

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

"There is no Religion higher than Truth"

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W. Q. JUDGE ON METHODS OF SERVICE

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That he was a "great occultist" many know by individual experience, but none have fathomed the depths of his power and knowledge. The future will reveal much in regard to him that is now hidden, will show the real scope of his life-work. We know that to us that life-work has been an inestimable boon, and that through us it must be bestowed on others. The lines have been laid down for us by H.P.B., W.Q.J., and Masters, and we can take again as our watchword, that which he gave us at the passing of H.P.B., "Work, watch and wait." We will not have long to wait.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

ON the day of the Spring Equinox, the 21st of March, 1896, William Quan Judge's life dedicated to the service of humanity came to a close. Earnest students of Theosophy use his anniversary day to contemplate the record of his labour of love and how he accomplished what he did.

What contributes to his greatness to no small extent is his simplicity—simplicity not only in his life but also in his exposition of Theosophy. The power that he had, and that his writings still have, to inspire hundreds of men and women comes from his ability to expound the teachings in a way that can be understood by the ordinary person. Such practical, clear exposition he held to be

entirely possible and of the highest importance, for "it relates to and affects ethics, everyday life, every thought, and consequently every act."

"High scholarship and a knowledge of metaphysics are good things to have," W.Q. Judge tells us, "but the mass of the people are neither scholars nor metaphysicians." This is a fact of which every Theosophical student-exponent needs to remind himself, for many tend, when talking of Theosophy to beginners, to drag them into obscure realms and to confuse them with words and phrases far removed from the living of the life. This only puzzles the new inquirer, often nips his interest in the bud, and puts Theosophy in a false light. Inquiring people sometimes complain that Theosophy has little relation to the ordinary life, or that it is complicated, abstruse and vague, or that their education has not been deep enough to enable them to understand it. Theosophy has a message for *every* man or woman; it is the fault of its exponents if its doctrines are not extended to daily life and there applied, thus bringing them to the ordinary level of human minds in general. Mr. Judge's writings bear out this fact.

"The higher philanthropy calls for a spreading among men of a right basis for ethics, for thought, for action," he writes. What provides that right basis are ideas such as Unity, Karma, Reincarnation, the Perfectibility of Man, the Dual Nature. If these ideas are grasped and made part of our thought, they can be expounded from a thousand different points of view.

"The bearing of the teachings upon ethics," Mr. Judge says, "is in my opinion very important. It gives a vital system as opposed to a mechanical one." It is a living, vital Theosophy that one finds in Mr. Judge's writings. A mechanical Theosophist is one who professes belief in Theosophical doctrines and at the same time thinks that he can retain undisturbed many old dogmas that are diametrically opposed to Theosophy. A mechanical conception of Theosophical doctrines was one of the factors that brought about the downfall of the original Theosophical Society. "Mechanical codes," Mr. Judge warns, "are conventional and for that reason they lead to hypocrisy. They have led people to mistake etiquette for

morality." The spirit of Theosophy must be sought, and a sincere application of its principles to life and act should be made. This will render a mechanical view of Theosophy impossible.

If the inner man, who is a thinking being, is given a wrong philosophy, "then, becoming warped and diseased, he leads his instrument, the outer man, into bewilderment and sorrow." Such a wrong philosophy often results from swallowing without study the words of others, even though they be Theosophical writers. What is study? "It is not the mere reading of books, but rather long, earnest, careful thought upon that which we have taken up." It is not enough to accept a teaching as true. We should be able to explain to ourselves and to others why we have accepted it, and we cannot do so unless we have first examined it with a clear and unbiased mind. "A weak reasoner or an apparently credulous believer has not much weight with others."

As with an individual, so with a centre of Theosophical activities. The work and influence of the latter, Mr. Judge reminds us, "hinge upon the knowledge of Theosophical doctrine, upon the motives, ideas, and ideals of the members." No individual Theosophist is justified in supposing that he or she is too obscure or too unprogressed to be of any benefit to the Movement and thus to mankind at large. All human beings are indissolubly linked and united together in one vast whole, and not a single good example in Theosophic life is lost. "Every one of us affects not only the immediate associates but also projects into the great universal current an influence that has its weight in the destiny of the race." This is also applicable to a centre in its totality, for it, too, is a part of the whole and has the power to aid and benefit not only its students and workers but also the whole Theosophic body corporate. We are all, Theosophically speaking, keepers and helpers of each other.

How often we forget this, and also that, unless the reason why we desire to know the truth is that we may give it to others, it is tainted with selfishness! Unless we feel the *need* to give, we, by reason of our attitude of selfishness, build up a hard wall between our minds and the very truths we wish to know. "It is a fact," says Mr. Judge, "that the mind of the selfish person is always making

about itself a hard reflecting surface which throws off and away from its grasp the very knowledge the man himself would take if he but knew the reason why he fails."

Self-assertion also needs to be guarded against. The self-asserter "is very nearly always close to error" and erects by his attitude a barrier between himself and the truth. Mr. Judge reiterates what true philosophy teaches, that "it is only from the concurrence of investigation that the truth can be arrived at." None of us is in possession of complete knowledge, and each is capable of seeing but that aspect of the truth which is easy for him by reason of his race inheritance, his education and the ideas and thoughts that preceded his contact with Theosophy. We cannot change ourselves at once. Hence the need to have patience, not with Theosophy, but with ourselves, and to wait for the gradual effect of the new ideas upon us. "The taking up of these ideas is, in effect, a new mental incarnation, and we, just as is the case of a new *manvantara*, have to evolve from the old estate and with care gradually eradicate the former bias."

One way to eradicate these old erroneous modes of thought, Mr. Judge suggests, is to understand that we are spiritual beings and as such are united with all others. Only when this law of spiritual unity is recognized can the errors which stand in the way of truth be shaved off, as is the teaching of the *Mundaka Upanishad*, and the brilliant lamp of spiritual knowledge illuminate our inner nature.

Let us use the day of the Spring Equinox, the day of Mr. Judge's passing, for making a solemn resolve to start walking the Path of Sacrificial Service which he walked and showed us how to walk, and, in less time than we conjecture, we may have the realization that the light of spiritual knowledge, which is the light of the inner Divinity, abides at the core of our being.

THERE is service objective and its counterpart within, which being stronger will at last manifest without.

—W. Q. JUDGE

CULTURE OF CONCENTRATION

THE quality which makes one human, the power which stamps him with his humanity, is the power of reasoning. Animals feel, and some of the most complex of feelings are shown by them. Mother-love, the love of the mate, the sense of belonging to its own flock or herd, which among humans we call community—these and other feelings, noble or base, belong to the kingdom of the animals.

On the other hand, there is, in the invisible kingdom of *devas*, gods and angels, the quality and the power which humans do not fully possess—the power of direct perception or intuition. Angels and gods make no mistakes in their own specific activities because their faculty to see being intuitive, is infallible. But they are less than men inasmuch as they lack the sense of reason, the power to compare and contrast and then to draw deductions. This is an interesting and important point. It is often presumed that gods and angels are superior to humans; not altogether. They are superior inasmuch as they have clear vision or clairvoyance, but they are inferior for they cannot choose for themselves as humans can.

