, which are the result of his past, need to be taken into consideration. His moral and mental state, his temperament, habits and inclinations, all may have a bearing on the course of his illness. Some systems of medicine today are beginning to recognize what Theosophy has always insisted—the incalculable effect of emotional and mental states upon the vitality and function of every living cell of which the body is composed. It is well enough known to observant physicians that emotions such as hatred, anger and jealousy make the individual susceptible to cancer.

There are many subsidiary physical causes for cancer—among others, an unnatural diet and intake of chemically-treated foods, excessive smoking, the abuse of antibiotics and other medicinal drugs, vaccination and inoculation which introduce alien substances into the human system, and too much exposure to X-rays. The message is clear—the giving up of an unnatural way of life and the adoption of clean and self-controlled living are the best preventives.

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# The United Lodge of Theosophists

## DECLARATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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