When we come to the human kingdom, we are neither like animals whose instinctual vision is perfect, nor are we like angels whose intuitive vision is perfect. We have both instinct and intuition, but neither is well developed because we have come to possess the power to reason, to think, to compare, contrast and evaluate. Man's lot until he has found himself is to be pitied, for he is not an animal nor is he an angel, but hovers between the two. We have a proverb which depicts well the state of man—we say he tries to carry water on both shoulders; *i. e.*, in this case, he wants to side with and please instinct and also intuition, and often fails. It cannot be done unless he is an expert in mental concentration.

So while it is true that because of the intermingling of instinct, reason and intuition the position of man is not enviable, let us not overlook the supreme advantage. When man succeeds in developing and mastering his own thinking-reasoning faculty, he will not only be superior to the animal but also become superior to the god or angel. Occult astronomy and cosmogony divide the firmament into

man-bearing globes and non-man-bearing globes. Those globes which are man-bearing, *i. e.*, where intelligent beings are evolving, are considered superior to other globes. On any globe the human kingdom is the highest, for in man heaven and hell unite, good and evil forces forgather, and as man possesses the power to choose, to select and to determine knowingly, he can become master of life and death, of spirit and matter, of animals and angels alike.

Therefore Theosophy emphasizes the cultivation of the thinking principle or mind. For, it is *mental* concentration that makes for real progress; it is through *mental* concentration that man masters both good and evil; and through *mental* concentration he rises superior to every force in the whole of Nature. In the lower kingdoms there is concentration, but it is not mental; nay more, there is concentration even among ordinary men and women, but it is rooted in desires and feelings. For instance, how concentrated is the crow with filth in sight; how concentrated is the vulture at the sight of a corpse! A miser is concentrated on his money-bags; the lover is concentrated and cannot get away from the sight of his beloved. There is concentration on every side. In the lower kingdoms of animals or angels, concentration is either instinctual or intuitional; only in the human kingdom there arises confusion and lack of concentration when reason intervenes and is at work. Some men and women would be perfectly happy to observe the law of the jungle. On the other hand, there are men and women who would make perfect members of the angel-community—guileless, innocent, docile, carefree, with no sense of responsibility. But either an animal or an angel is out of place in the body of a human, with a sensitive brain and an organized nervous system, fit instruments of the thinker and the reasoner.

Just as there is concentration of one type or another in the whole of nature, so also there are different types of cultures. What more culture does a lotus require?

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (*Matthew*, VI,

28-29)

Each kingdom of Nature has its own culture and it is the innate and inherent culture which shows itself in the majestic march of evolution. There is no conflict and pain in other kingdoms as we know conflict and pain; there is effort, there is overcoming of difficulties, there is test of resources, there is some pang of birth, some throes of the creative urge, but pain and suffering and sorrow as we know in our minds, that is the peculiar prerogative of humans—because it is through mental anguish and the sorrows and sufferings produced by the mind that we ultimately conquer nature. So, though there is concentration and culture in other kingdoms, mind-concentration and mind-culture are the special tasks that humans have to perform if they want to grow and succeed, if they do not wish to be frustrated and to fail.

Wherein does our lack of concentration show itself? Also, why is there conflict within ourselves so that humans are not true to type in their character and their culture? The son of a miser will not necessarily be born a miser; heredity showing type, character and culture seems to go wrong when we reach the human stage. Not only heredity; a miser himself may develop generous instincts for something or somebody. So among humans neither heredity nor hard and fast sticking to type is possible. This is because of mind. The power to reason, the thinking capacity, disturbs the inner harmony and balance, and conflict arises. A person shows perfect concentration when he is fully engrossed in his feelings and desires. Why is he not equally concentrated in other affairs of life? Nay more, why does that very concentration get disturbed sometimes?

First of all we need to note the root-cause of the wandering, wavering mind. What causes the mind to shift from one position to another? The animal nature in man. This animal nature has its own concentration on one thing, while the mind has a different object or goal on which it is concentrated. But man has not only an animal nature; he also possesses a divine nature. In him there is a ghost as well as a god. Man is triple: animal-human-angel; he is divine, human and devilish; he is ghost, plus god, plus man. Therefore the

second factor that disturbs mental concentration is the angel or godlike nature. Through suffering and sorrow, the human mind not only gets disillusioned with the animal, but often yearns to run away from its own manhood, and repose in its *daivic* or angelic character. This is a real danger. When despondency accompanied by desirelessness overpowers the human being, he yearns to get away from the world of responsibility into his own condition of pure bliss, *ananda*. There are numerous schools of so-called *yoga* which teach this form of mental exercise, helping the mind to abrogate its legitimate function, *i.e.*, to go back on its own manhood. Theosophy raises its voice against such systems of meditation and *yoga*, because they are dangerous to human evolution and frustrate the very purpose for which Nature evolutes from within itself the human kingdom.

Yoga is union of the human with the divine, of the human soul with the Universal Spirit. This clearly implies that the human soul knows and lives in and with the Divine Spirit. What do the so-called *Yogis* know of Divine Existence or *Sat*, of Divine Ideation or *Chit*, of Divine Bliss or *Ananda*? The object of concentration is to turn the human-man into a divine-man. *Yoga* is union in which there is spiritual realization and bliss, but also there is the yoke of life without which that union becomes meaningless.

So in our effort to train the mind, to educate the thinking-reasoning faculty, to endow it with character and culture, we must ever bear in mind the two enemies of man: the animal and the ghost is one; the angel and the god is the other. We want neither of these states: we want to subdue the animal for our own use; we want to yoke the angel to our human car of progress and growth; and in doing these two things we must retain our humanity, our manhood.

What shall a person do now and here with his wandering mind? How shall he control it? What culture and what character shall he evoke?

Naturally because of the three principles that constitute his being, the culture of concentration falls into a triple group: That culture must deal with the desires and passions of the animal in man; it must deal with the reasoning mind which makes one a man;

and thirdly, it must deal with the god or divinity in man, which constitutes his higher nature. No notice is taken of the physical body. Theosophy teaches that meditation on the body, on any part of the body, for any purpose whatsoever connected with the body, is wrong and spiritually injurious. The culture of concentration deals with what is *within* the body, and as a result of that culture beneficent expressions very naturally stream forth from every gate of the body. People ask about *Chakras* and centres; they talk about raising *Kundalini*, the serpent power; all these are very rarely understood and those who understand and possess the knowledge do not write books on the subjects, nor speak about them from public platforms. In this age many things pass off as *Raja Yoga*, and injury to brain and mind, to heart and soul itself can take place. What part then does the body play in the culture of concentration? No active part at all. As a result of that culture, *ojas* and *tejas* of the body, the light and the radiance, will show themselves, but Theosophy does not recommend any bodily practices save to keep the body well and healthy, to keep it clean and pure. Then how and where to begin?

Let us begin with the mind. In every human being mind is the source, the root, the seed of all his woes and troubles as well as his contentment and successes. Let us begin by distinguishing between two aspects of the mind: its wandering nature and its immutable nature. We all know that the mind goes from object to object and that it refuses to stay put on any single object we determine. But there is the immutability of the mind that we do not take note of. We are so provoked by its unsteady, roaming nature, that we do not see it is one and the same mind that is wandering. The mind flies from one object to another and still another, but it is the very same mind. Patanjali's phrase, "modifications of the thinking principle," is widely known and used; but it is not understood that the changes and modifications that take place belong to just one entity—the mind. Mind is immutable and in one sense immortal. It has two aspects: First, the lower mind, which is the collectivity of all our varied thoughts—a whole assemblage of modifications. Secondly, the Thinker, to whom those thoughts and modifications belong.

This Thinker is the higher immortal part of the mind. At this very moment each person is expressing thoughts that are different from the thoughts of a few moments ago, but he who expresses them and creates them is the same Thinker. The Thinker is one thing and his assemblage of thoughts is another. This Thinker is an aspect of the Soul—the divine in us. The Thinker is divine and is capable of divine creations or thoughts.

Turn to the lower aspect—the assemblage of many and varied thoughts. Where and how did these arise? If we analyse and dissect this vast assemblage of thoughts that we name the lower mind, we find two types: (1) a few noble ideas and images created by the Thinker, the higher aspect of mind, which are now in the lower mind; and (2) a large number of ideas and images which are commonplace, colourless, or even evil and ignoble. These arise from the human sensorium. Our senses and sense-organs, working in conjunction with our desires-passions-longings, have brought them into being. Immediately we see that the task before us is twofold: purifying and cleansing the Augean stable, and transforming that stable into a studio of the artist. The human mind is a veritable Augean stable and we do not clean it, though each one of us, as Augeas, is a ray of Helios, the Sun. Our first task then is to clean up this stable, our lower mind.

To transform the stable into the studio is the task before us; we cannot be creative artists in a filthy studio. But how to clean the mind? Real concentration and meditation without a pure life of ethics is not possible. There are in vogue objectionable methods which instead of purifying the mind merely put it to sleep. People want to forget their woes and worries, which implies forgetfulness of their vices and weaknesses. Theosophy certainly does not recommend brooding over one's vices; it says, "Look not behind or thou art lost." But drugging oneself with goody-goody sentimental ideas does to the mind what alcohol does to the body. The *Gita* teaches that there is no purifier like spiritual knowledge, so let us dwell on profound metaphysical and philosophical ideas that will impersonalize our feelings and desires and universalize our ideas and thoughts. If we want to learn concentration, let us begin in the

right way, by studying. Right study of sacred texts provides noble ideas which replace the lower unclean thoughts that are in the Augean stable of the human mind. That is the right method of cleaning and constitutes the first step—replacing low ideas with divine ideas. Let us do that every morning—study for half an hour. Study is like bathing; it cleanses the mind, making room for great ideas. These great thoughts should be in the background of our mind during the day. This is an essential practice for concentration.

Books like *The Voice of the Silence*, the *Bhagavad-Gita* and the *Dhammapada* are ideal for purifying the mind and developing concentration. A few verses read every night ere we retire, and again in the morning, taking in as much of the meaning of each verse as we can, and going over it mentally during the day, will help us bit by bit to acquire concentration. In the process, of course the mind will wander, but let us bring it back and place it on the verses we are reading or thinking about. This is the only sure way—though a long way requiring time and patience—for cleansing the Augean stable of the mind.

That mind which is like a stable has to be transformed into a studio. This is the place where the creative artist works—the painter, the sculptor, the composer of soul-stirring music. We have to work like that creative artist. How to begin to create divine ideas, potent images, sublime thoughts? There are two stages.

First, we copy great pictures painted by master-artists before we start painting original pictures. So also we must first acquire great ideas through our study, and with the aid of those ideas we learn to create. Memorizing the ideas—not just the words—is a process similar to copying great pictures. So let us learn to put in our own words the master-ideas of master-minds. What we read in the sacred texts, what we think about their thoughts, that we must learn to repeat correctly for our own inner growth. Learning and teaching go together. The best of teachers is one who is the best of pupils to his own teacher, and who humbly confesses: "Thus have I heard."

Then, we reach the second stage in the career of the artist: we need a living model. Theosophy teaches that there are living pictures in the art gallery of Mother Nature—*Akasha*—and as we

become pure in heart and lofty in mind, these living images reproduce themselves in our consciousness. Then there are the Images of the great Rishis and Mahatmas—Buddha and Shankara, Rama and Krishna, Moses and Jesus, and others. As we dwell on the radiance of Their Compassion, on the light of Their Wisdom, we slowly but steadily grow into Their likeness.

To sum up, we have to cleanse the mind, to memorize great ideas, to copy these ideas by correct repetition, to dwell on the Image and the Idol of Living Rishis and Mahatmas—not for worldly gain, but for the securing of inner balance, heart-light, mental peace, so that all our acts become acts of sacrifice, should we learn concentration. *In* the world but not *of* the world, labouring for humanity, we become lamps, small and humble but clean and pure, in which the Light of the Great Ones burns with unfading glory; and that flame, however dim, throws its light long and far into the darkness of this world.

THE *Gita* teaches that the causes of misery do not lie in conditions or circumstances, but in the mistaken ideas and actions of the man himself; he reaps what he has sown in ignorance. A better knowledge of the nature of man and the purpose of life is needed; as this is acquired, the causes of misery are gradually eliminated. No greater charity can be bestowed upon suffering humanity than right knowledge that leads to right action. The possessor of this knowledge will be filled with divine sympathy for all sufferers; he will relieve only such distress as should be relieved in each and every case, while at the same time he will impart as much of his greater knowledge as the sufferer can receive and apply. But he will not let his left hand know what his right hand does; he will have no thought of reward nor even of gratitude; he will simply do all that he can and the best he knows how to do to raise the sufferer to a higher plane of thought and action, while he affords sufficient physical relief to give a foothold.

—*Notes on the Bhagavad-Gita*

SPIRITUAL PSYCHOLOGY

Meditation, abstinence in all, the observation of moral duties, gentle thoughts, good deeds and kind words, as good will to all and entire oblivion of self, are the most efficacious means of obtaining knowledge and preparing for the reception of higher wisdom.

—*Raja-Yoga or Occultism*

MODERN psychology is a product of our contemporary civilization. Its roots are implanted in the shallow and arid soil of materialism. It lacks a spiritual tradition and does not go beyond the psychic realm. Ancient Oriental psychology has behind it a long spiritual tradition and its roots are embedded in the realm of the Spirit.

This fundamental difference makes for diametrically opposite approaches to the many psychological problems we are facing today on all sides. There is an increasing unrest and a sense of frustration, considerable nervous tension and anxiety. The modern psychologist claims he is trying to restore mental health. His goal is the well-being and happiness of his patient. That is also the goal of the practitioner of spiritual meditation. But that is the only common factor. In all else there is a wide gulf between the modern psycho-therapist and the advocate of spiritual therapy. The definition of mental health itself is altogether different, since the concept of man is poles apart. For the modern psychologist, man is at best a social animal. For the ancient spiritual therapist, he is primarily an unfolding Soul, potentially divine.

The modern approach aims at helping the mentally disturbed to adapt themselves to the prevailing conditions, by accepting them as unavoidable and even necessary, and hence to conform to them. The spiritual approach, on the other hand, begins by suggesting a re-evaluation of these conditions and advocating the cultivation of some degree of detachment. If such a re-thinking on a dispassionate basis reveals the evil of the world's behaviour, there should be no compromise and no conforming.

The fundamental difference between these two approaches is vividly apparent in the attitude to sex and sex life. The so-called

"new morality" starts from the assumption that, because the sex urge is natural, sexual self-indulgence is not only permissible, but even desirable. Pre-marital and extra-marital relations are considered legitimate; promiscuity and even sexual aberrations are condoned. The conflict arises, argue the advocates of this school, because of a false sense of guilt rooted in obsolete moral taboos. Teach the young people to get rid of this sense of guilt and they will enjoy sex relationships freely without any psychological disturbance.

This, from the standpoint of spiritual psychology, is "an abomination inspired by Mara." It merely brings a person to accept as normal his own degradation. It reduces him to the level of an animal. The moral conscience has been dulled and the mind closed to any higher influence. The spiritual tradition considers such "adaptation" as a horrible downfall. Vice cannot be overcome by indulgence. "It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart."

Instead of advocating indulgence, as does the "progressive morality," ancient psychology teaches self-restraint, accompanied by the practice of meditation. Man is an animal plus a living God! He stands between the animal nature and the higher reason and spiritual consciousness. This duality makes of man a mixture of good and evil. The Soul is drawn to the Self of Spirit and pulled down by the self of Matter. And so man at times is moved by spiritual aspirations, by higher volitions, by divine love. At other times he is motivated by selfish desires, animal passions, and hatred. This is the fierce conflict that rages within the human mind and that must be resolved not by submission to the lower propensities, not by becoming a slave to the animal nature, but by liberating the mind from all that is of the earth, earthy, by raising it above the animal and making it the channel for the God to act through.

Spiritual psychology helps a person to gain control over his lower nature and to unfold his inherent divinity. It teaches a reformation of the conduct of life that will restore the inner balance and mental health.

Such a spiritual discipline advocates a life of virtue. It includes both ethics and philosophy, and teaches the practice of mindfulness

and concentration. Then follow exercises of meditation leading to wisdom. A mind wedded to passion, imprisoned by lust, anger, and greed, is totally blind to anything but the gross world of matter. The liberated mind becomes receptive to higher vibrations and enters a realm beyond that of external and transitory phenomena.

There can be no reconciliation between these two approaches. "The learned and the ignorant cannot agree on the subjects of Spirit, Matter, World, just as a sober man cannot agree with a drunken man," says Vasishtha, the great Indian Sage, the preceptor of Rama. Every effort must be made to help the drunken man to get over his drunkenness and to wish to remain sober. Chronic drunkenness is injurious to both body and mind. Under its influence one is led to abject crime and vice. There is no possible justification for such an insane and abnormal condition.

What then is the remedy? The only remedy lies in the release of the mind. To quote again the ancient sage Vasishtha: "Release the Elephant—your mind—from the fetters of its egoism and its bonds of avarice."

The release of the mind brings about its transformation, whereby the very quality and mode of thinking change altogether. The unreleased mind is the passionate mind, *Kama-Manas*; the released mind becomes the *upadhi* or vehicle of divine intuition and the channel of the Spiritual Will. *Kama-Manas* has become transformed into *Buddhi-Manas*. The animal man has become the divine man, the man of mind complete.

The Higher Mind, *Buddhi-Manas*, is potentially in every one of us and this is the true basis for the sentiment that all are created equal. The equality lies in the inherent potentiality. We must be made aware of this potential divinity.

The Great Ones all teach us to seek the hidden jewel, to find the way to the storehouse within wherein a treasure awaits us. They tell us of a triple way, a way of Precept, Meditation, and Wisdom. May we follow that Triple Way and thus discover the Buddha-mind in us!

OUR COMPANIONS

IF asked, any of us would say that we kept good company. But do we? Do we know what is good and what is evil company, or what they really mean? There are many types of good and evil company.

Let us understand first that the word "company" is not limited to contact between human beings. It covers all aspects of human life—thoughts, feelings, actions, places and even the atmosphere itself. It means that which we are near to or in contact with, and this not merely in space. Do not the sun, the moon and the stars affect us? "Company" from this point of view affects us unconsciously to ourselves and we cannot avoid it. Our emotions, thoughts, ideas, diseases, etc., affect and are affected by the world in its entirety to some degree, and if the seeds of these that we and others send out find suitable soil in any person where they can grow, then their effect on such will be great. We affect and are affected more particularly by our immediate surroundings, in the measure of our consubstantiality with those surroundings.

Few of us would voluntarily mix with what we know is evil company, but how many of us recognize evil when we see it? What, for instance, do we think of as evil? Actually, anything and everything that originates in selfishness, self-centredness, pride, the wish for power, the wish to hurt or humiliate another, is evil. Too much goodness is evil. Can we always recognize this kind of evil? Our own motives may be, and indeed often are, evil, though we fail to recognize them as such. All life is probationary, we are told, and it is only as we progress on the Path that we are able to sense more clearly the evil lying latent at the heart of so much we had thought of as good.

From the Theosophical point of view, we have to have a *norm* on which we can base our life of companionship with others, whether at the personal level or in the realm of ideas. That norm is inherent in the Declaration of the United Lodge of Theosophists, where reference is made to the idea of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood based on the sure foundation of

similarity of aim, purpose and teaching.

Our need, especially when we begin to tread more consciously the "Path of Return," is for companionship with those so striving, and for help from Those who have already arrived at the end of that Path. So the company we should keep and foster should be that of the Great Ones and of our fellow probationers. These are our permanent companions, companions because of the same aim and purpose in life and the same teachings.

This idea should also form the basis for cultivating other companionships. It is useless to say that we are forced into companionship with our family, with religious, national or racial traditions, etc. The warning we are given—not a dictum, a rule, but a warning—is: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." The Buddha accepted family men as his *Bhikkhus*. Jesus said that one could leave one's father and mother and follow him. In our Theosophical Movement there is the instance of Damodar who left his caste to dedicate himself to the Masters and Their Cause. Once any kind of relationship has been outgrown it is no longer our *dharma* to continue in it. This has to be thought over and understood, for if karmically we are still bound to our family, traditions, etc., then to break away from them would be wrong. If the inner ties have broken, then the physical breaking away will follow naturally unless we create again the old tie. The *Dhammapada* tells us that "there is no companionship with a fool," and that we should "keep company with the best of men." If we have lost the inner tie with our family and friends and have recognized the greater tie with those who are like-minded and like-hearted, then we err if we try to keep company with that which we have outgrown.

Turning to evil companionship, we are taught why we should eschew it. "Familiarity breeds contempt," we hear, and we see before us in the world that too much familiarity with the idea of evil, too much seeing of bad conditions, dulls one's sense of right. The thoughts that lie behind evil actions and feelings are real entities having a life of their own and batten on any soil that will feed them, thus also making evil the nature of the owner of the soil. Just as

contagious diseases can be carried from one to another provided the soil in that other is suitable, so can evil thoughts and actions. Evil here can also be thought of as ceremonies of magic, however disguised.

Evil companionship is also the companionship of the "fool," the idler, the liar, the gossip, the proud; of everyone, in fact, save the kind, the true, the helpful, the unselfish, the diligent.

All this refers to our ordinary life in the world. But we have two environments, the outer and the inner. The inner consists of our companions in the nature of our thoughts and our feelings. These are truly those with whom we are most familiar; they intrude on us when we would rather be silent, restful, or engrossed in other kinds of thoughts and feelings. They so often worry us and will not leave us when we want them to leave. Yet, it is possible for us to change this inner environment, hard though it be. We must refuse entry to the would-be "companion" who intrudes on our thought-feeling and disturbs us. We should send away from the door of the mind-heart thoughts of evil, of hatred, of sadness, of despondency. We should open the door of our mind-heart only to those companions we want to entertain. Only when we have begun to rule our own house, our own thought-feeling nature, can we go out to help others. Only as we conquer can we show others the way to win.

We have been told to make the sacred books our companions, to make the Eternal our companion, to have as our beloved guests our highest aspirations. Our present nature is like the inn in which there was no room for the Christ-child to be born; it was full of other guests. The Christ-child was born in the manger which was the home of the domesticated animals, symbolizing our tamed animal nature which serves rather than demands. The animal nature in us, when brought under control, can alone provide suitable environment in which the higher Ego, the Christ-principle, can be born.

We need to make the Christ-principle our companion. He is our true friend, the spectator in us, the admonisher, the sustainer, the enjoyer. To make Him our friend and companion we need to cleanse and purify our animal nature, our personality. And to do this rightly we have to remember that He does not function in us

now because our "inn" is full of other guests. We know of His existence, and we know that a portion of Him has been welcomed, for it makes us self-conscious, responsible beings. But we have to free Him from the bonds of our lower nature and let Him act in us. The link between Him and our personal consciousness is the *Antaskarana*, the path or bridge between the higher and the lower; and to move up along this path is, first, to follow the voice of conscience, and then to seek Him by thought, meditation and aspiration. Once we can grasp that His connection with us is only by means of His ray in us until we make a suitable vehicle for Him, we shall lose our pride and our feeling that our own higher-lower nature is He. We must learn about Him, feel devotion to Him, and try to act in terms of what we are taught is His nature.

His greatest characteristic is service, universal service. Therefore we must try to emulate Him in this. He is part of the great pulsating heart of the Universe. So are we, but we disturb that Heart; He is one with it; all Nature is one with it. To free ourselves from the limitation of "I" and "mine," and to learn to think and feel that the same Heart beats in the criminal as in the saint, is the task before us.

This realization gives us a new "home." *Sat Sang* is the company of the great Fraternity of the Servers of Humanity and those devoted to Them. It is the realization of Those Elder Brothers that gives us the basis on which to build other companionships. We want to be Their companions. To take our refuge in, or to keep company with, the *Buddha* (the Enlightened One), with the *Dhamma* (the Good Law), with the *Sangha* (the Order constituted of those who are like-minded and like-hearted) is to keep *Sat Sang* or good company.

We must remember the Great Fraternity and the *Ishwara* within and fill our mind-heart with those thought-feelings that pertain to the spiritual life. Two things can never occupy the same space, and the mind-heart that is constantly full of spiritual teachings cannot harbour evil. Great thoughts and aspirations must not only fill our mind-heart but also be put into practice. To remain living companions they need exercise, just as the body does. How shall we practise? By helping those who need help, who know still less than we do.

This is why repetition of sacred texts is recommended for spiritual living, and why Krishna points out in the last chapter of the *Gita*:

There dwelleth in the heart of every creature, O Arjuna, the Master—*Ishwara*.... Take sanctuary with him alone...with all thy soul; by his grace thou shalt obtain supreme happiness, the eternal place....

He who expoundeth this supreme mystery to my worshippers shall come to me if he performs the highest worship of me; and there shall not be among men anyone who will better serve me than he, and he shall be dearest unto me of all on earth. If anyone shall study these sacred dialogues held between us two, I shall consider that I am worshipped by him with the sacrifice of knowledge; this is my resolve. And even the man who shall listen to it with faith and not reviling shall, being freed from evil, attain to the region of happiness provided for those whose deeds are righteous....

[Sanjaya says:] And as I again and again remember, O mighty king, this wonderful sacred dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I am delighted again and again. Also, as I recall to my memory the wonderful form of Hari, the Lord, my astonishment is great, O king, and I rejoice again and again. Wherever Krishna, the supreme Master of devotion, and wherever the son of Pritha, the mighty archer, may be, there with certainty are fortune, victory, wealth, and wise action; this is my belief.

If you love and serve men, you cannot by any hiding or stratagem escape the remuneration. Secret retributions are always restoring the level, when disturbed, of the divine justice. It is impossible to tilt the beam. All the tyrants and proprietors and monopolists of the world in vain set their shoulders to heave the bar. Settles for evermore the ponderous equator to its line, and man and mote, and star and sun must range to it, or be pulverized by the recoil.

—EMERSON

THE MYSTERY OF BEING

THE History of Mankind reveals that Great Sages, at all times, have tried to untie the knot of the mystery of being. The life story of the Buddha describes beautifully that untiring search of the human spirit to solve the riddle of birth, death, happiness and suffering. Such a search implies faith in man's power to find the truth, and reliance on the Law of the Universe. Man has known from the beginning of time that he is the Eternal, Immortal Ego, that which was, is and ever will be. The body will disintegrate, but that which resides in it, the real Ego, neither is born nor dies, is beyond the reach of sorrow and pleasure.

It is that sense of immortality which gives to our mortal physical existence a meaning and a purpose. A reflection of the spiritual Vision of the Ego is caught by the personal consciousness, thus lighting up the field of experiences in this world of matter. No one who tries to get out of the Ocean of *Maya* is ever completely lost in it, though there are, it is true, struggles, failures and deaths.

Civilizations rise and fall, but man's spirit lives through them all, inextinguishable, all-knowing. Life is divine and at its core there is perfect Justice. But, one may ask, "What is that Mysterious Power which so perfectly readjusts each effect to its cause and whose majestic sweep extends to all the regions of the Universe and planes of being? Perhaps to many this is not so much a matter of inquiry as of mystic wonder. Even to the rational mind Nature sometimes appears to be a workshop whose master is never to be approached.

When man ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge he became aware of himself as a separate entity; from then on his mission lay in knowing himself as a part of the whole. Unless man feels real pity and sorrow for all that lives and suffers, how can he ever realize the real purpose of his human existence?

Searching deep within his own heart, man asks, "What is the nature of that Law of laws which governs my own being and all manifestation? What am I? Can I think, feel and act as it pleases

me?"

Artists through their works of art have enriched life. Poets have sung of life and have shown the way to transmute suffering into joy. The Christs and the Buddhas down the ages have given a message of peace and good-will to all men. Truth and the Law of the Universe are at the very base of life. Men thus learn that the message of life is not one of misery, discord and hatred but one of harmony and love.

Perhaps the first glimpse of truth that can come to the mind is that the ultimate governing force is spiritual. There can be no discrepancy between the mathematics of the Universe and the mathematics of the Soul. Through the law of Karma man begins to learn the arithmetic of the soul. The world of Spirit and the world of matter form a single whole; therefore the same fundamental principles must govern all actions taking place in manifestation. An action must always have an effect, and action includes thought. Our thoughts and feelings have a direct, potent effect on others even though we may not speak a single word. On the plane of mind, Space and Time bear a different relationship to each other from what they do on the physical plane. Thought travels faster than anything we know of in this age of speed. Therefore all human beings can be our brothers and friends, even those we may never have met in their physical frames.

We have to meditate and constantly dwell upon the idea that we are primarily Manasic, responsible beings. There is a spiritual bond between all human beings. This must not remain a purely intellectual concept. Our whole being must be so imbued with the implications of the law of Karma that we can no longer act against what we know in our heart of hearts to be true, fair and compassionate.

No account of the Universe in its totality can be final which disregards consciousness.

—WILLIAM JAMES

"WHILE THERE IS LIFE, THERE IS HOPE"

WE need to remind ourselves of the assurance given us that there is no real failure but ceasing to try and that, however many times we fall, all is not lost if we pick ourselves up and go on.

The personal man who has erred admits to himself, if he is wise, the seriousness of his offence, but, turning with humility and renewed devotion to the Soul within, deepens and renews his determination to let Its light shine through, to rise with It.

For, even in the depths of sorrow over apparent failure, he remembers that regret is futile and a waste of energy, and that dwelling upon wrongdoing only strengthens the tendency towards repeating it. The task is, by strenuous present effort, to get back to the true position as quickly as may be, by turning to whatever of our devotional books or other writings have been found elevating and ennobling, or by doing an act of kindness to another. There is no time or need for despair.

"While there is life, there is hope," it has been said, and truly, for the worst of sinners is not beyond the possibility of self-redemption so long as the connection with the soul is there. However great the suffering his acts may have brought on others, or the reactions may yet bring to him, until the death hour strikes the evildoer may turn upon his evil inclinations with sufficiently earnest fervour of resolve and action to strengthen or renew the sacred inner ties.

As for the question of the attitude of others towards the evildoer, none can justly claim brotherhood with Masters and deny his brotherhood with the lowest man or woman in whom the divine spark dwells, remembering that, as Isaac Watts put it in one of his hymns:

...while the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.

There is a wealth of wisdom in what A.E. wrote: "Do what is right and beautiful and trust to the justice of Nature; the laws are inevitable." Be another's sin what it may, we are not called on to usurp the role of Karma.

The teachings ascribed to Jesus Christ in the Gospels are eloquent upon the attitude to be adopted toward wrongdoers. Pressed by the scribes and Pharisees to pass judgment upon an erring woman, guilty of an offence for which their law prescribed death by stoning, he told them: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And her he bade, when all her accusers quietly slunk away, "Go, and sin no more."

He told them also, on another occasion, the parable of the prodigal son. What student of Theosophy could ever in good conscience play the role of the resentful elder brother of the returning prodigal, to celebrate whose return the old father had killed his fatted calf? This graceless fellow had complained:

Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

The father did not reproach him, saying only:

Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

In another parable, apparently on the same occasion, when publicans and sinners as well as the "unco guid" Pharisees and scribes made up his audience, Jesus described the shepherd's going in quest of his lost sheep, bringing it back with rejoicing and calling the neighbours in to rejoice with him. And Jesus concluded the parable with the words:

I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over the sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

DISCIPLINE is learnt in the school of adversity.

—M. K. GANDHI

AN AMERICAN EXPERIMENT

[This article by W.Q. Judge first appeared in *The Omaha Bee* and was reprinted in *The Theosophical Forum*, August 1948.]

AS I write these words there lies before me an old book written by Jacob Boehme, a German shoemaker who was a very religious and extraordinary man. His book is called *Forty Questions on the Soul*; it was printed in English in the year 1647, and was only one of the many books he wrote. In all of these he calls himself a "theosopher," which in those days was the same as "theosophist," the title really belongs to one who has put all the theosophical principles into practice. Still, popular usage is always stronger than fine distinction, and it is almost impossible to keep before the mind of the public the fact that a mere member of this Society is not necessarily thereby made into a perfect being, and is indeed only one who is on trial. The famous Madame Blavatsky made this clear one day in London to a visitor who asked if she was a theosophist, to which she replied, "No, but I am trying to be one." So in my use of the title "theosophist" I mean one who is trying to put theosophy into practice and that too without regard to membership in the Society. But this old Teutonic theosopher Boehme was, I think, in all senses a theosophist, for he ever lived up to his doctrines and came at last to have a great influence, which may be considered proved from the anger he aroused in the hearts of certain dogmatic priests of his day who caused him to be persecuted and driven from his town.

There was already beginning to spread among the minds of the people of Europe in the time of Boehme a revolt against the terrible orthodoxy which would not allow a man to believe that the earth was round or that it could not be possible that the globe and all thereon were created in six small solar days. This discontent at last led to the pilgrimage of the puritan fathers to America and the great nation now on this continent as a consequence.

Among the descendants of these strong men were such as Franklin and Jefferson and Washington and their friends. But at the same time there was also another man in England who did not come here until the revolution had begun to be whispered in the air, though as yet not broken forth. This personage was the well known Thomas Paine, than whom no other man, perhaps, has been so unjustly libelled since his death. Washington said of him that the American colonies owed him a debt of gratitude, for to him more than anyone, in Washington's opinion, did the people owe the impulse to strive for liberty. These prominent figures in the history of this nation—Washington, Franklin and Jefferson—were the freest of thinkers, and all the wild efforts of interested persons since then have not been able to show them as only church going pious souls, but solely as men who lived justly and did right in the eyes of men and the sight of the one God in whom they believed. Certainly as to Paine and Franklin it is clear that they were liberal and wholly untrammelled by any church or priest.

These men, with their friends and supporters, established the United States on a footing of absolute freedom from dogmatic interference, and as a revolt against tyranny. They took care to leave God out of the Constitution—and why? For the reason that every man has his own conception of that Being, and if God were mentioned in that great instrument, then bigots and sectaries would enforce their notion of God on everyone else, drawing their supreme warrant from the Constitution. And so the great American experiment came on the world's stage; to be a success or miserable failure; to hold out to humanity for ages to come the hope of an ever-widening horizon of liberty and truth and right. Whether those hopes will be fulfilled is a mystery yet in the womb of time.

"What," you may ask, "has all this to do with Theosophy?" A very great deal; for the latest and best organized attempt to revive true Theosophy and spread it among the people of the earth was begun in the United States, the land of experiment and of reform. Fifteen years ago and a little over, the sages of the East conveyed to their friends the intelligence that the time had now come to start

the preparations for a new wave of thought and a new revival of belief in the soul and its powers, together with a new building up of the breastworks needed to stem the onrush of materialism, which had been growing under the diligent, fostering care of the scientific schools, whose masters and pupils care not for the immortal and believe not in the inner self. The result of this communication—in itself a command—resulted in the forming of the Theosophical Society in the city of New York, with the avowed object of forming a nucleus of a universal brotherhood—in fact, a repetition, on the purely moral side, of the Declaration of Independence. Unlike other bodies with broad aims, this one had from the first a basis which has given it solidity and will ever keep it alive.

The founders of the organization, believing in the intelligence sent to them that a wave of interest in the powers of the soul was about to rise and that a new seeking for the philosopher's stone upon an entirely different basis from any in the past would soon begin, wisely directed the attention of the members to the ancient stores of learning, to the end that all the superstition of the centuries might be stripped off from the doctrines and beliefs held from immemorial time in respect to man, his power, his origin and his destiny. This attention resulted in a belief in the ranks of society that there existed a key to puzzles of the inner self, and soon upon the belief there followed a wide promulgation. But such a divulgement inevitably draws down abuse and ridicule from all who will not take the trouble to know what it is all about, and brave men and women are required to carry the struggle forward until misunderstanding disappears. Such men and women have been found, and now a little more light begins to break, increasing the probability that the people are almost ready to give a hearing to expositions of such satisfying doctrines as those of karma and reincarnation, which are two out of many that the members of the Society endeavour to place before thinking people.

These two doctrines are in fact the foundation stones of all theological edifices, for without them the universe is a hopeless

jumble, while with them hardly a question of cosmogony or anthropology remains unanswered.

Evolution, so widely accepted, is admitted as an empiric doctrine only, for there is no connection between the links of evolution, and scientists are obliged to assume many things, many of them hunting forever for the missing link, whether it be between the ape and man, or between the mineral and the vegetable more highly organized. But with karma and reincarnation the link appears, maybe without any visible representative, but plainly seen as a philosophical conception. And in the great question of the evolution of man as a reasoning being, all doubts disappear at once when we master the theosophical idea of his origin and destiny. Theosophy does not deny evolution but asserts a reasonable one. It shows man as coming up through every form from the very lowest known to science, and postulates for him a destiny so much higher and greater than any permitted to him by either church or science that the pen of comparison gives up the task. But it goes further than science, as the human monad—the immortal spark—according to Theosophy, comes out of the eternities, and in each evolutionary course it emerges upon the plane of matter as we know it, in the form of an immaterial (if we may say so about that which although invisible to our sight is still matter) being called by some an elemental and by others a spirit. But of these things more at another time.

For the present it is sufficient to know that the theosophical experiment of the present century is a product of the soil of America, although engineered at the beginning by a Russian subject, who at the same time gave up her allegiance to the Czar of all the Russias and became an American citizen.

There are two kinds of knowledge, the real and the unreal; the real concerned with eternal verities and primal cause, the unreal with illusory effects.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Dr. Karan Singh, Chairman, Temple of Understanding, New Delhi, in his address to the Third Parliament of the World's Religions held in Cape Town in December 1999, stressed that we have reached a crucial crossroad in the history of humanity and that the need of the hour is "a paradigm shift in consciousness":

What we are now involved in will certainly be the most crucial and difficult of all the transitions that we have encountered so far—the transition to the global society. Impelled by science and technology, all aspects of life on our planet are, for better or worse, undergoing a process of globalization....The great religions of the world also have burst geographical boundaries and assumed global dimensions. While we are thus being irresistibly propelled towards a global society, the consciousness needed to sustain such a society is still imperfectly developed.

It is this dangerous time lag which is at the root of much of the tumult and turmoil that we see around us today, and if the truly religious impulse is creatively projected, it can go a long way in forging a new consciousness that would unite rather than divide the peoples of the world....

Religion remains a major motivating force for the vast majority of the six billion inhabitants of Planet Earth. This being the case, the question before us is whether we are going to revert to the mediaeval pattern of religious wars and inter-necine conflicts, or move onwards to a new dimension of Interfaith dialogue, harmony and understanding....

One of the measures necessary is a paradigm shift in the traditional pattern of present-day education. Instead of clinging to fixed ideas and rigid patterns, what is needed is a rediscovery of some of the insights of various religious and cultural traditions for a decisive breakthrough, a quantum leap into a new spiritual dimension.

All over the world there is a growing number of individuals and organizations who are searching for methods to expand human consciousness in order to bring about a spiritual transformation. This can be achieved through a new education based on co-operation, collaboration, reciprocal altruism and

personal and social responsibility. Only a comprehensive and hostile system of education can bring about a change in our consciousness and expand our personal and global awareness so as to ensure harmony in the emerging global society.

The universal values inherent in all the great religions of the world are often overlooked with all the preoccupation with ritual and theology. It is, in fact, these universal spiritual values that ultimately link all human beings into one great extended family—*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, as the Vedas have it. Fanning the spark of potential divinity within each individual, irrespective of race or creed, sex or nationality, caste or colour, into the blazing fire of spiritual discernment, is the true role of the great religions of humanity.

How, looking at the record of history, can we foster harmony between various religions and cultures and avoid repeating past conflicts? This is what a group of experts asked themselves when they met to discuss *Models of Philosophical Encounters: Conditions for a Fruitful Cultural Encounter*, organized by UNESCO's Division of Philosophy and Ethics at the organization's Paris headquarters. (*Unesco Sources*, October 1999)

Religion, the participants said, is not a collection of rigid practices, fixed once for all and removed from any context. Religions borrow from one another, change constantly and are continually enriched, not always accompanied by violence. Conflict arises whenever a religion claims dominance and control over others.

The main problem, the experts agreed, is how to draw lessons from history to bring about "active" tolerance. Past conflicts can teach us things about the present, but their example cannot be applied in entirety to modern times. And the nature of conflict itself has changed. These days people argue less over sacred texts and more about culture and lifestyle.

Today, conflicts often arise between liberal and conservative wings of the same faith. Another modern feature is that the worst

conflicts are occurring within multi-ethnic societies, such as the countries of the former Soviet Union. "This cultural rivalry," said Dr. Notker Schneider of Cologne University, "which erupts in societies with a big immigrant population, requires new solutions. Solutions which have yet to be found."

Would not one solution be the comparative study of various religions, cultures and customs, and the selection therefrom of universal elements—the good and the noble which is beneficial to all? Such study should be made a part of the school curriculum, for it is best to begin with the young, whose minds are still pliable and free of prejudices and predilections.

Speaking at the 87th session of the Indian Science Congress held early this January at Pune, Richard Ernst, the 1991 Nobel laureate in chemistry, cautioned against indiscriminate pursuit of science and technology, without any respect for nature. It could spell doom for humanity, he said. The purpose of science and technology, he reminded his audience, was to help understand nature and improve life for the common man, not to destroy life. (*The Times of India*, January 5)

Dr. Ernst scoffed at the vision of colonizing planets and termed the enormous expenditure on space exploration as an absurd pursuit which was not aimed at improving the life of man. He stressed the need to temper scientific and technological pursuits with respect for universal and ethical principles. Eastern schools of thought, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, he said, contained essential treatises which could guide man in coexisting with nature:

Science and humanity need to coexist. We should be guided by wisdom and compassion in our scientific pursuits...India is in a unique position to provide leadership in several such aspects....

The heroes of our time are people helping street children rather than those developing a moon rocket.

The eminent scientist urged his fellow scientists to address themselves to the needs of society and make relevant contributions

which would help improve the life of the common man.

What is a myth? A schoolboy once described it as "something that is true on the inside but not true on the outside." "A myth is true, perhaps not in the outer, physical sense, but as an accurate expression of a psychological situation of the inner condition of the psyche," writes Marguerite Theophil in *The Times of India*, January 20:

While myths can be understood to be somewhat like dreams, dreams are messengers of the individual and personal unconscious mind, whereas myths serve to express the dynamics within the collective mind of a specific society, culture or race.

Myth can be seen as the collective "dream" of an entire people at a certain point in their history. It is as if we can imagine something like an entire population dreaming together, and the dream, the myth, bursting forth through its poetry, songs and stories. At a personal level, the study of myth allows us to see our ordinary lives from a different perspective, to see that many "characters"—noble and heroic as well as base and uncouth—dwell in us. Myth helps us get an intuitive sense of who we truly are at many levels, and what is truly important to us.

Myth lives not only in literature and imagination, it finds its way into the behaviour and attitudes of the culture—into the practical daily lives of people. At the social or cultural level, mythology allows us to see what is significant to any group of people claiming a common belonging.

The interpretation of myths and symbols is a vast subject and H.P.B. has dealt with it at length in her *Secret Doctrine*.

Allegory and a mythical ornamentation around the kernel of tradition, in no wise prevent that kernel being a record of real events....All the so-called myths of the Hindu, Grecian, Chaldean and Jewish Pantheons are found to be built on fact and truth. (*S.D.*, II, 235-36)

The so-called "myths," in order to be at least approximately dealt with in any degree of justice, have to be closely examined from all their aspects. In truth, every one of the *seven Keys* has to be used in its right place, and never mixed with others, if we

would unveil the entire *cycle of mysteries*. (*Ibid.*, II, 517)

Myths were cloaked in allegory and symbolism for their better preservation. The ancients knew that nothing could be preserved in human memory without some outward symbol. Paper, papyrus and parchment decay, stone crumbles and languages change, but "the ideas underneath symbols do not alter, no matter what might be the language, and symbols are clear immortally, because they are founded in nature itself."

Beliefs are the bedrock upon which all experience is built. What we believe can affect our life, our attitudes, our actions, says Noell Nelson, clinical psychologist and author of many books. An article in the January-February *Futurist*, adapted from her book *Winner Takes All*, speaks of the power of beliefs:

All of your beliefs—about yourself, your abilities, your potential, your "place" in the world—affect how you live your life. In fact, beliefs are so powerful that they can even affect whether you live or die....

The good news is that, if you have beliefs that limit your ability to create the future you want for yourself, you can change them.... By changing your beliefs, you take the first step toward changing the way you live your life. The bad news is that you can't change your beliefs unless you know what they are. Even though our beliefs run our lives, most of us have little conscious awareness of what those beliefs are....

To discover your beliefs about the future, start by looking at your "core beliefs," the ones that make broad, sweeping statements about life.... "The future is wide open; it is whatever you make of it" is a typical winner's core belief. It stresses the enormous possibilities available in the future and the degree to which an individual is in charge of his or her own future. From this belief, winners will generate secondary beliefs such as "Where there's a will, there's a way" and "As one door shuts another one opens."...Winners' beliefs imply a future full of positive possibilities and support their ability to go into the unknown with confidence and hope....

No matter how grim your present seems, be willing to accept the belief that the future holds positive possibilities. The wonderful thing about possibilities is that they can be turned into probabilities, and from there into actuality.

On the other hand, seeing the future as *only* full of bright promises might lead to disappointment and dejection sooner or later. Helpful as an optimistic attitude is, we have to be prepared for any eventuality and accept it not only as what we deserve under Karma but also as just what we in fact desired.

"For the love of heaven do not take any tales or information from any person to any other," advises Mr. Judge. We are apt to forget the precept, and gossip has become the pastime of the thoughtless. The real occult reasons for avoiding gossip, small talk, backbiting, etc., are pointed out in Theosophical philosophy, but are often not so clearly perceived even by its students.

Even from the physical health angle, gossip has deleterious effects. According to a report from New Delhi (*The Time of India*, January 22):

Gossips are more prone to heart attacks and heart diseases, doctors have warned. When a person gossips or criticizes another person, they say, negative thoughts run through his or her system. These thoughts become responsible for the release of neuropeptides. These substances then oxidize LDL, a component of cholesterol....

While diet control and exercise are said to be essential to reduce the chances of a heart attack, doctors feel that negative thoughts go a long way in harming the heart. Indraprastha Apollo Hospital cardiologist Dr. K. K. Aggarwal says that efforts should be made to remove negative thoughts as much as possible. If one is angry and upset about something, think of the positive sides of life, like the people you love and the people who love you, he explains.

Chief cardiologist at Batra Hospital, Dr. Harbans S. Wasir, points out, "When a person is angry, chemicals like adrenaline and noradrenaline are secreted into the blood. These increase the

pulse rate and blood pressure and can cause damage to an already sick heart." On the other hand, positive thoughts and action result in the release of nitric oxide into the bloodstream. Nitric oxide has healing powers and ensures good health, he says.

Our thoughts and speech are more potent even than acts—for good or for ill.

Two teams of scientists have found evidence of bacteria living in Antarctic ice, above a freshwater lake that lies beneath the thick frozen surface. Lake Vostok, as it is called, is one of the deepest bodies of water on Earth and is located more than two miles under the East Antarctic ice cap. According to John Priscu of Montana State University, who led one of the two teams, "From a biologist's perspective, this is the Holy Grail of lake biology." (*The Times of India*, January 6)

The ice core, eighteen inches long and four inches wide, was drilled from 11,800 feet into the ice sheet and 393 feet above where the ice and the waters of the lake meet, suggesting life can survive cut off from nutrients and light. The existence of such "extremophiles" in Lake Vostok and elsewhere has given scientists hope that life could exist in similarly forbidding conditions on other planets.

Indeed Life and the lives exist everywhere, even in the unlikeliest of places. "There is not one finger's breadth (*Angula*) of void Space in the whole Boundless Universe," says an Occult commentary. (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 289)

UNTIL you can help your enemy and converse with him, until you can be of use to your fellow man, you have no human rights at all.

—YEHUDI MENUHIN

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